

NORWAY

LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE DATA SHEET 2025

Health and climate change in Norway

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change tracks the evolving relationship between climate and health through 50+ peer-reviewed indicators. Since 2016, it has provided peer-reviewed annual assessments, published in *The Lancet*. The 2025 report reveals the grave health toll of climate change inaction: fossil fuel dependence, rising emissions, and delayed adaptation are costing millions of lives. Recent climate policy rollbacks further threaten our ability to respond to the accelerating crisis, undermining progress towards a healthy future.

This document highlights key country-level findings from the 2025 Lancet Countdown report for Norway, showing that:



Warming seas are driving new coastal health risks, with Norway's northern waters increasingly suitable for harmful pathogens.



Norway's low-carbon transition is advancing, with declining emissions across energy and healthcare sectors.



Norway's **strong governance and fiscal capacity** position it well to support the net-zero transition, with domestic coal reliance already declining and clean energy investments growing.

With the threats of climate change growing, protecting people's health and survival demands simultaneous and unprecedented efforts to advance adaptation and mitigation, and requires an "all hands on deck" approach.

Marine and Coastal Health Risks: Warming Seas and Vibrio Expansion

Rising sea surface temperatures are transforming Norway's coastal ecosystems, with direct implications for human health. Warmer waters enable the northward spread of marine pathogens and affect fisheries and livelihoods in coastal communities.

1.05°C

In 2024, the average sea surface temperature in Norway's coastal areas was 1.05 °C higher than the 1981–2010 baseline, reflecting significant sea warming in the North and Norwegian Seas. (Indicator 1.4) This warming threatens marine ecosystems, fisheries, and coastal communities, with rising temperatures disrupting species distribution, increasing the risk of harmful algal blooms, and affecting food security and livelihoods.



The total coastal area environmentally suitable for *Vibrio* transmission was 84.5% greater in 2024 than in 1990–1999, underscoring the potential for wider pathogen distribution in previously unaffected areas, (Indicator 1.3.6)



Over the same period, estimated vibriosis cases increased by 37%, suggesting that environmental changes are already translating into measurable health impacts. (Indicator 1.3.6) This trend underscores the urgent need for enhanced surveillance and climate-adaptive public health strategies to mitigate emerging infectious disease risks.

WARMING WATERS AND COASTAL HEALTH

The rapid warming of Norway's coastal waters reflects broader trends across northern Europe, but the country's extensive and economically vital shoreline, home to one of the world's largest aquaculture industries, makes the risks particularly acute. Rising sea temperatures are altering marine ecosystems, increasing the prevalence of harmful algal blooms and marine pathogens. Strengthening disease surveillance and early-warning systems will be critical to protect both public health and the livelihoods of coastal communities in a changing ocean climate.

Decarbonisation and Sustainable Energy Transition

Norway continues to advance towards a low-carbon future, with one of the cleanest electricity mixes in Europe and declining emissions across key sectors. However, Norway remains a major oil and gas producer globally. It is projected to be the 16th largest producer of oil and gas in 2040, with state-owned Equinor expected to produce nearly twice the volume compatible with limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

8.8%

Between 2016 and 2022, CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion fell by 8.8%, at 35,603 kilotonnes. (Indicator 3.1.1)



Coal now plays a negligible role in the energy system, making up just 0.03% of electricity generation and 2.17% of total energy supply in 2022 (Indicator 3.1.1).



SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

Norway's near-zero-coal electricity system reflects the benefits of sustained clean energy investment. Continued progress will depend on reducing emissions from transport, industry, and public services like healthcare. However, this domestic leadership sits alongside a continued reliance on fossil fuel exports, highlighting the tension between national progress and global climate responsibilities.

Within the healthcare sector, GHG emissions declined 17.5% (from 2016 to 2022) to 1.39 Mt CO₂e, equivalent to 257 kg per capita (Indicator 3.5).

Ecosystem and Land Use Pressures

Norway's vast natural landscapes are central to both its economy and environmental health. While forestry remains the dominant driver of land-use change, modest improvements in urban greenness highlight ongoing efforts to sustain ecosystem benefits in cities.

57,970

In 2023, 57,970 hectares of tree cover were lost, a 9.3% decrease compared with 2021, though 97.6% of cumulative loss since 2001 has been attributed to forestry activities (Indicator 3.4).



Oslo, the only Norwegian city with more than 500,000 inhabitants, is classified as having moderate level of urban greenness. Greenness has not improved since 2015. (Indicator 2.2.3).

Fiscal and Governance Readiness for the Net-Zero Transition

Norway's climate and health progress is supported by strong fiscal and governance structures that integrate environmental policy with economic and health system priorities. Continued alignment of carbon revenues and preparedness planning will be key to maintaining leadership in the transition.

0.6%

In 2024, Norway's preparedness for the low-carbon transition increased by 0.6% from 2023, signalling continued institutional progress toward achieving climate neutrality (Indicator 4.2.4).



In 2023, Norway generated net-positive carbon revenues of US\$ 1.996 billion (2024 USD), equivalent to 3.61% of current health expenditure, indicating that fiscal measures are effectively reinforcing both climate and health priorities (Indicator 4.3.2).

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE DRIVING CLIMATE ACTION

Norway's sustained carbon revenues and growing preparedness underscore the role of robust governance in achieving equitable decarbonisation. Linking these financial instruments to health resilience and emission-reduction initiatives can further accelerate progress toward a sustainable, net-zero future. At the same time, the country remains a major exporter of oil and gas through its state-owned enterprises, raising ongoing concerns about the alignment of its international energy strategy with global climate goals.

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