5.M. Workshop: Mental Health and Climate change - Challenges and Opportunities

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Climate Change affects population health directly and indirectly, not only physical, but mental health also. Mental health and environment are closely linked to each other. Yet, so far the connections and relations have often been overlooked. Health and climate change are closely linked to macro-economics, energy policy, urbanization, demographic factor, and mental status of population also.
The Lancet Commission specified that the future trends of climate change represent an unacceptably high and potentially catastrophic risk to human health. Direct effects of climate change, are different: heat stress, floods, drought, storms etc. Indirect effects include overwhelming the population with increased disease vectors, air pollution, undernutrition, food insecurity, but also climate displacement, migration and mental disorders. Mental health and the impact of climate change on mental health becomes the focus of interest of the health professionals and scientists.
The aim of the workshop is to bring together these two areas of research and enable innovation. Mental Health and Climate Change should be concerned through Challenges and Opportunities.
Sustainable future for human population could be achievable with strengthening adaptation, but also mitigation activities. Changing mind-set of our and future generation, not only through adaptation but intensively through mitigation of climate change is very important. It is difficult, but necessary. The question for all of us is: can we lead through examples and actions? Changing mind-set related to climate change is a mental health and societal issue. Long term result of such actions should be less burden of mental disorders. It is important to note that climate change solutions will improve the quality of our air and food but also enhance children’s cognitive abilities and strengthen mental health.

The important question for public health professionals is can we produce resilient communities in future, new generation more responsible for climate change mitigation and with strength enough mental health capacity?

Key messages:

- Changing mind-set related to climate change is a mental health and societal issue. Long term result of such actions should be less burden of mental disorders.
- Can we produce resilient communities in future, new generation more responsible for climate change mitigation and with strength enough mental health capacity?