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

A decade tracking progress on health and climate change

MEXICO

LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DATA SHEET 2026

Health and Climate Change in Mexico

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change tracks the connections between health and climate change. In its tenth annual assessment, 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 Lancet Countdown Latin America tracks these links across the region through more than 39 peer-reviewed indicators, and its forthcoming 2026 report will provide the latest assessment of progress and challenges on health and climate change across Latin America.

This document presents key findings for Mexico from the **2026 Lancet Countdown Global Report (indicators represented in bold)** and the forthcoming 2026 Lancet Countdown Latin America Report.

Increasing exposure to extreme heat is threatening health in Mexico, particularly among vulnerable populations, while reducing labour capacity and generating substantial economic losses. Extreme drought has also become considerably more widespread, threatening water security, food production and livelihoods.

Wildfire-smoke-associated mortality has increased in Mexico, while expanding environmental suitability for Vibrio transmission presents additional risks to health in coastal areas.

Expanding renewable electricity use in Mexico can reduce harmful air pollution and protect health, while improving access to affordable, nutritious diets can address preventable diet-related mortality. Reducing fossil-fuel dependence and food-system emissions offers further opportunities to protect health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Mexico has substantially increased attention to health in its national climate commitments, while scientific research on climate change and health has expanded considerably. Corporate reporting also reflects engagement with the health dimensions of climate change.

Heat and Drought

Rising temperatures increase the risk of heat-related illness and mortality, particularly among infants, older adults and people with pre-existing health conditions. Heat exposure also reduces people's capacity to work, threatening livelihoods and economic productivity. Extreme drought can further undermine health by reducing water availability, food security and agricultural productivity.

Between 2016 and 2025, infants and adults over 65 in Mexico each experienced an average of approximately nine heatwave days annually, around six additional days per year compared with 2006–2015. This represents an increase of approximately 200% for both age groups. **(Indicator 1.1.1)**

Between 2016 and 2025, people in Mexico experienced an average of 9.4 heatwave days annually, an increase of 110% compared with 2006–2015. **(Indicator 1.1.1)**

Between 2021 and 2025, the average annual monetised value of heat-related mortality among people aged over 65 in Mexico was approximately US$5.6 billion, equivalent to approximately 319,000 average annual incomes. This was 390% higher than in 2000–2004. **(Indicator 4.1.2)**

Heat exposure caused an average annual loss of 2.9 billion potential labour hours in Mexico between 2016 and 2025, 71% higher than the annual average in the 1990s. Agriculture accounted for 44% of these losses.
However, potential labour hours lost per worker increased by only 0.5%, from 52.6 hours annually in the 1990s to 52.8 hours in 2016–2025. The increase in total losses therefore largely reflects growth in the exposed workforce rather than an equivalent increase in losses per worker. **(Indicator 1.1.3)**

In 2025, heat-related labour capacity reduction in Mexico resulted in an estimated US$9.2 billion in potential earnings losses, with agriculture accounting for 32% of the total. **(Indicator 4.1.3)**

Between 2021 and 2025, an average of 65% of Mexico's land area experienced at least one month of extreme drought annually, compared with 12% in 1981–1990. **(Indicator 1.2.2)**

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Wildfire Smoke and Coastal Infectious Disease Risks

Wildfire smoke contributes to harmful air pollution, increasing the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and premature mortality. Warming coastal waters can also increase environmental suitability for *Vibrio* bacteria, which can cause gastrointestinal and wound infections. In Mexico, wildfire-smoke-associated mortality has increased, while a growing extent of coastline has become environmentally suitable for *Vibrio* transmission.

Wildfire smoke was associated with an estimated 11,100 deaths annually in Mexico between 2021 and 2025, 48% higher than in 2003–2012. People also experienced an average of 84 days of very high or extremely high wildfire danger annually, approximately nine additional days compared with 2003–2012. **(Indicator 1.2.1)**

In 2025, approximately 775 km of Mexico's coastline had environmental conditions suitable for *Vibrio* transmission, a 711% increase compared with 1982–1991. Estimated annual vibriosis cases averaged approximately 4,200 between 2016 and 2025, a 1,168% increase compared with 1982–1991. **(Indicator 1.3.6)**

Energy, Food Systems, and Health

Fossil fuel combustion and polluting household energy sources contribute to harmful air pollution, increasing the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and premature mortality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Mexico's annual mean concentration of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) was 18 μg/m^3, more than three times the WHO annual guideline of 5 μg/m^3. Improving access to affordable, diverse and nutritious diets can also prevent diet-related illness, while reducing emissions from food systems can support climate change mitigation.

Renewable sources accounted for 11.7% of Mexico's electricity generation in 2023, a 244% increase compared with 2016. The carbon intensity of the overall energy system declined by 5.3% over the same period, reaching 54.7 tCO_2/TJ. (Indicator 3.1.1; Latin America Report)

In 2023, electricity accounted for only 33.7% of household energy use. (Indicator 3.1.2; Latin America Report)

In 2024, Mexico provided US$14.6 billion in net fossil-fuel subsidies, equivalent to 14% of national health expenditure. These subsidies support continued fossil-fuel dependence, potentially undermining efforts to reduce air pollution and its associated health impacts. **(Indicator 4.3.2)**

FOOD SYSTEMS

In 2023, approximately 75,500 deaths in Mexico were associated with insufficient consumption of healthy plant-based foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds. A further 41,900 deaths were associated with excessive consumption of dairy, red meat and processed meat. Improving access to affordable, diverse and nutritious foods is an important public health priority. **(Indicator 3.3.2)**

Emissions associated with Mexico's consumption of agricultural food products increased by 7.5% between 2016 and 2023. Cow and buffalo meat and dairy products together accounted for 51.5% of food consumption-related emissions in 2023. **(Indicator 3.3.1)**

Health in Climate Policy and Research

Scientific research and engagement across public and private institutions can strengthen the evidence available to inform climate and health policy.

Mexico has included health-related content in all four of its nationally determined contributions (NDCs). Its most recent submission, in 2025, contained 114 health-related references, the highest across its four submissions, reflecting increased attention to health in national climate commitments. **(Indicator 5.4.1)**

Between 2020 and 2025, researchers based in Mexico led an average of 39 scientific publications on climate change and health annually, a 638% increase compared with 2000–2005. Most publications focused on the health impacts of climate change, accounting for 86% of studies published during 2020–2025. **(Indicator 5.3.1)**

In 2024, 117 of the 411 companies (29%) in Mexico reporting through the UN Global Compact (the world's largest voluntary sustainability initiative) referenced the health dimensions of climate change. **(Indicator 5.5)**

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
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