

PLANETARY HEALTH

Impact of climate crisis on human health

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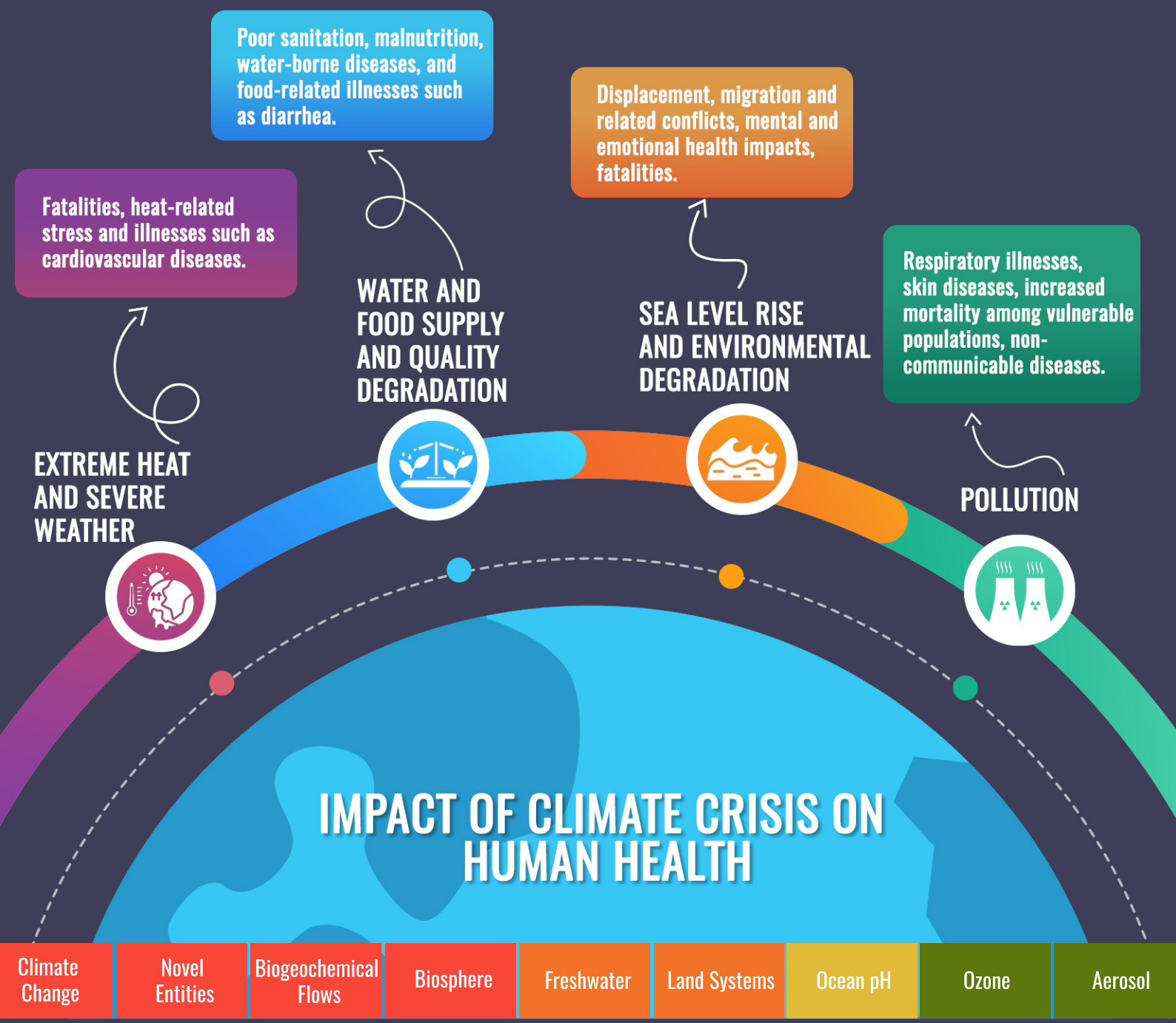
Planetary health is a concept that entails **healthy, stable, and resilient Earth systems as conditions necessary for human and ecological well-being**.

Nine scientific processes required in regulating these systems have been identified: **Climate change, Novel entities, Modification of biogeochemical flows, Stratospheric Ozone Depletion, Land system change, Freshwater change, Ocean acidification, Atmospheric Aerosol Loading, and Biosphere integrity**.

In 2024, six of the nine planetary boundaries had been breached, with ocean acidification on the verge of boundary transgression as well, highlighting the rapidly worsening crisis. It has been acknowledged that the transgression of these boundaries and the impact of the climate crisis on human well-being is now observable, wide-ranging and destabilizing, with issues of extreme heat, pollution and water and food supply disruptions having direct negative outcomes on human health.



FIGURE 1: THE IMPACT OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS ON HUMAN HEALTH



There is now a critical need to address the **impact of the climate crisis on human health**, not just in rapid action towards mitigation and adaptation of climate change, in order to reduce the accelerated transgression of planetary boundaries, but also **through a planetary health perspective**. By using the planetary health concept to address the climate crisis, crucial progress can be made in **assessing health vulnerabilities**, integrating health into environmental programmes and **building resilient and sustainable health systems**.

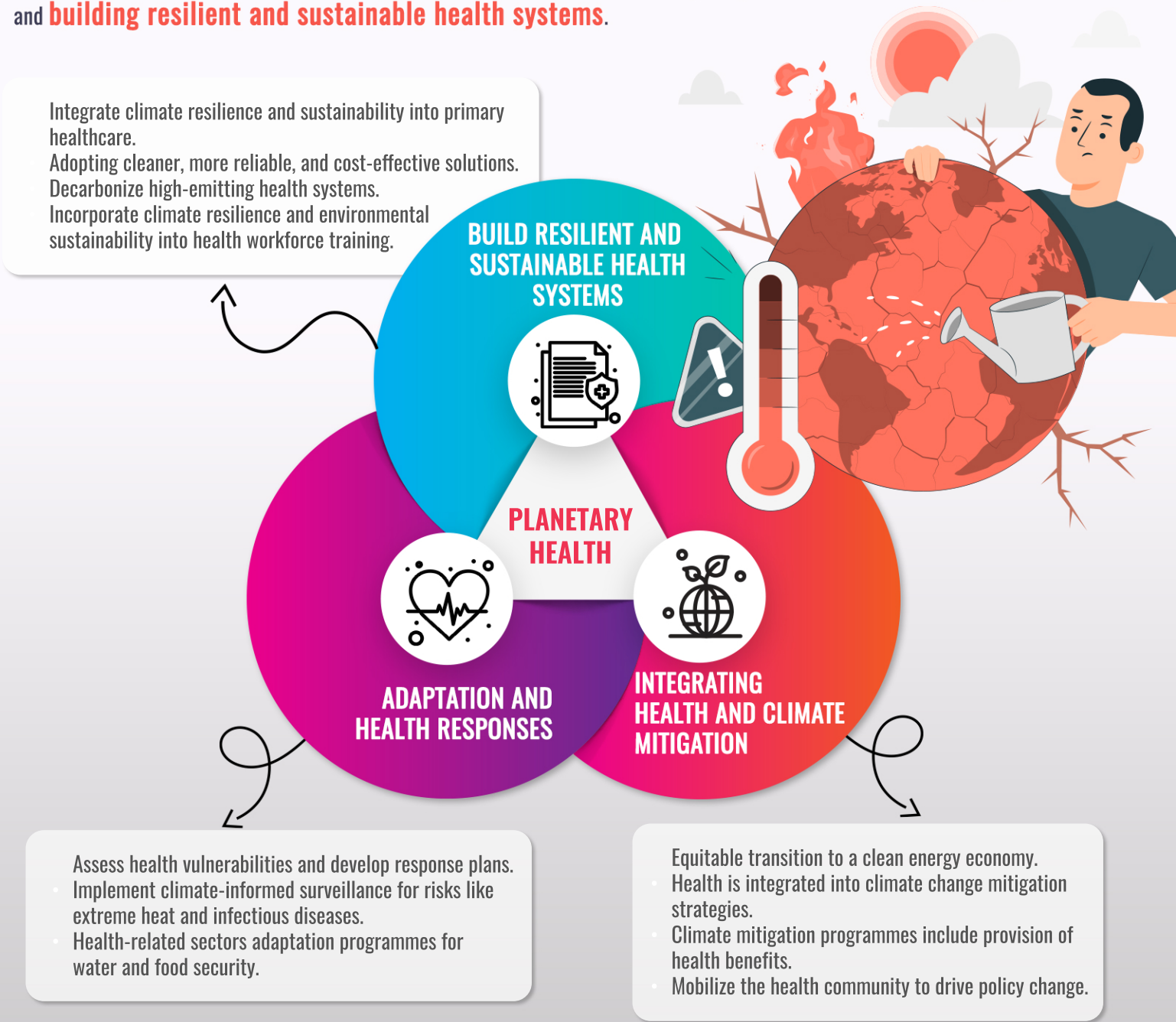


FIGURE 2: A PLANETARY HEALTH FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING CLIMATE IMPACTS ON HUMAN HEALTH

Sources for both Figures 1 and 2: Compiled from

- The Planetary Health Check. 2025. "The Planetary Health Check 2024." Planetary Boundaries Science and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, <https://www.planetaryhealthcheck.org/>, accessed 07 March 2025.
- US Environmental Protection Agency. 2025. "Climate Change and Human Health." United States Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/climateimpacts/climate-change-and-human-health>, accessed 07 March 2025.
- World Health Organization. 2023. "Climate Change and Health." World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>, accessed 07 March 2025