

THE LANCET COMMISSION ON POLLUTION AND HEALTH

Pollution – the largest environmental cause of disease and premature death in the world today

AN OPEN LETTER

Commission Co-Chairs:



PHILIP J. LANDRIGAN, MD
Arnhold Institute for Global Health,
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount
Sinai, New York, NY, USA



RICHARD FULLER, BE
President, Pure Earth (formerly
Blacksmith Institute), New York, NY,
USA; Global Alliance on Health and
Pollution, New York, NY, USA

It is time to put pollution on the map.

Pollution accounts for 16% of all deaths worldwide – 3 times more deaths than AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined; and 15 times more than all wars and other forms of violence. In the most severely affected countries, pollution accounts for more than 1 in 4 deaths.

These are the facts. And there's much more in the new report from *The Lancet* Commission on Pollution and Health, the first report of its kind to quantify the cost of pollution, and the cost of inaction against pollution, measured in lives, money, and lost opportunity for sustainable development.

For too long, pollution has been sidelined, overshadowed, ignored by the world, in part because it is a complicated topic with many causes, and as many outcomes. Often it kills slowly, and indirectly, hiding its tracks.

With this report, we bring pollution out of the shadows. This report is the result of two years of collective work from ourselves and our colleagues around the world, representing some of the world's most influential leaders, researchers and practitioners in the fields of pollution management, environmental health and sustainable development.

We, the authors, present this report and call on the world—decision makers, business leaders, international agencies, funders, governments, students, teachers, everyone—to act now to take control of pollution. This is one global problem that can be solved.

This report does not just tell us why we have to take up arms. More importantly, it tells us how to win the war. It is a battle we cannot lose. We just have to fight it.

Co-Chairs of *The Lancet* Commission on Pollution and Health

[Read the report, key findings and solutions](#)

Commissioners

Commission Co-Chair:

Philip J. Landrigan, MD

Arnhold Institute for Global Health, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, USA

Commission Co-Chair:

Richard Fuller, BE

President, Pure Earth (formerly Blacksmith Institute), New York, NY, USA; Global Alliance on Health and Pollution, New York, NY, USA

Neric Acosta, PhD

Office of the President, Manila, Philippines

Olusoji Adeyi, DrPH

Health, Nutrition & Population Global Practice, The World Bank Group, Washington, DC, USA

Robert Arnold, PhD

Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA

Niladri Basu, PhD

Canada Research Chair in Environmental Health Sciences and Associate Professor, Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; Adjunct Professor, University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

Abdoulaye Bibi Baldé, MS

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Dakar, Senegal

Roberto Bertolini, MD

Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks of the European Commission, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg; Office of the Minister of Health, Ministry of Public Health, Doha, Qatar

Stephan Bose-O'Reilly, MD

Institute and Outpatient Clinic for Occupational, Social and Environmental Medicine, University Hospital of LMU Munich, Germany; Department of Public Health, Health Services Research and Health Technology, Hall in Tirol, Austria

Jo Ivey Boufford, MD

New York Academy of Medicine, New York, NY, USA

Patrick Breyse, PhD

Department of Environmental Health Sciences and Engineering, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD, USA

Thomas Chiles, PhD

Department of Biology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, USA

Professor Doctor Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol, PhD

Chulabhorn Research Institute, Bangkok, Thailand

Awa Marie Coll-Seck, MD

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Dakar, Senegal

Maureen Cropper, PhD

Resources for the Future, Washington, DC, USA; Department of Economics, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

Julius Fobil, DrPH

Department of Biological, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, School of Public Health, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana

Valentin Fuster, MD

Mount Sinai Heart, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, USA; Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Cardiovasculares Carlos III (CNIC), Madrid, Spain

Michael Greenstone, PhD

Department of Economics, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA

Andy Haines, FMedSci

Department of Social and Environmental Health Research and Department of Population Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK

David Hanrahan, MSc

Pure Earth, New York, NY, USA

David Hunter, MBBS

Nuffield Department of Population Health, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Mukesh Khare, PhD

Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, India

Alan J. Krupnick, PhD

Resources for the Future, Washington, DC, USA

Bruce Lanphear, MD

Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, Canada

Bindu Lohani, PhD

Centennial Group, Washington, DC, USA; The Resources Center, Lalitpur, Nepal

Keith Martin, MD

Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), Washington, DC, USA

Karen Mathiasen, MALD

Office of the US Executive Director, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, USA

Maureen McTeer, LL.M.

Faculty of Common Law, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, Canada

Christopher Murray, MD

Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Seattle, WA, USA

J. Ndahimananjara, MD

Ministry of Environment, Ecology and Forests, Antananarivo, Madagascar

Frederica Perera, DrPH

Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health, Department of Environmental Health Sciences, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, NY, USA

Janez Potočnik, PhD

UN International Resource Panel, Paris, France; SYSTEMIQ, London, UK

Alexander S. Preker, PhD

Department of Environmental Medicine and Global Health, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, USA; Department of Health Policy and Management, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, NY, USA; Health Investment & Financing Corporation, New York, NY, USA

Jairam Ramesh, MS

Parliament of India, New Delhi, India

Johan Rockström, PhD

Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Carlos Salinas, PhD

Former President of Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico

Leona Samson, PhD

Department of Biological Engineering and Department of Biology, Center for Environmental Health Sciences, Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA

Karti Sandilya, LLB

Pure Earth, New York, NY, USA

Peter D. Sly, DSC

Children's Health and Environment Program, Child Health Research Centre, the University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

Kirk R. Smith, PhD

Environmental Health Sciences Division, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

Achim Steiner, MA

Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Richard Stewart, LLB

Guarini Center on Environmental, Energy, and Land Use Law, New York University, New York, NY, USA

William Suk, PhD

Division of Extramural Research and Training, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, Research Triangle Park, NC, USA

Onno Van Schayck, PhD

Care and Public Health Research Institute, Maastricht University, Maastricht, the Netherlands

Gautam N. Yadama, PhD

School of Social Work, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, USA

Kandeh Yumkella, PhD

United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Vienna, Austria

Ma Zhong, PhD

School of Environment and Natural Resources, Renmin University of China, Beijing, China

