



Our Planet, Our Health: Creating Well-being Societies and Making Peace with Nature

Opening Remarks

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Annual Conference**

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**Just a quick
reminder. . . .**



. . . this is what it's all about



**The Earth's natural
systems are the
ultimate
determinant of our
health**



**“the state of the planet is
broken. Humanity is waging
war on nature.
This is suicidal.”**

***Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, at Columbia
University’s World Leaders Forum, December 2nd
2020***



World Health Day 2022

7 April 2022

Our planet, our health





“On World Health Day 2022, WHO will focus global attention on urgent actions needed to

keep humans and the planet healthy
and foster a movement to

create societies focused on well-being.”

<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2022>



Our conference themes

- **Making Peace with Nature: A ‘top, top, priority’ for Public Health**
- **Bringing an Ecojustice/Eco-social Equity Perspective to Public Health**
- **Creating a Wellbeing Society: An Essential Role for Public Health**
- **Creating Wellbeing Communities: Local Practice and Action for Planetary Health**



Challenges and responses

- **Our Day 1 plenaries are mainly focused on the main challenges we face**
 - The threat to wellbeing, locally and globally
 - The threat to equity, locally and globally
- **Our Day 2 plenaries are mainly focused on responses to those challenges**
 - Creating a Wellbeing society and economy in harmony with nature
 - Creating Wellbeing communities in harmony with nature



1. Making Peace with Nature

- **“Making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century. It must be the top, top priority for everyone, everywhere”.**

*Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General,
at Columbia University's World Leaders Forum,
December 2nd 2020*

- **And that, of course, includes public health**



Climate change is “the single biggest health threat facing humanity”

WHO, COP26, 2021

The world is in “a life-or-death struggle” for survival as “climate chaos gallops ahead”

**UN Secretary General,
October 2022**

“We are in the fight of our lives and we are losing . . . We can sign a climate solidarity pact, or a collective suicide pact,”

UN Secretary General, COP27



COP27

**SHARM EL-SHEIKH
EGYPT 2022**



Reconciliation with the Earth – The TRC

- **“Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, from an Aboriginal perspective, also requires reconciliation with the natural world. If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy the natural world, then reconciliation remains incomplete.”**
- **“This is a perspective that we as Commissioners have repeatedly heard: that reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the Earth.”**



Ask yourself . . .

What would it mean in my working life and in my family life to make peace with nature?

What would that look like?

What would I do?



2. Bringing an Ecojustice/Eco-social Equity Perspective to Public Health



The triple crisis and health

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres issued a call for action against a “triple planetary crisis”

- **the climate emergency – “that is killing and displacing ever more people each year”**
- **biodiversity loss – which threatens “more than three billion people”**
- **pollution and waste, “that is costing some nine million lives a year”.**

Stockholm +50 Conference, June 2022



Climate change and health inequity

- **“the people whose health is being harmed first and worst by the climate crisis are the people who contribute least to its causes, and who are least able to protect themselves and their families against it - people in low-income and disadvantaged countries and communities.”**

WHO's COP26 Special Report on Climate Change and Health, Oct 2021



Biodiversity loss and health inequity

- **“The projected decline in biodiversity will affect all people, but it will have a particularly detrimental effect on indigenous peoples and local communities, and the world’s poor and vulnerable, given their reliance on biodiversity for their wellbeing”**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2020)



Pollution and health inequity

- **Pollution disproportionately kills the poor and the vulnerable.**
- **Nearly 92% of pollution-related deaths occur in low-income and middle-income countries**
- **In countries at every income level, disease caused by pollution is most prevalent among minorities and the marginalised.**
- **Children are at high risk of pollution-related disease**

The Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health, 2017



Ask yourself . . .

What would it mean in my working life and in my family life to remedy eco-injustice and create eco-social equity ?

What would that look like?

What would I do?



3. Creating a Wellbeing Society



The Geneva Charter for Well-being

- **“expresses the urgency of creating sustainable well-being societies, committed to achieving equitable health now and for future generations without breaching ecological limits.”**
- **“A healthy planet is essential to the health and well-being of current and future generations and for enabling all to flourish.”**



health promotion response

- **Value, respect and nurture planet Earth and its ecosystems**
- **Design an equitable economy that serves human development within planetary and local ecological boundaries**
- **Develop healthy public policy for the common good**
- Achieve universal health coverage
- Address the impacts of digital transformation

Geneva Charter for Well-being



- **“A healthy planet is essential to the health and well-being of current and future generations and for enabling all to flourish. Well-being societies prioritize a rapid, just transition to a low-carbon economy . . . provide access to clean energy for all, enhance biodiversity, reduce resource depletion and pollution, support harmonious relations between humans and Nature, and center Indigenous knowledge and leadership.”**



- **“Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their [...] lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard”**

***Article 25 of the United Nations
Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous
Peoples***



- **“We call on the health promotion community and the wider global community to make space for and privilege Indigenous peoples’ voices and Indigenous knowledges in taking action with us to promote the health of Mother Earth and sustainable development for the benefit of all.”**

Waiora – Indigenous Peoples’ Statement for Planetary Health and Sustainable Development, IUHPE, 2019



Ask yourself . . .

What would it mean in my working life and in my family life to create a society based on human and planetary wellbeing??

What would that look like?

What would I do?



4. Creating Wellbeing Communities: Local Practice and Action for Planetary Health



Ask yourself . . .

What would it mean in my working life and in my family life to create a community based on human and planetary wellbeing??

What would that look like?

What would I do?



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