Environmental Justice and Health

Air Pollution

Air pollution is one problem in the environment that needs change. An air pollutant is defined as “any substance which may harm humans, animals, vegetation or material” (Kampa & Castanas, 2007). Air pollution causes serious environmental and health complications and usually stems from gaseous pollutants.

Data 1: Statistics

7 million premature deaths per year are caused by indoor and outdoor pollutants. A projected 250,000 deaths are predicted from 2030-2050 due to effects of air pollutants.

Data 2: Health Trajectory

Together with the U.S healthcare system, GHG emissions will cause a combined 123,000 to 381,000 years of future health damages and disabilities with malnutrition being the most damaging effect.

Supporting Details

- Climate change increases the global temperature which allows for the spread of diseases such as malaria, respiratory disease from allergens, diarrhea, malnutrition, cardiovascular disease, etc.
- Environmental inequalities affect the disadvantaged and people of color. These effects include higher rates of mortality, morbidity, and disability when compared to white counterparts of higher socioeconomic status.

Data 3: Social Actions

Policy changes addressing environmental health on a macro level will improve issues within housing, segregation, transportation, and energy policies. Improving the equity in health should be the ultimate goal for improving environmental health.

Related Illustrations

Preserving trees can reduce air pollutants by absorbing CO2 from the atmosphere.

References


