

Book Review

Climate Change and Global Health

Edited by Colin D Butler

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Two of the most pressing issues of our time, climate change and health, are addressed with exceptional scholarship and clarity in this new volume edited by Prof Colin D Butler of the Faculty of Health at the University of Canberra, Australia. Unusual for a multi-author book where disciplinary diversity is required is its coherence and evidential thoroughness. This is no small tribute to the broad grasp of the complex science tackled and marshalled by the editor and his advisors.

The legacy that the late Prof AJ (Tony) McMichael, pioneer of climate change and health epidemiology, provides the book in one of its chapters and through the contributions of his successors is plainly evident. He progressed the notion that the present geological epoch as Anthropocene, one where human enterprise began to match the forces of nature (Crutzen in 2004 and Steffen in 2007), is of major health relevance. Indeed, as Steffen asserts in the present volume, it is now possible that, on this account, the earth may enter an irreversible warmer era, with all its dire consequences.

In the meantime, the authors adduce the primary, secondary and tertiary health effects already underway in various regions. The biomedical, psychosocial and environmental health threats we face are cogently elaborated.

What of food and health? Throughout the publication we are caused to think how closely food and health security move together. The ecological basis of health is undergoing a momentous natural experiment which must be recognised and acted upon through population, resource and conflict management in order to survive long enough for sufficient planetary recovery to occur.

This is a book with content for all food, nutritional and health professionals to assimilate.

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