

# Representation of health in global climate diplomacy, and vice versa

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**World Health  
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*"The defining issue for public health during this century"*

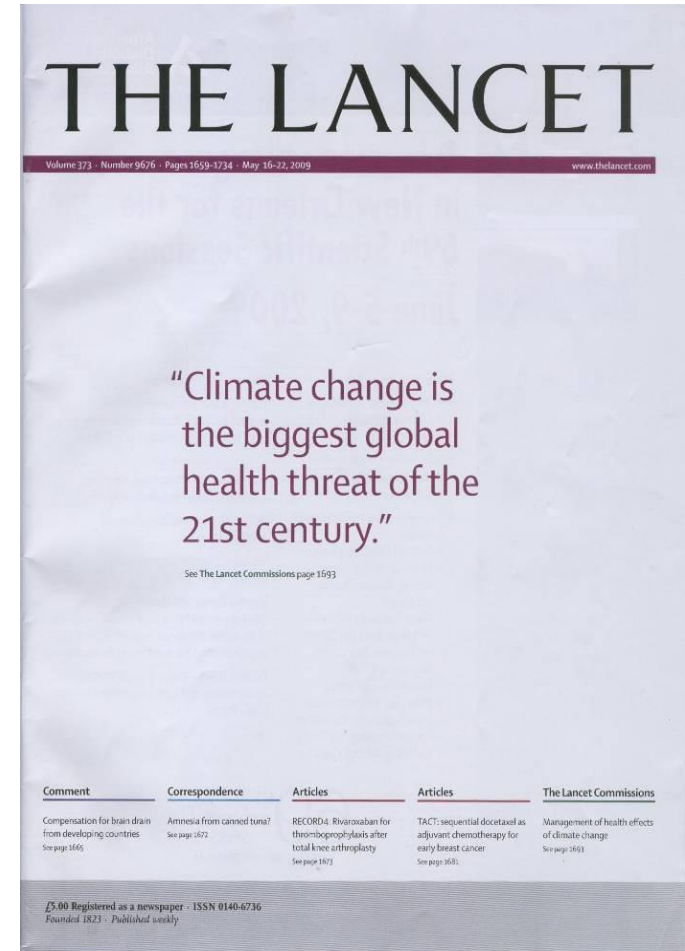


# Health impacts of climate change

## Each year:

- Undernutrition kills 3.1 million
- Malaria kills over 600,000
- Diarrhoea kills almost 600,000 children
- Extreme weather events kill tens of thousands

These, and others, are **highly sensitive to a changing climate**



# Health impacts of the causes of climate change

- **Outdoor air pollution** → 3.7 million deaths/yr – mostly from urban exposures
- **Indoor air pollution** → 4.3 million deaths/yr – mostly from inefficient biomass and coal cookstoves



- **Polluted air, unsustainable transport systems, poor diet are major contributors to non-communicable disease**

# Health impacts are unfairly distributed



Cumulative emissions of greenhouse gases, to 2002



WHO estimates of *per capita* mortality from climate change, 2000

Map projections from Patz et al, 2007; WHO, 2009.

# Health as a central principle of the 1992 Rio conference and the UNFCCC:



**1992 RIO DECLARATION Article 1:** *"Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a **healthy** and productive life in harmony with nature."*

**UNFCCC Article 1:** *"Adverse effects of climate change" : changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which have significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on **human health and welfare**.*



# Climate change is rising on the health agenda

- Identified by WHO DG as a top priority, and selected as theme for World Health Day 2008.
- WHA 2008 resolution, Executive Board 2009 endorsement of a new WHO action plan, Regional Committee Resolutions and Frameworks for Action.
- Multiple new initiatives on advocacy, assessment tools, research funds, country level adaptation pilots.
- All led by health sector at the global, regional and national level - and most very recent.



**Conference on  
Health & Climate**

27th - 29th August 2014

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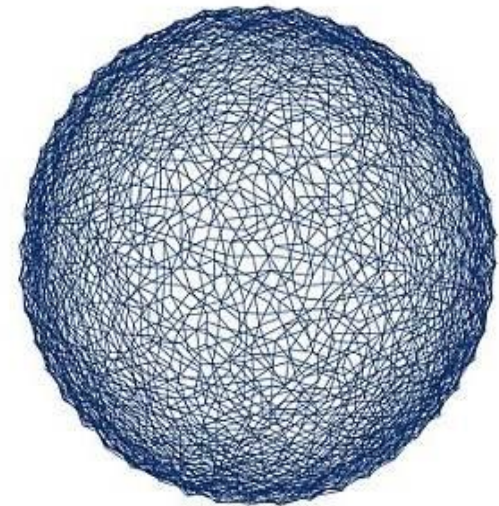
# *Challenges*





# State of global climate change negotiations

- Science broadly settled, but political difficulties to achieve even the modest commitments made so far.
- The main disagreement - Why should WE pay to achieve uncertain, shared environmental benefits, decades down the line?
- Health has a role to play – but high barriers to getting messages across.

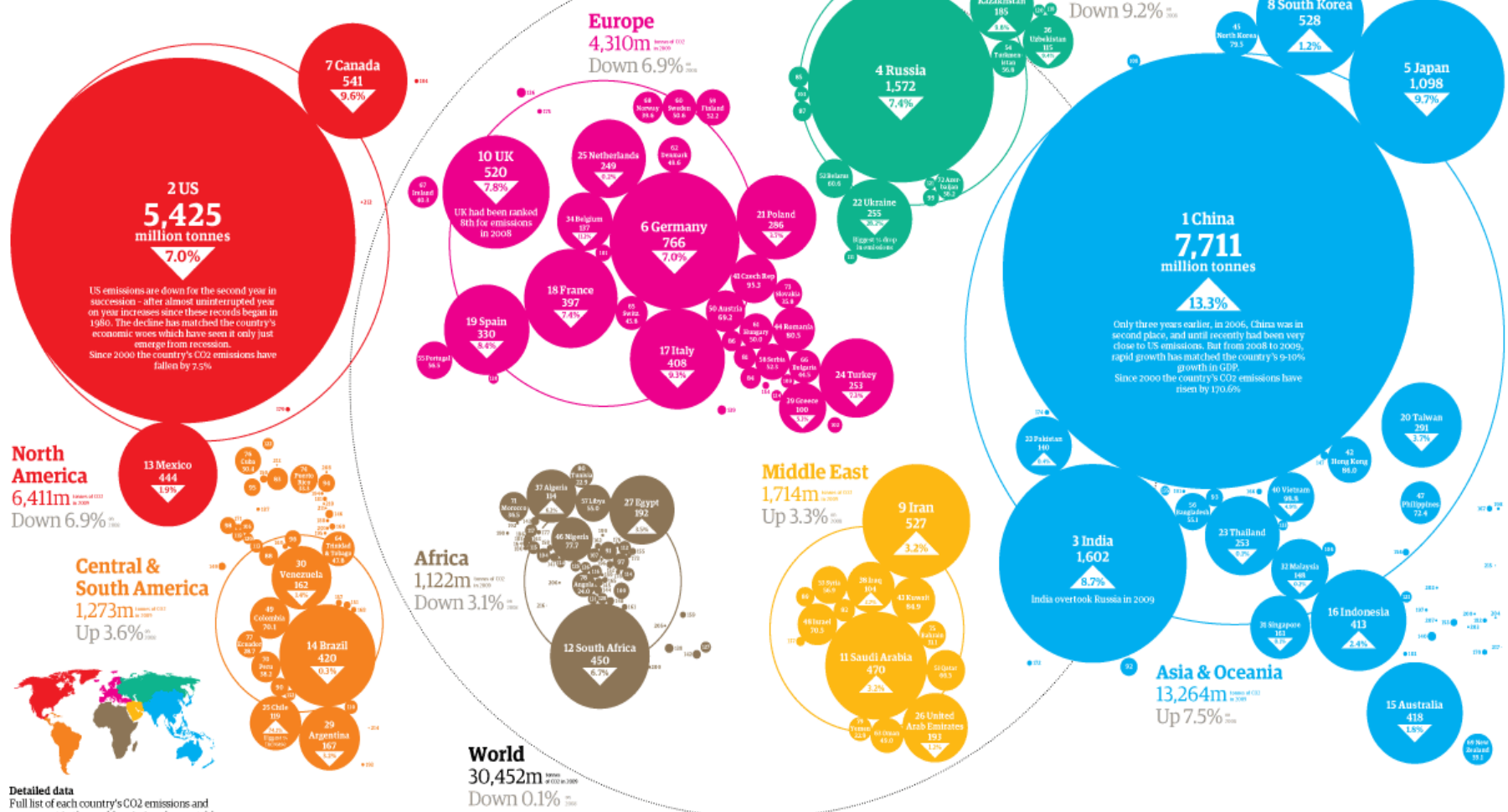


COP15  
COPENHAGEN  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009



# An atlas of pollution: the world in carbon dioxide emissions

Latest data published by the US Energy Information Administration provides a unique picture of economic growth - and decline. China has sped ahead of the US, as shown by this map, which reizes each country according to CO2 emissions. And, for the first time, world emissions have gone down



Detailed data Full list of each country's CO2 emissions and movement in the world emissions league table

Rank	Country	Million tonnes	Percent change	Rank	Country	Million tonnes	Percent change	Rank	Country	Million tonnes	Percent change	Rank	Country	Million tonnes	Percent change
1	China	7,711	13.3%	21	Poland	286	5.3%	41	Viet Nam	101	1.1%	71	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
2	US	5,425	7.0%	22	Pakistan	245	1.1%	42	Russia	99	1.1%	72	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
3	India	1,602	8.7%	23	Thailand	253	1.1%	43	Iran	99	1.1%	73	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
4	Russia	1,572	7.4%	24	Turkey	253	3.3%	44	North Korea	98	1.1%	74	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
5	Japan	1,098	9.7%	25	Netherlands	249	0.2%	45	Finland	97	1.1%	75	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
6	Germany	766	7.0%	26	United Arab Emirates	191	1.1%	46	Nigeria	97	1.1%	76	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
7	Canada	541	9.6%	27	Egypt	192	1.5%	47	Indonesia	96	1.1%	77	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
8	South Korea	528	1.2%	28	Kazakhstan	185	1.8%	48	Peru	96	1.1%	78	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
9	Iran	527	3.2%	29	China	181	1.1%	49	Mexico	96	1.1%	79	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
10	UK	520	7.8%	30	Venezuela	162	0.1%	50	Austria	95	1.1%	80	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
11	Saudi Arabia	470	3.2%	31	North Korea	155	0.1%	51	Cuba	95	1.1%	81	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
12	Brazil	420	0.3%	32	Malaysia	148	1.3%	52	Viet Nam	95	1.1%	82	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
13	Mexico	444	1.9%	33	Belgium	137	1.1%	53	Serbia	95	1.1%	83	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
14	Argentina	167	1.7%	34	Hungary	136	1.1%	54	Turkey	95	1.1%	84	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
15	Australia	115	5.7%	35	Portugal	135	1.1%	55	Czech Rep	95	1.1%	85	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
16	Indonesia	413	2.4%	36	Uzbekistan	115	1.1%	56	Austria	95	1.1%	86	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
17	Italy	408	9.3%	37	Algeria	114	1.1%	57	Russia	95	1.1%	87	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
18	France	397	7.4%	38	North Macedonia	109	1.1%	58	Belarus	95	1.1%	88	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
19	Spain	330	8.4%	39	South Africa	104	1.1%	59	Kazakhstan	95	1.1%	89	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%
20	Taiwan	291	3.3%	40	United States	101	1.1%	60	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%	90	Azerbaijan	95	1.1%

# Weak links between climate and health policies

- 1) How many times was health mentioned in the 200 page draft agreement proposed at the Copenhagen UNFCCC CoP?
- 2) How many of the 323 side events focussed on health?
- 3) What percentage of global climate funds were allocated to health projects?
- 4) Of the 13 main economic models to inform climate mitigation decisions, how many incorporated health co-benefits?

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# Weaknesses in planning responses

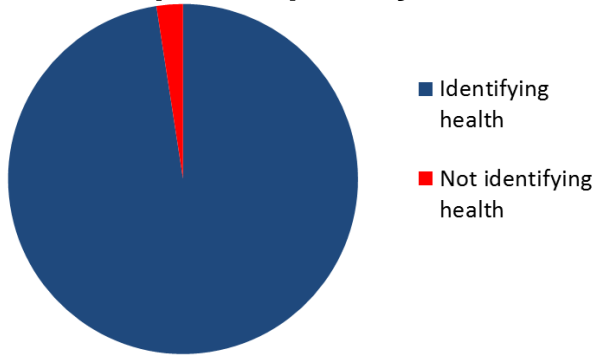
- 95% (39/41) of National Adaptation Programmes of Action include health as a sector affected by climate change
- 73% (30/41) of NAPAs included health interventions within adaptation needs
- However, only 23% (9/39) had a comprehensive health vulnerability assessment
- Only 27% (8/30) of the interventions were considered adequate



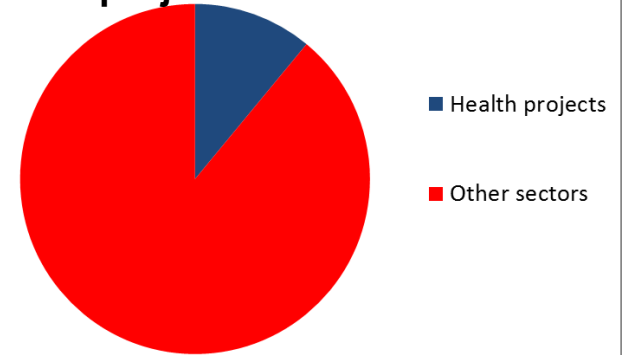
Review by WHO-AFRO; Manga et al, 2010.

# Lack of resources to implement the response

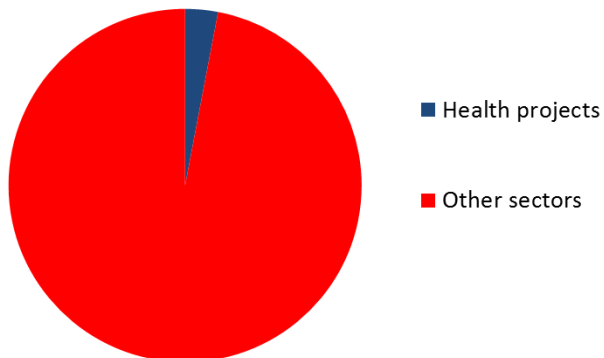
## LDCs identifying health as adaptation priority



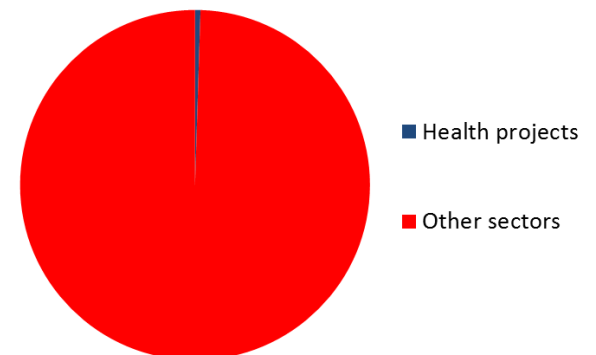
## Number of adaptation projects submitted



## Funds requested for health



## Funds awarded for health



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# *Opportunities*



# Opportunity 1: Greater relevance to the public

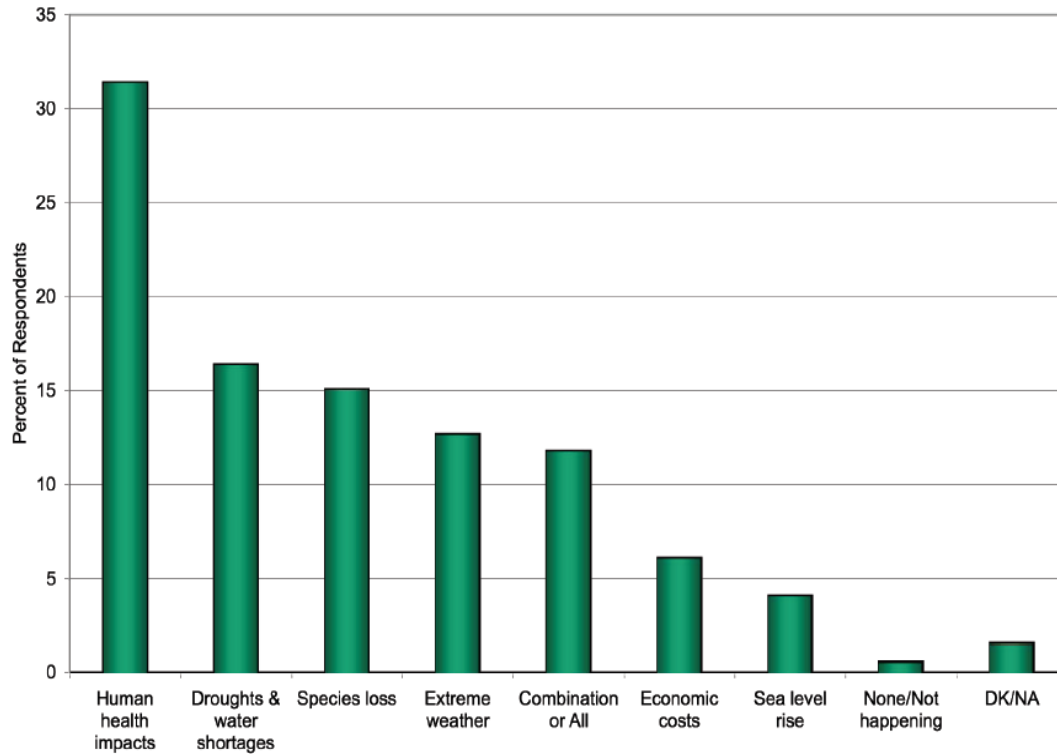


Figure X. Climate Impacts of Greatest Concern (GlobeScan, 2001)

2001 Globescan poll in 30 countries:

“Now I would like to ask you some questions about climate change, which is sometimes referred to as global warming or the greenhouse effect. Which ONE of the following possible impacts most concerns you personally, if any?”



# Opportunity 2: Mobilization of the capacity of the health sector



WHO/SEARO

We have proven, cost-effective interventions against every climate-sensitive health impact

All of these can save lives now, and reduce vulnerability to climate change

Strengthening of health systems, including prevention, is central to protection from climate risks



# Opportunity 3: Simpler and more efficient public policy



US President Barack Obama at children's asthma ward, during launch of US national climate plan, May 2014.

- The same regulations can address climate as well as health-threatening pollutants
- E.g. - the legal instrument for regulating US greenhouse gas emissions is based on evidence that they endanger public health

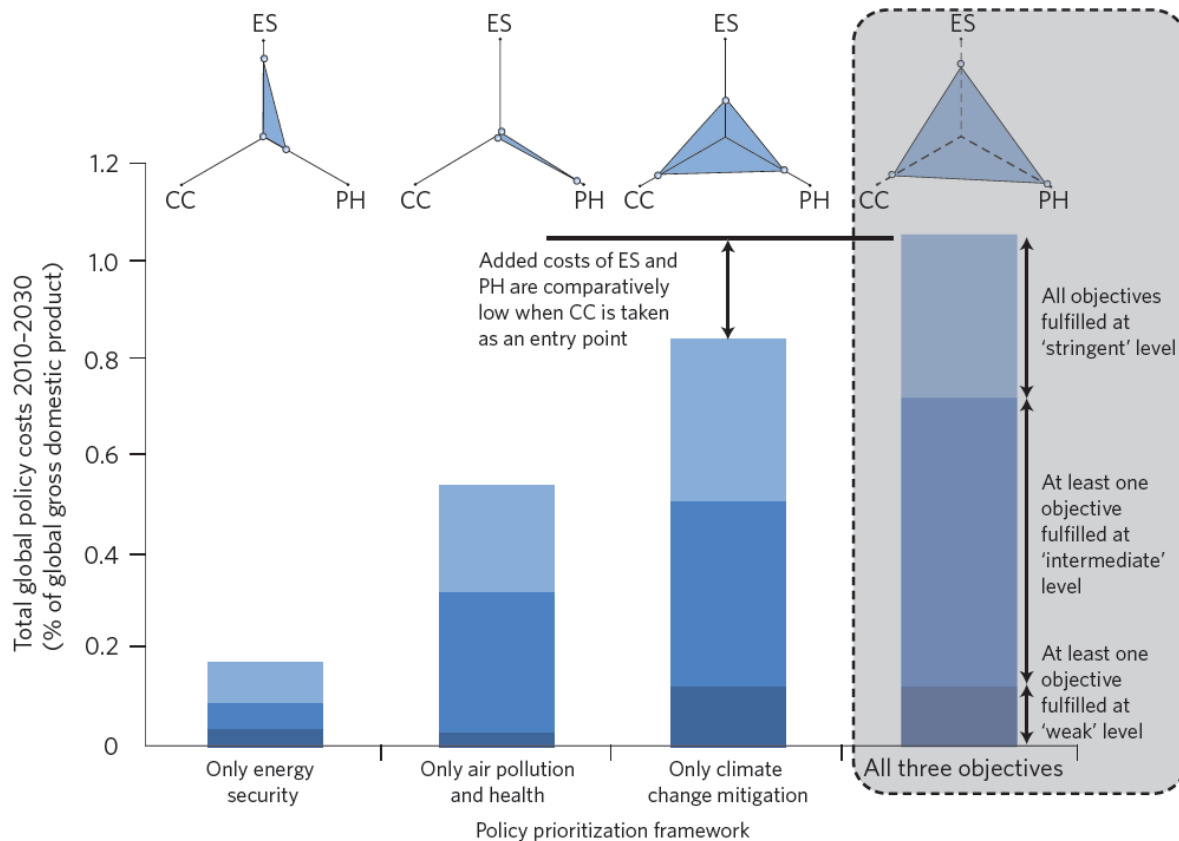
# Opportunity 4: More positive arguments for mitigation

- Reducing short-lived climate pollutants is expected to save almost 2.5 million lives per year, and avoid 0.5C of warming by 2050
- Sustainable urban transport – could cut heart disease and stroke by 10-20%, breast cancer by 12-13%, depression and dementia by 5-8% in developed countries - greater gains in developing countries

Lancet, 2009; WHO, 2011, 2012; CCAC 2013 .



# Opportunity 5: More cost-effective policy



**For the top 20 emitting countries, pricing carbon is in their own national interests, due mainly to health cobenefits. Nationally optimum pricing of cobenefits would reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 13.5 percent.**

*IMF working paper, September 2014*

McCollum et al, Nature Climate Change, October 2011

# Creating a positive vision for the future

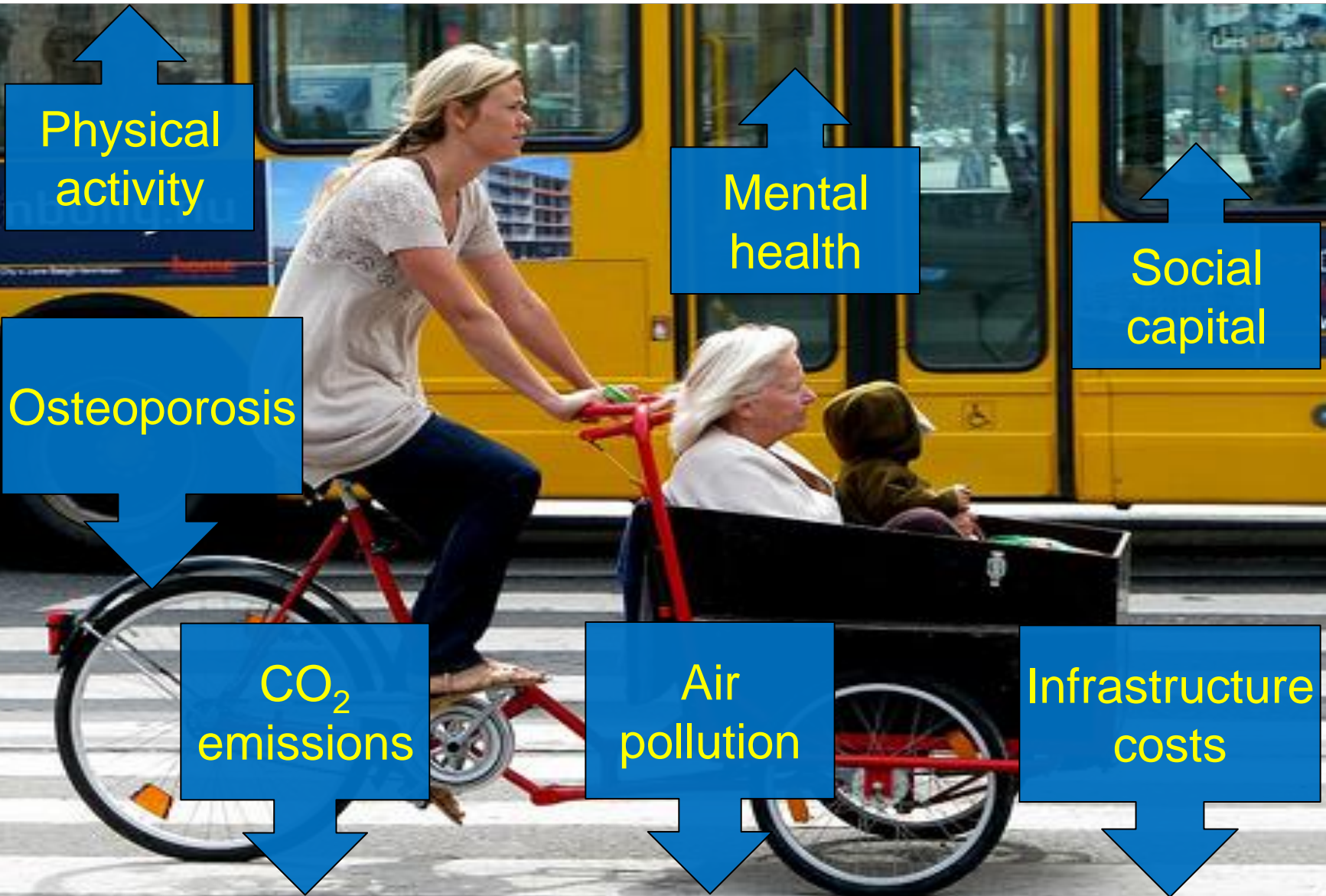


Photo: Copenhagen cycle chic



# Conclusions

- Health is part of the original justification for action on climate change
- A future without mitigating and adapting to climate change is unacceptable for health
- Health remains weakly connected to international climate change policy – though this is improving
- Stronger linkages should help promote environment, health, economic (i.e. sustainable development) objectives.



