

The Triple Planetary Crisis and Planetary Health Equity: A Call to Action for Addiction Medicine Clinicians

Abstract Body

The Gaia hypothesis (Lovelock, JE) postulates that all organisms and their inorganic surroundings behave as a single entity. With this viewpoint, we can say our planet has a fever that is disrupting essential ecological systems and impacting the life that relies on it. The primary etiology of the planet's fever is well-recognized with a 2021 paper summarizing 3000 climate-related papers (randomized from a total of 88,125 papers) identifying that *"the scientific consensus on human-caused contemporary climate change—expressed as a proportion of the total publications—exceeds 99% in the peer reviewed scientific literature"*. The study authors concluded that the reality of anthropogenic climate change *"is no more in contention among scientists than is plate tectonics or evolution"*¹.

As organisms living on the planet, humans are experiencing *"global systemic crises resulting from converging impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, inadequate global health infrastructures, and stark inequalities"*.² These intersecting issues are a result of humanity's addiction to consumption and economic growth, and our anthropocentric way of commodifying nature and disrespecting its role in the health of the planet. This talk will provide factual information on the triple planetary crisis. It will highlight how our patients are amongst those *already* suffering. Conference participants who are in any of the stages of change, with respect to appreciation and action on the triple crisis, are encouraged to attend as there are different levels of care depending on "where they are at". The talk will challenge attendees to reflect on their own contribution to the problem and provide potential planetary health solutions to ensure a safe and equitable space for future generations who inherit the earth.

Learning Objective #1

Summarize how that the health of the planet, and the organisms that rely on it, are interconnected and in distress.

Learning Objective #2

Explain how climate change and pollution are affecting our patients already and how we have a role in mitigating the problem.

Learning Objective #3

Practice and develop solutions that benefit planetary and human health.³

Reference #1

Lynas M., Houlton B., Perry S. "Greater than 99% consensus on human caused climate change in the peer-reviewed scientific literature" *Environ. Res. Lett.* (2021) 16 114005

Reference #2

Falk J., Colwell R. et al. "Beyond 2020: converging crises demand integrated responses" *Sustainability Science* (2021) 16(2): 691–693.

Reference #3

Howard C. et al. "Learning to treat the climate emergency together: Social tipping interventions by the health community" *Lancet Planet Health* (2023) 7: e251–64