LANCET COUNTDOWN: TRACKING PROGRESS ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
In collaboration with Wellcome

A decade tracking progress on health and climate change

FIJI

LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DATA SHEET 2026

Health and Climate Change in Fiji

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change tracks the connections between health and climate change. In its tenth iteration, the 2026 Global Report shows that the health impacts of climate change have escalated, and frequently accelerated, in the decade since the Paris Agreement came into force. The 2025 Lancet Countdown report on small island developing states (SIDS) further examines the climate-related health risks facing island populations and opportunities to strengthen resilience.

This document draws on findings from the **2026 Lancet Countdown Global Report (indicators represented in bold)** and the 2025 Lancet Countdown SIDS Report to present key insights for Fiji.

Increasing heat exposure is affecting vulnerable populations in Fiji, disrupting sleep, limiting safe physical activity and reducing labour capacity, with consequences for health and livelihoods.

Rising coastal sea temperatures and exposure to climate hazards threaten marine food security, livelihoods and the health of coastal communities in Fiji.

Storms, floods and drought have affected communities and livelihoods across Fiji, with consequences for health and essential services. Although extreme drought has become less widespread, the cumulative impacts of climate-related disasters remain substantial.

Fiji has given greater prominence to health in its national climate commitments, but adaptation funding approved in 2024 did not explicitly target health, highlighting the importance of integrating health priorities into climate finance.

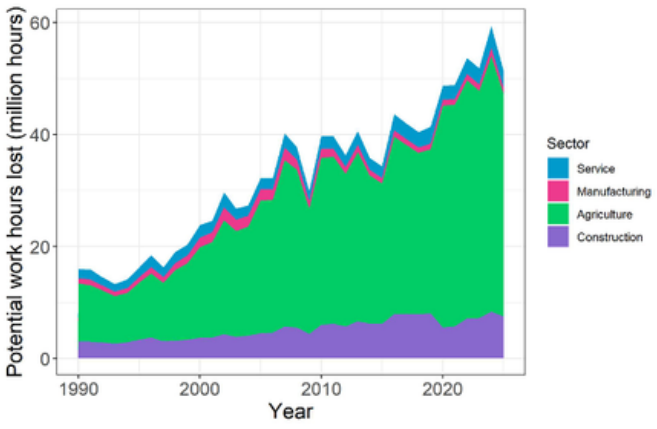
Heat and Health

Exposure to high temperatures increases the risk of heat-related illness and mortality. Vulnerable groups, including older adults, young children, pregnant women, and those with pre-existing conditions, face the greatest risks. Heat can also disrupt sleep, limit safe physical activity and reduce people's capacity to work.

In 2025, all of the heatwave days that people in Fiji were exposed to on average were directly attributable to climate change. Children under one year of age and adults over 65 in Fiji each experienced approximately 5 additional heatwave days annually between 2021 and 2025 compared with 1986–2005, reaching an average of approximately 6.5 heatwave days per year for both groups. **(Indicator 1.1.1)**

People in Fiji were exposed to over 2,300 hours per year in which heat posed a moderate or higher risk of heat stress during moderate outdoor physical activity (e.g., brisk walking) between 2016 and 2025, over 450 hours (24%) more than the annual average in the 1990s. **(Indicator 1.1.2)**

Annual potential work hours lost, disaggregated by economic sector. Fiji, 1990-2025.



People in Fiji lost an estimated 70 hours of sleep annually due to high night-time temperatures between 2021 and 2025, approximately 3 hours more per year than in 1986–2005. (**Indicator 1.1.4**)

Heat exposure caused an average annual loss of over 48 million potential labour hours in Fiji between 2016 and 2025, over 190% higher than the annual average in the 1990s. Agriculture accounted for 76% of these losses, followed by construction at 15%. (**Indicator 1.1.3**)

Heat-related labour capacity reduction in Fiji caused an estimated potential earnings loss of approximately US$126 million in 2025. Agriculture accounted for almost 70% of these losses, followed by construction at 19%. (**Indicator 4.1.3**)

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Coastal and Food-System Health Risks

Rising coastal sea surface temperatures can affect marine ecosystems and fish stocks, with implications for marine food security and livelihoods. Sea-level rise and extreme weather events can also threaten coastal communities, disrupt essential services and increase risks to health.

Coastal sea surface temperatures around Fiji were 0.6°C higher between 2023 and 2025 than in 1981–2010. Warming coastal waters can affect marine ecosystems and fish stocks, with implications for food security and livelihoods. **(Indicator 1.4.2)**

Approximately 5% of Fiji's population, or over 50,000 people, live in areas less than one metre above sea level, highlighting the potential risks of coastal flooding, displacement and disruption to essential services. **(Indicator 2.3.3)**

Extreme Weather Events and Health

Storms, floods and drought can cause injuries, illness and deaths, disrupt essential health services and threaten water availability, food security and livelihoods. In Fiji, extreme weather events have affected large numbers of people and imposed substantial economic costs, although the proportion of land experiencing extreme drought has declined.

Since 2000 (to 2024), over 1.5 million Fijians have faced effects of droughts, storms, and floods, carrying an estimated direct cost of over US$100 million. Furthermore, Fiji has faced consecutive cyclones within the same Pacific hurricane season; underscoring the economic and societal backlash hampering effective long-term recovery. (Indicator 2.3.1; SIDS Report)

An average of approximately 20% of Fiji's land area experienced at least one month of extreme drought annually between 2021 and 2025, compared with 46% in 1981–1990. **(Indicator 1.2.2)**

Health in Climate Policy and Finance

Integrating health into national climate commitments and investment decisions can help address the health impacts of climate change. In Fiji, health has received increasing attention in national climate policy, although recent multilateral adaptation funding has not explicitly prioritised health. Scientific research also contributes evidence to inform climate and health policy.

Fiji's third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), submitted in 2025, placed greater emphasis on health than its previous submissions, with more than 80 references to general health, disease reduction and wellbeing. **(Indicator 5.4.1)**

In 2024, US$7.5 million in multilateral funding was approved for two adaptation-related projects in Fiji, neither of which had an explicit health focus. This highlights the need to ensure that health priorities are adequately reflected in adaptation finance. (Indicator 4.2.2; SIDS Report)

Fiji has developed national climate policies addressing adaptation and climate-related displacement. However, the extent to which these policies explicitly integrate the health needs of people at risk of displacement remains an important consideration. (Indicator 2.3.3; SIDS Report)

An average of eight scientific papers on climate change and health were published annually between 2020 and 2025 with lead authors based in Fiji. Of these, 55% examined the health impacts of climate change, while the remainder focused on adaptation or mitigation. **(Indicator 5.3)**

Romanello M, Walawender M, Israelsson J et al. The 2026 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: A decade of escalating health harms and a decisive moment for all. The Lancet 2026; published online October 2026. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(26)01779-4
Gordon-Strachan, Georgiana M., et al. (2026) "The 2025 small island developing states report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: building resilience in the face of rising heat." The Lancet Global Health.