



SAMA Presentation to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Environment, Forestry and Fisheries on: **The Climate Change Bill**

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Date: 28 October 2022

INSERT HEADING

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Introduction & Overview
2. Health impacts of CC
3. Broad comments
4. Specific comments



Introduction & Overview



- **Overview of SAMA:**

- is a professional association for public and private sector medical practitioners
- and is registered as an independent, non-profit company.
- member of the World Medical Association (WMA) which represent 16million doctors world wide

Motivation to address Climate crisis:

- Climate change is an existential threat, and a **social determinant of health**. The 2018 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change labelled climate change as “***the biggest global health threat of the 21st century***”.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(21\)01787-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(21)01787-6/fulltext)

- It is recognized that climate change may increasingly threaten the achievement of universal health coverage.
- SAMA supports a shift to a decarbonized economy, with due regard to the imperatives of a just transition.

Introduction cont...



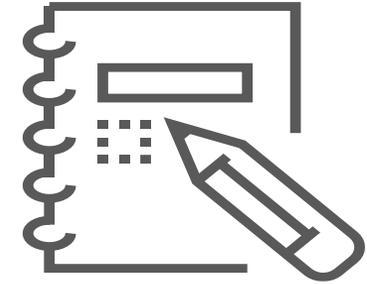
SAMA regards climate change as a priority topic on its Agenda:

- ✓ Member of the WHO Civil Society Working Group on Climate Change
- ✓ Member of the National Climate Change & Health Steering Committee
- ✓ Member of Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA)
- ✓ SAMA Climate Change policy structure
- ✓ SAMA Draft Policy on Climate Change
- ✓ Input on Climate Change **Policy** → **Green** Paper → **White** Paper → **Bill**
- ✓ Multiple articles in the SAMA internal publication, the SAMA Insider
- ✓ Actively participated at COP17 – Durban 2011; COP 27 – Egypt Nov 2022
- ✓ **Member of the World Medical Association (WMA):**

WMA climate change policies

- 1). *WMA Declaration of Delhi on Climate Change- 2009, 2017*
- 2). *WMA Resolution on Climate Emergency- 2019*
- 3). *WMA Resolution on Protecting the Future Generation's Right to Live in a Healthy Environment-2020*

In the lead-up to COP26, our organization signed key international documents:



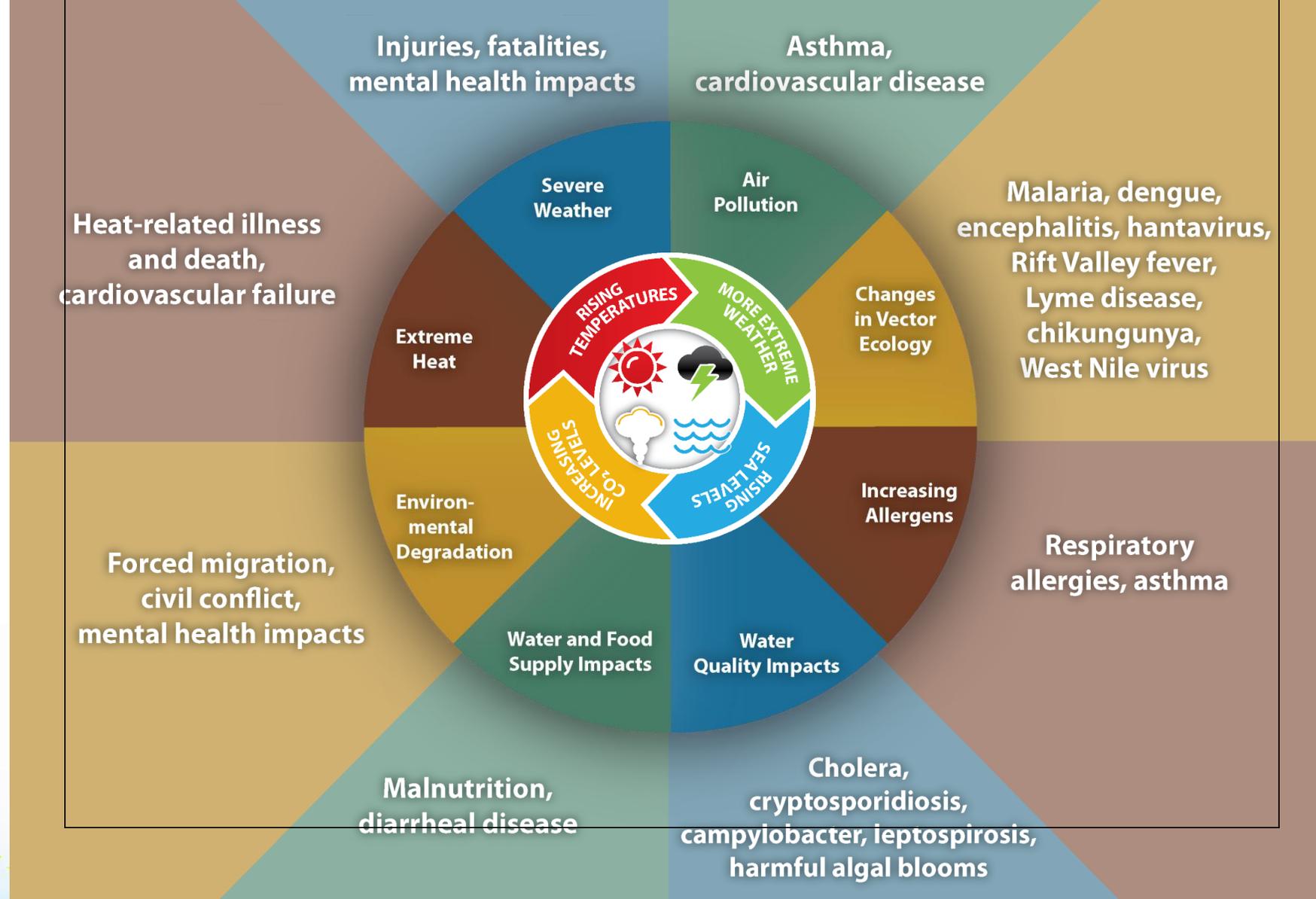
1. The international Call for a Healthy Recovery from COVID-19

2. Healthy Climate Prescription Letter

.... In collaboration with our key stakeholder organizations, namely the, Public Health Association of South Africa, Global Climate & Health Alliance and the World Health Organization.



Impact of Climate Change on Human Health





GENERAL COMMENTS on
the Climate Change Bill

The Preamble



Positives:

- The Preamble quotes key documents on climate change eg: the South African Constitution; the National Climate Change Response White Paper' the Paris agreement; South Africa's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).
- recognizes one's **Constitutional right** to an environment not harmful to their health and well-being (section 24 of the Constitution).
- Highlighting of the need for commitment to both **mitigation** and **adaptation** measures at the local and international levels.
- inclusion of both **mitigation** and **adaptation** in South Africa's updated nationally determined contribution (NDC) document
- acknowledges the special vulnerability of South Africa to the impacts of climate change

Challenges

- Neglecting rights-based approach to health and lack of emphasis of State's obligation to create an environment not harmful to people's health.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA notes, with concern, our country's unrelenting pursuit of climate-harming economic initiatives, including new coal-powered stations and mines, emission-intense economic projects, and continued exploration of fossil fuel deposits.



SPECIFIC COMMENTS on
the Climate Change Bill



Section 1[definitions]:

Challenge:

- **Definition of “person”**
- inclusion of a definition for “**person**”, which is quoted in several key definitions provided in the Bill, such as “carbon budget”, “direct greenhouse gas emissions”, “indirect greenhouse gas emissions”, and also in sections 20.1, 23.3.b, 24, among others
- use of this undefined term “person”, especially with respect to carbon budget obligations, can be quite confusing to the general public.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- This definition should be clear where “person” is meant to refer to a **juristic person** and not a natural person – which is most presumably the case in this Bill.

Section 3.e [integrated management]



Positive:

- principles of **integrated management**

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA recognise the interdependence of climate change and many sectors, including the Health sector, and recognises environmental factors as a key social determinant of health
- Climate change and its impacts on health can only be addressed through an integrated and multi-sectorial approach
- 'Whole of Government, Whole of society approach'

Section 3.f [vulnerable groups]



Positive:

- Highlighting of **Vulnerable groups**
- Identified in the Bill as women, especially poor and rural women, children, especially infants and child-headed families, the aged, the poor, **the sick** and the physically challenged.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA recognises the importance of climate justice as vulnerable groups are often affected the most.

Model 10 Members

Section 3.g &h [“cautious approach”]



Positives:

- Inclusion of cautious approach/ precautionary principle
- “which takes into account the limits of current knowledge about causes and effects of climate change and the consequences of decisions and actions in relation thereto”.(‘precautionary principle’, UNFCCC article 3.3)

Challenges

- Ensuring that the the precautionary is not used to postpone action and measures to address climate crisis.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA argues that there is already sufficient evidence of the loss & damage due to climate change to inspire adequate response action by our government.



Section 3.k [“Public awareness”]

Positives:

- The inclusion of public awareness
- There are low levels of awareness and attentiveness to climate change even among professionals.
- public awareness is a critical element for society’s adequate response to climate crisis.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

SAMA, in keeping with the World Medical Association policy positions on climate change, conforms to, climate change public awareness efforts should also be targeted at **doctors and other health professionals**

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Section 7.1[alignment of policies]



Positives:

- Inclusion of the mandate to 'review and if necessary revise, amend, coordinate and harmonise their policies and measures, programmes and decisions..'

Challenges

- This mandate does not clearly emphasise the role of the minister of Health Minister and the minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in aligning all inter/intra ministry policies to accommodate climate change.

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Section 7.1[alignment of policies]



SAMA noting and recommendation:

- **Harmonisation of policies** should not be confined within ministries (silo approach) but should cut across different ministries/sectors and also across state and non-state actors— which is the essence of the **whole of government, whole of society approach and the health-in-all-policies approach** (which is one of the mainstays of addressing social determinants of health).
- Clear emphasis of Role of minister of Health Minister and the minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in aligning all inter/intra ministry policies to accommodate climate change.

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Recommendation

Section 7.2[advisory role]



Positives:

- Inclusion of the clause that allows organised labour, civil society and business to “advise on the Republic’s climate change response, the mitigation of climate change impacts and adaptation to the effects of climate change towards the attainment of the just transition to a climate-resilient and low carbon economy and society”
- Clause allows organised labour, civil society and business to “advise on the Republic’s climate change response, the mitigation of climate change impacts and adaptation to the effects of climate change towards the attainment of the just transition to a climate-re

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA is committed to participating actively, and avails itself to working collaboratively with the government

Section 8 [Provincial and municipal forums]



Positives:

- Inclusion of provincial and municipal forums
- The foundation of climate structures and action is the grassroots, where climate change impacts are felt more

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA supports the engagement and planning of action with communities, communities are at the frontline of the climate assault and most affected.

Model

to members



Section 10, 11 & 12 [Presidential Climate Commission]

Positives:

- Existence of the Presidential Climate Commission.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA is available and requests participation in the Presidential Climate Commission.

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to members

Section 15 [wide stakeholder engagement]



Positives:

- Highlighting of needs assessments and formulation of implementation plans

Challenges

- needs assessments and formulation implementation plans should not be the sole assignment of government structures but must entail wide community consultation and participation at the local level

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA urges the government to enable the active participation of health sector representatives in needs assessments as well as in the creation and implementation of climate change response plans at the local and national levels.
- SAMA recognises that the Government must thoroughly engage residents of municipalities or geographical regions

Section 18.3c [Best available evidence]



Positives:

- Clear expression of the use of evidence

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA therefore fully supports the IPCC6's assertion that evidence of climate change as a threat to human well-being and planetary health is **unequivocal**

Section 18.4e [Community inclusion]



Positives:

- Highlighting engagement of local communities

Challenges

- inclusion of local communities in engagements should not be a matter of 'where relevant' but **always**

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA argues that the inclusion of local communities in engagements should **always present, consistent and continuous.**

Chapter 5 [Greenhouse gas emission & removals]



Positives:

- Government for being a signatory to various international climate change instruments and obligations

Challenges

- **Coal dependence** of the South African economy.
- South Africa's greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

SAMA noting and recommendation:

- SAMA agree with other stakeholders that **the country's emission reduction targets remain too weak. The national greenhouse gas emissions trajectory needs to be stringent enough.**



THANK YOU

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