



PLANETARY HEALTH

The caring relationship between us and the earth

One of the aspects that makes Earth unique is that it is the only planet where the presence of life forms has been confirmed. All the organisms coexist, influencing each other and determining the balance of life on Earth. Since our species has taken control over the other living beings, we now bear the responsibility for the imbalance we have created. We are attempting to re-establish a healing dialogue to address and heal the damage we have caused.

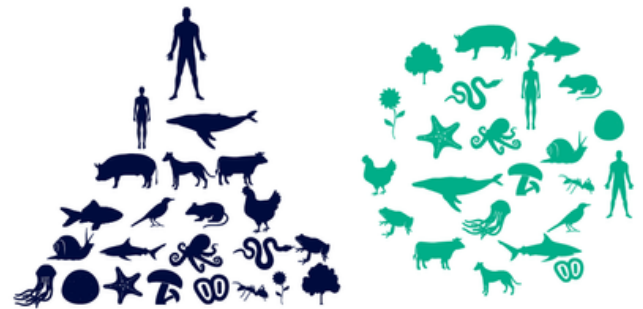


Figure 1: The antropochentrich and ecocentrinc paradigms, image of Esade

The novel planetary health approach try to tackle this challenge. Planetary health has been defined as an integrated approach of research and action that aims to give full meaning and implementation to a vision of health as a state of bio-psycho-social well-being and as a fundamental human right, in which health and illness are considered results of not only biological but also economic, social, political, cultural and environmental processes, transcending and exceeding the perspectives, interests and possibilities of individual nations (Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS, 2022).

Some distinctions

Planetary Health	International health	Public health
Focuses on issues that directly or indirectly affect health but that can transcend national boundaries	Focuses on health issues of countries other than one's own, especially those of low-income and middle-income	Focuses on issues that affect the health of the population of a particular community or country



The Earth Medical Record

We all know that the state of the Earth's health is seriously worrying. In recent decades, reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientists have become increasingly alarming, depicting catastrophic future scenarios. The uncontrolled acceleration of human development in the 20th century, driven by the massive use of fossil fuels, set the stage for the deterioration of the Earth's ecosystems. As of today, Earth's nature is seriously ill. In fact, as many as six of the nine planetary boundaries—the limits beyond which nature is no longer able to regulate itself—have been surpassed (Richardson et al., 2023).

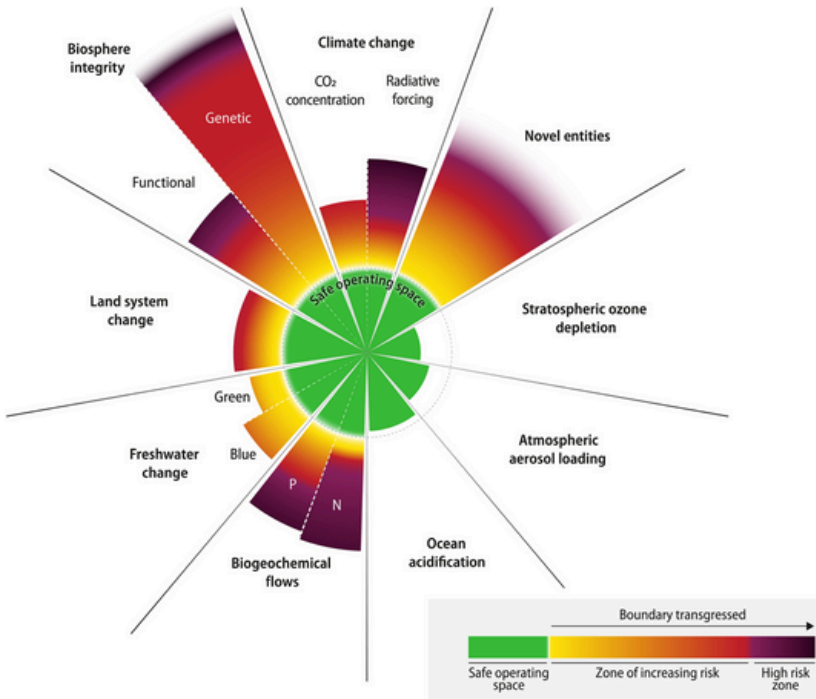


Figure 2: The 9 Planetary Bounds, image of Richardson et al., 2023.

Even though the consequences of planetary disease are evident, understanding the process by which human activities have such a major impact on life on Earth is not straightforward. Planetary health researchers attempt to diagnose the roots of Earth's disease by reconstructing a causal chain of determining factors that may have contributed to the worsening living conditions for Earth's inhabitants. And it is precisely by indicators such as life expectancy and quality of life - the health outcomes of the general population - that planetary health is measured.

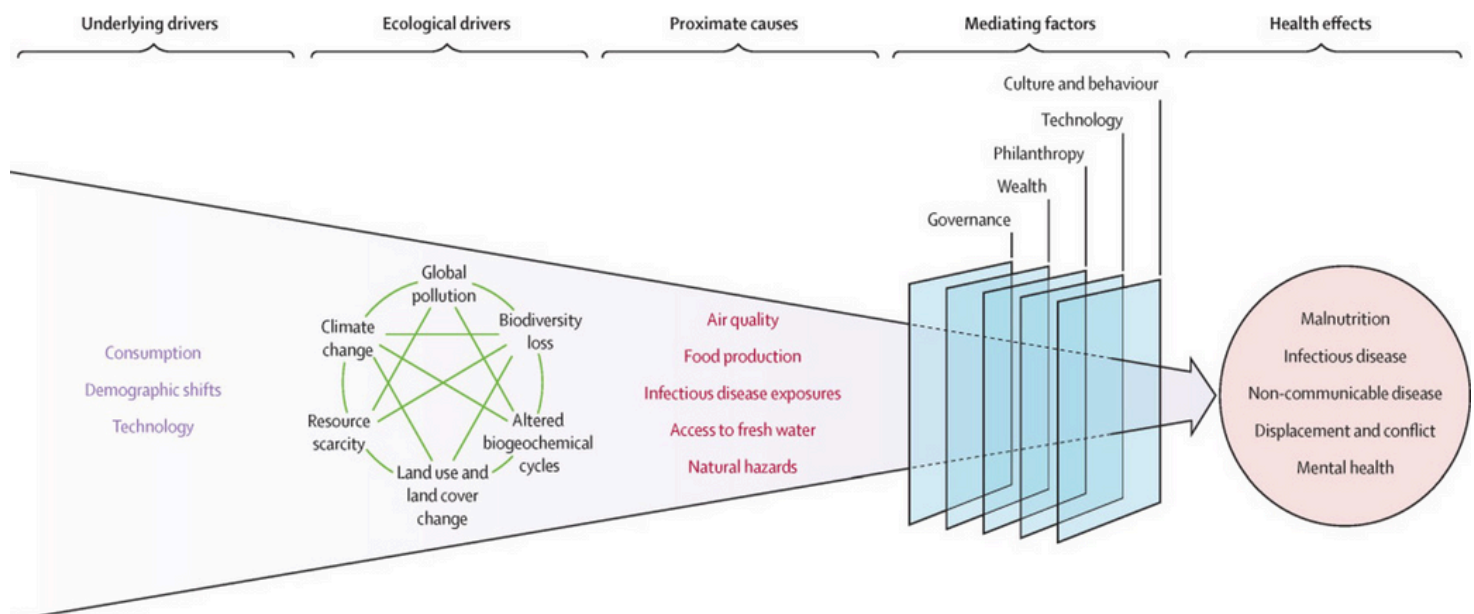


Figure 3: The casual chain that affect planetary health, image of Sam Myers, 2017, Planetary health: protecting human health on a rapidly changing planet [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32846-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32846-5/fulltext)



Trusting the healing process

Although it may seem that all is lost, we must believe in the possibilities of healing, recognizing that only through an act of faith can positive changes be generated. In fact, this new planetary approach helps us increase awareness of the complex interconnections between different Earth systems. Sustainable growth goals have been set across various fields, but they converge to define a unified path of care for the Earth (United Nations [UN], 2015). In short, adopting a planetary health perspective helps identify inter-sectorial strategic solutions to achieve a full recovery.

