Photo: The Hans India

Call to Action

Climate Action Working Group (CAWG)

IAPB The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

Why act on climate change?

Photo: Sydney Morning Herald

Photo: Light for the World

- It is a global human health issue and it's happening now

- Need for mitigation and adaptation strategies from health care sector

- Disproportionately impacts marginalized and vulnerable populations

  - Women and girls
  - People with disabilities including vision impairment
  - People living in remote and rural areas

2

How will it impact eye health?

- Predicted increase in
  - trachoma infections
  - onchocerciasis infections
  - cataracts
  - skin cancers, corneal and conjunctival lesions
  - eye injuries
  - age-related macular degeneration
  - glaucoma
  - allergic eye diseases

Photo: Sightsavers

How will it impact eye care services?

- Disruption
  of eye care services

- Severe impact on
  supply chains
  - Raw material extraction
  - Manufacture capabilities
  - Increased competition/product availability
  - Impeded logistic supply lines
  - Cost increases

Photo: Fred Hollows Foundation

How does eye care contribute to climate change?

Healthcare is responsible for 4.4% of global emissions including unsustainable procurement and poor waste management
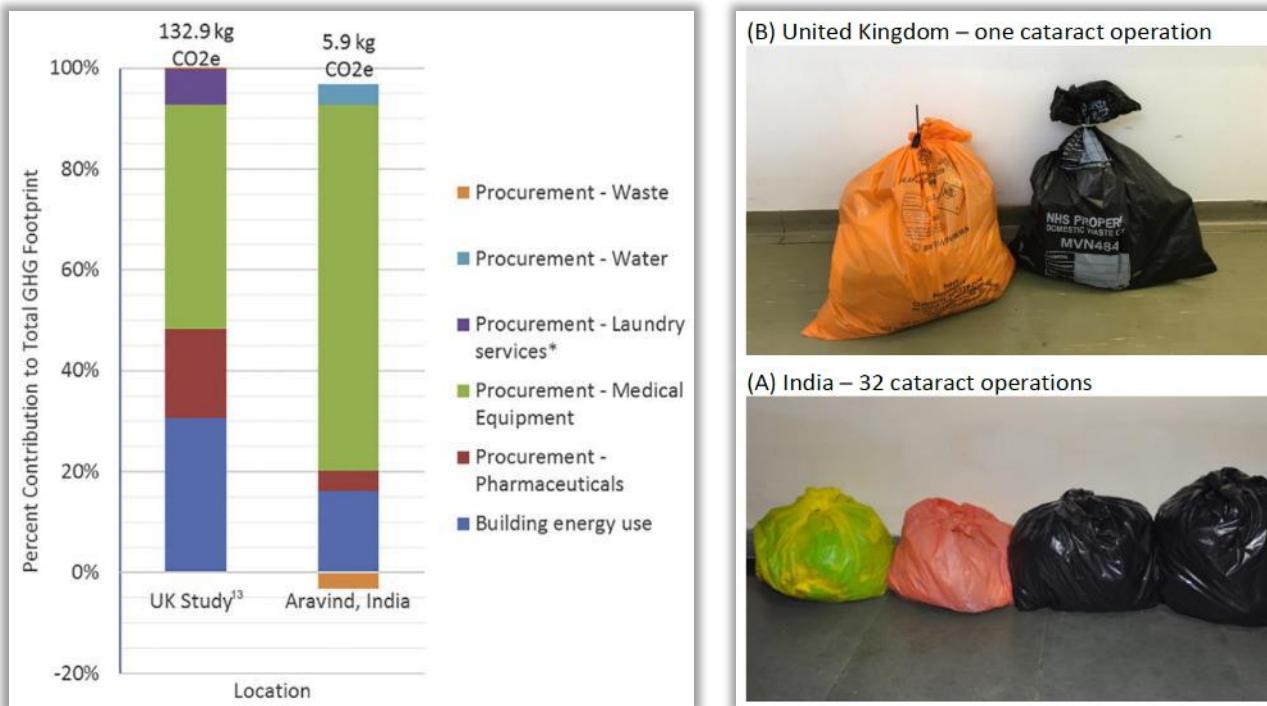
Thiel et al. showed that the same cataract surgery yields 30x more emissions in UK than compared to when it was performed in India

Political drive to address climate change

The UN has declared climate change as a global emergency

WHO has stated that climate change affects the social and environmental determinants of health

The Lancet Commission on Global Eye Health added Planetary Health as a key component to improving quality of eye care

What action is IAPB taking?

- Established Climate Action Working Group in 2017
- 2-day workshop during 2019 IAPB Council of Members to define the priority issues for eye health
- Declared a climate emergency in 2021
- Encouraging the sector to take climate action
- UN Resolution linking eye health to the SDGs across economic, social, environmental pillars in 2021

Call to Action

- Call out to the sector to take action

- Leads the sector to mitigate our own carbon footprint

- Helps to mobilize and support other IAPB members in responding to environmental sustainability and climate change

The Guide

- Aligned to the Call to Action

- A comprehensive practical guide developed by the Climate Action Working Group

- Provides detailed guidance to eye care sector on ways they can reduce their environmental impact and support climate resilience

10 Key Areas of Action

Lead

Advocate

Procure sustainably

Reduce the use of fossil fuels

Conserve water

Reduce and safely dispose of waste

Reduce and green the travel

Follow the 4 Principles of sustainable clinical practice

Embed environmental sustainability in education

Focus your research

1. Lead

Why?

- Recognises the urgency
- Shows commitment
- To achieve leadership in environmental sustainability there are four key pillars: accountability, transparency, compliance and equity

How?

- Acknowledge a climate emergency and commit to climate action publicly
- Prioritise and resource climate change initiatives,
- Identify a sponsor/ champion
- Develop a policy and strategy
- Engage all departments in the development of an environmental sustainability strategy
- Establish a framework for regular monitoring
- Develop or join cross-sector coalitions
- Consider how vulnerable populations can actively participate

2. Advocate

Why?	How?
• Creates awareness • Collaboration among NGOs and eye care providers will offer peer support and accelerate implementation	• Embed environmental sustainability into your advocacy • Declare a climate emergency to raise awareness • Make every contact count (advocate at events/meetings/clients/other practitioners) • 'Use' your voice - eye health practitioners are well respected. • Collaborate and include representatives from vulnerable populations in your discussions and plans • Show young people and vulnerable populations that the health sector increasingly cares deeply about the future of the planet

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

*Linked with **SDG 17:** Diverse partners can also mobilise resources and combine their voice to advocate for increased attention and investment in sustainability efforts.*

# 3. Procure sustainably

Why?	How?
• **71% GHG emissions of the global health sector are associated with the supply chain** • Consider entire lifecycle including raw material extraction, use of resources in production, transportation and logistics, to end-of-life and disposal	• Engage with suppliers and manufacturers • Develop a sustainable procurement policy • Assess the impact of products and services • Explore the potential for collective bargaining. • Consider reusables vs single use • Buy locally • Encourage a plant-based diet in hospitals and meetings • Manage waste and hazardous chemicals • Develop training in sustainable procurement • Training of local staff for basic maintenance of equipment

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

*Linked with **SDG 12**: the 2019 update has warned that worldwide total and individual material consumption has expanded rapidly, seriously jeopardizing the achievement of the goal.*
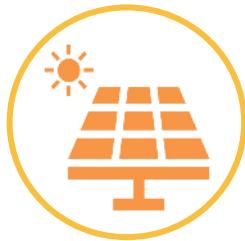
4. Reduce the use of fossil fuels

Why?

- Energy used in healthcare facilities contributes to around 25% of healthcare's global carbon footprint

Solar panels on Aravind Eye Hospital, Pondicherry, India

How?

- Minimise electricity consumption through
  - building design
  - energy efficient heating/cooling, lighting, equipment and appliances
  - behaviour change campaigns
- Procure electricity from a renewable energy provider
- Where appropriate generate your own electricity through solar

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

*Linked with **SDG 7**: the renewable energy share of total final energy consumption gradually increased from 16.6% in 2010 to 17.5% in 2016. However, much faster change is required to meet climate goals.*

5. Conserve water

| Why?	How?
• 50% of health-care facilities lack access to piped water • Insufficient water management has a deleterious impact on health	• Minimise water use • Reuse water - explore the collection and use of rainwater and grey water cycling • Monitor pipes and taps to minimise leakages • Invest in effective wastewater treatment

6. Reduce and safely dispose of waste

Why?

- Healthcare waste treatment and disposal can pose direct risks to health
- Although 85% healthcare waste is non-hazardous, its disposal still has an impact on the environment e.g GHG emissions produced by biodegradable waste in landfill are especially high

How?

- Where possible adopt a circular approach.
- Follow the waste hierarchy 'reduce, reuse, repair, recycle'
- Make waste disposal at your healthcare facility easy
- Consider for your local context the most appropriate option for safe disposal of hazardous medical waste

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
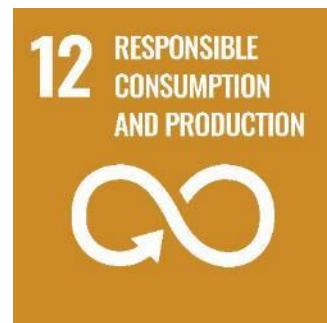
*Linked with **SDG 12**: is advocating for environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, to significantly reduce air, water and soil pollution, minimising their adverse impacts on human health and the environment..*

7. Reduce and green the travel

Why?

- Transport – business travel, operational transport and supply chain logistics – contributes globally 7% to healthcare's carbon footprint
- Generally, healthcare facilities, especially bigger, high-volume hospitals, generate a huge amount of traffic

How?

- Question the necessity of journeys e.g. COVID-19 has prompted us to connect with others with reduced travel
- Consider video conferencing as an alternative
- Consider tele-medicine where possible
- Consider opportunities for active travel and public transport
- Consider options for reducing the number of journeys
- Advocate for better public transit in urban areas
- Conduct a commuter survey to ascertain how staff travel to the office

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

*Linked with **SDG 11**: In 2016, 9 in 10 people living in urban areas still breathed air that did not meet the World Health Organization's air quality guidelines for particulate matter*

8. Follow the 4 principles of sustainable clinical practice

What?

- Sustainable clinical practice is underpinned by four principles
    1. Disease prevention and health promotion
    2. Patient education and patient empowerment
    3. Lean service delivery
    4. Preferential use of medical technologies with lower environmental impact

How?

- Support, promote and/or implement prevention programmes
- Review opportunities for engaging patients in their own treatment
- Review your service delivery models
- Review medical technologies
- Support, promote and/or implement plant-based diets which are important for general health

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

*Linked with **SDG 3**: is advocating to end epidemics of communicable diseases by 2030, halve the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020, and achieve universal health coverage.*

9. Embed environmental sustainability in education

Why?

- Climate action/ environmental sustainability in healthcare is an emerging concept
- Is a holistic approach to medical care

How?

- Embed environmental sustainability in education training programmes
- Promote resources of environmental sustainability in eye health
- Make every event count.
- Develop training programmes and e-learning
- Continuing professional development in eye health
- Set up environmental or sustainability working groups within your organisation

13 CLIMATE ACTION

*Linked with **SDG 13:** Training and education in all key areas of sustainability in healthcare will be vital to support eye health organisations and providers to meet the public health challenge climate change poses.*

10. Focus your research

Why?

- Research into environmental sustainability in healthcare is still in its infancy, particularly in eye care.
- E.g. research indicates Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery has a lower carbon footprint than Phacoemulsification
- More data is required for evidence based interventions

How?

- Conduct more research in environmentally sustainable eye care practices
- Hot topics for further research include
  - Surgical techniques
  - Reusables versus single use
  - New service delivery modules and climate resilient infrastructure
  - Existing research evidence on the extent and nature of environmental impacts of health services

Case Study 1: KAA 1 - Lead

- **Issue:** Organisational recognition of climate emergency

- **Action:** Organisation wide steps:

  - Environmental impact assessment at project sites
  - Action plan developed (short and long term)
  - Implementation of Environment Policy
  - Internal working group
  - Publication of brief on 'Climate Change and Disability'

Rights-Based Climate Action:
Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Issue Brief – June 2020

Summary

► The impact of climate change as well as related natural disasters and resource conflicts is increasingly felt around the globe.

Key learnings

Input from experts

Setting targets

Implement step by step

Get buy-in from colleagues

Committed CEO

'Burn for it'
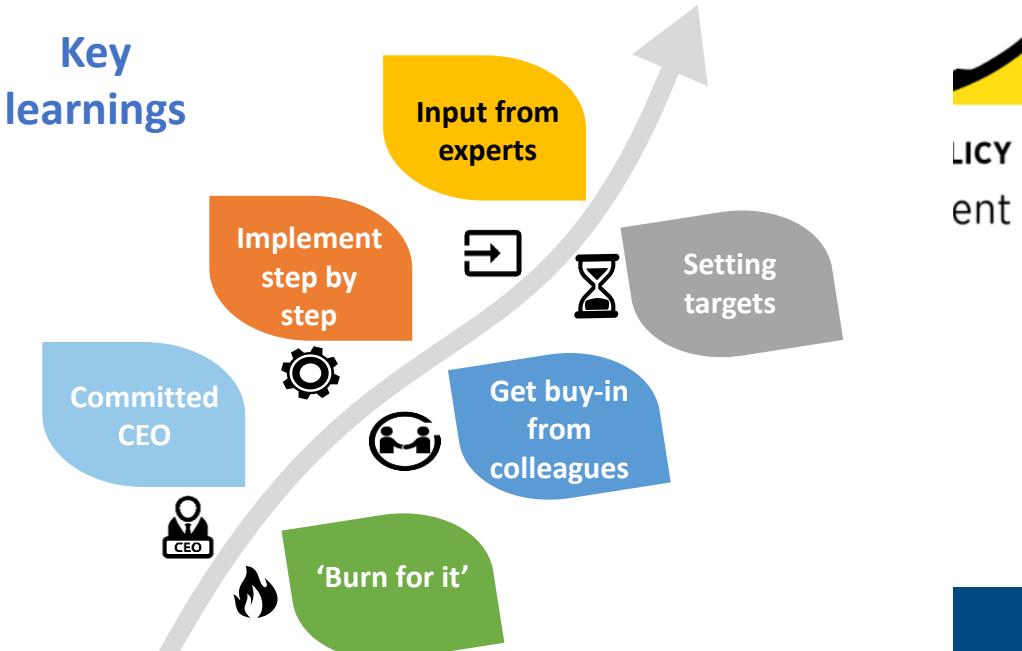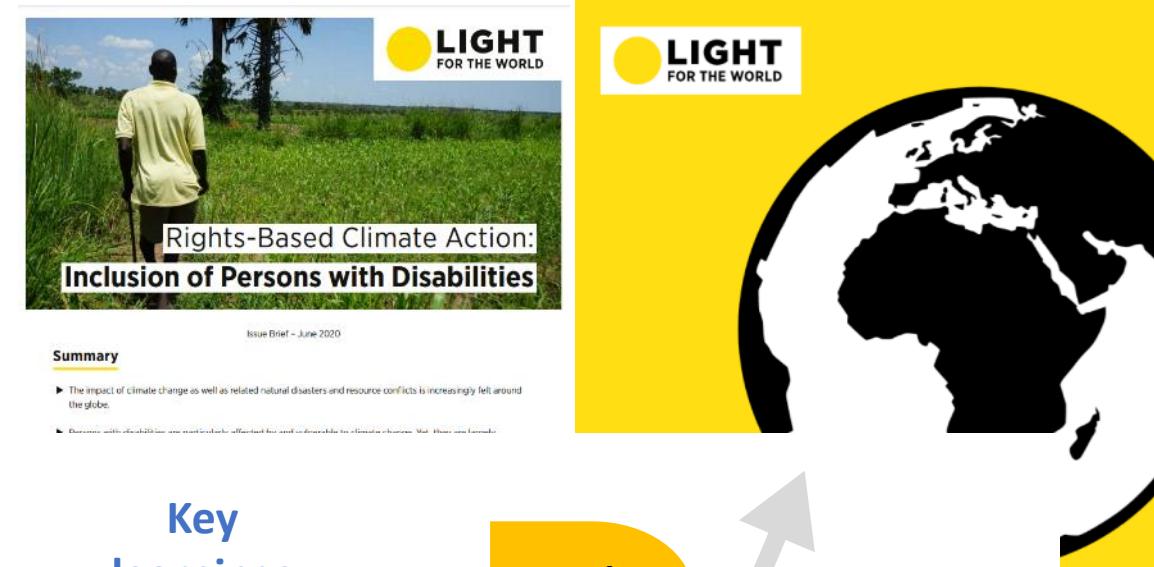
Case Study 2: KAA 6 - Reduce and safely dispose of waste

- Issue: Operation theatre waste

- Action:
  - Colour coded biohazard waste bins placed
  - Separate colour coded bins for recyclable waste installed
  - Waste sent to waste storage room
 - Waste processed appropriately (eg weekly recycling is collected)

Colour coded waste bins at Aravind Eye Hospital, Pondicherry, India

Case Study 3: KAA 9 Embed environmental sustainability in education

- Issue: Building staff awareness on environmental sustainability and actions

- Action:
  - Established Sustainability Working Group
  - Developed 'green office guides'
  - Developed policy and procedures for sustainability, e.g. in procurement
  - Internal blogs and knowledge sharing events

The Fred Hollows Foundation

Melbourne Office Green Guide
Sustainable Office Practices

IAPB Climate Action Working Group
#WorldEarthDay

NEW Resources on Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability in eye care

Read more

Lessons from case studies
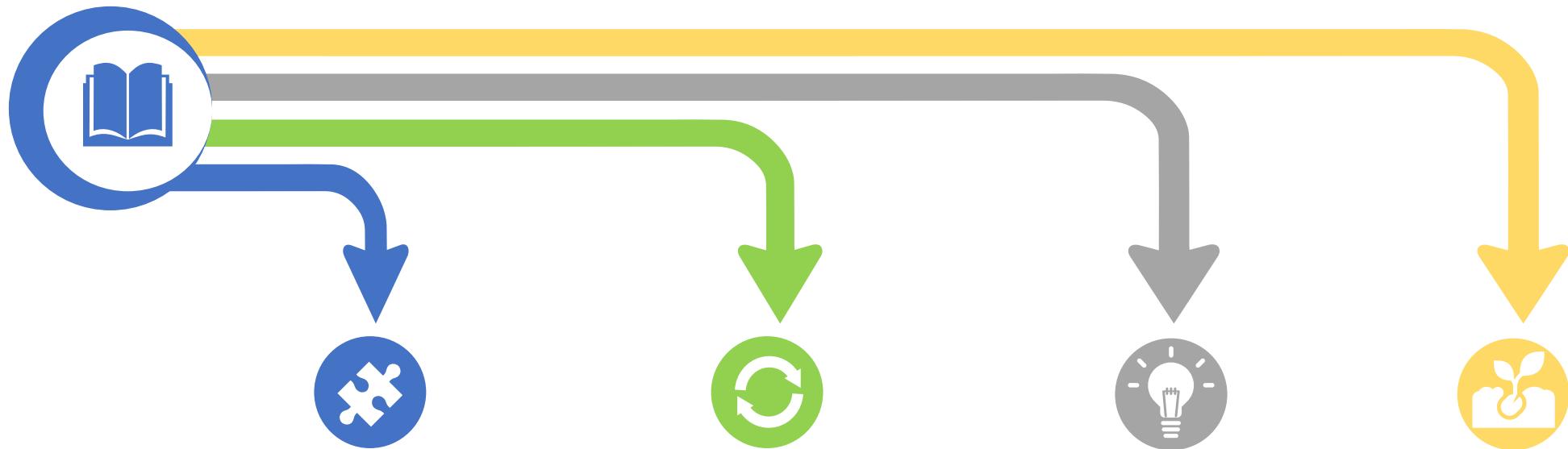
It is not an all or nothing initiative: individuals and organizations can make efforts according to their capacity

Small changes can catalyse larger changes

Small changes can make a big impact

Be hopeful, that with action we can do our bit to address climate change

Eye health programmes can become environmentally sustainable – we are all accountable

Going forward

Get informed

- Download the Guide for more information (iapb.org)

- Join the IAPB mailing list – alerts for key events and resources

Photo: Aravind Eye Hospital

Get involved

- Join the Communities of Practice

- Join IAPB's Climate Action Working Group