

One Health: Taking care of ourselves and the Earth



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What's One Health and why does it matter?



What's One Health and why does it matter?



We, as humans, are generally healthier than we have ever been before... sadly, this has come at a cost to the planet we depend on.

Dr. Paula Franklin, Bupa Chief Medical Officer¹



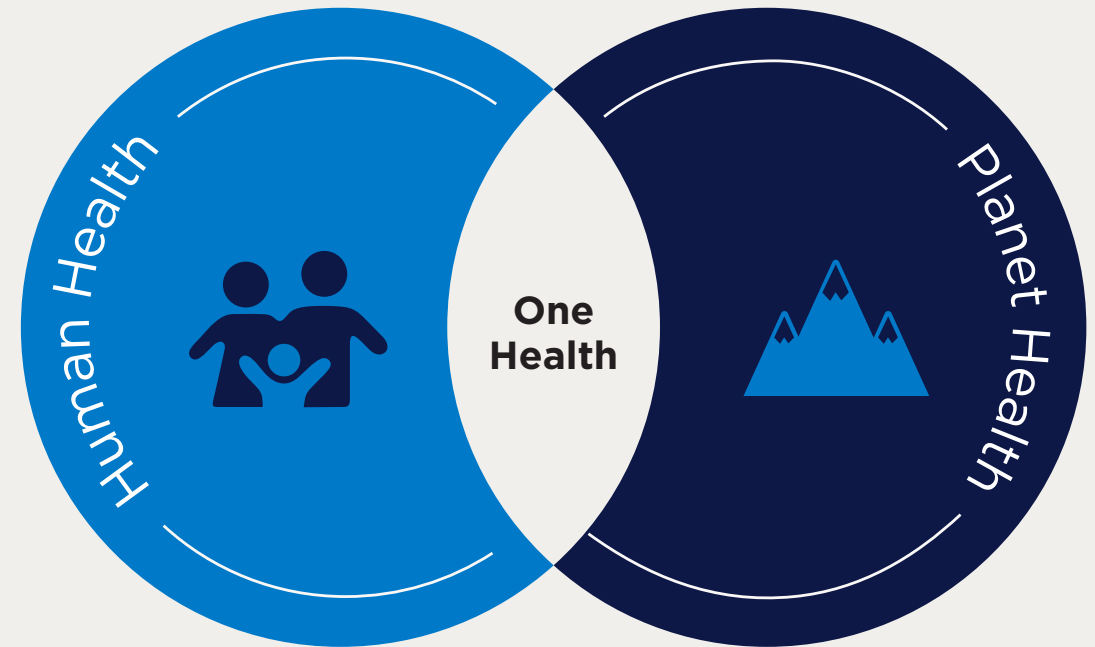
The environment impacts our health in ways so deeply connected to our everyday life that we don't even recognise it. It's at the core of what we drink, eat, breathe and, how we move around. What's clear is a healthy environment is essential for healthy people.

We can't escape the fact that humans create pollution in many forms, including air, noise, light, water and plastic and as a result we are significantly contributing to climate change, damaging habitats, and reducing biodiversity.

The emerging concept of 'One Health'

'One Health' is a concept that has been advocated by academics and sustainability experts around the world for a long time. It identifies that the health of people is interconnected and interdependent with the health of the planet. This close relationship between humans and nature makes preserving the environment not only an environmental matter, but also integral to human health. One Health is also an approach emphasising collaboration among different sectors to achieve the healthiest outcomes in this shared environment.^{2,3,4}

We must start thinking about the relationship between the environment and human health, so we can preserve the planet now and for generations to come.



Did you know?

- According to the One Health survey in Hong Kong, 54.2% of respondents believe their individual actions can make a big enough impact.⁵
- Almost 9 in 10 respondents expect a stronger commitment from the government (87.1%) and the business sectors (90%).
- Bupa as a trusted healthcare leader in Hong Kong has launched the "One Health" campaign to play our part.

[Click here to learn more. >](#)

Did you know?

We contribute towards greenhouse gases.

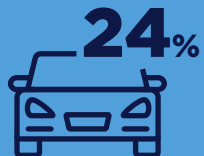
Our contributions vary through the use of electricity, food production, digitalisation, automation, and even through our waste that goes to landfill.

Human activities and One Health

Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas emitted by human activities.

It accounts for 77% of all greenhouse gases released, while burning of fossil fuels and deforestation are the major source of carbon dioxide emission.⁶

The vast amount of emissions has exacerbated the greenhouse effect, resulting in global warming.



Globally, we produce 24% of carbon emissions through transport.⁷



3.7% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from digital technologies, and this is set to double by 2025.^{8,9}



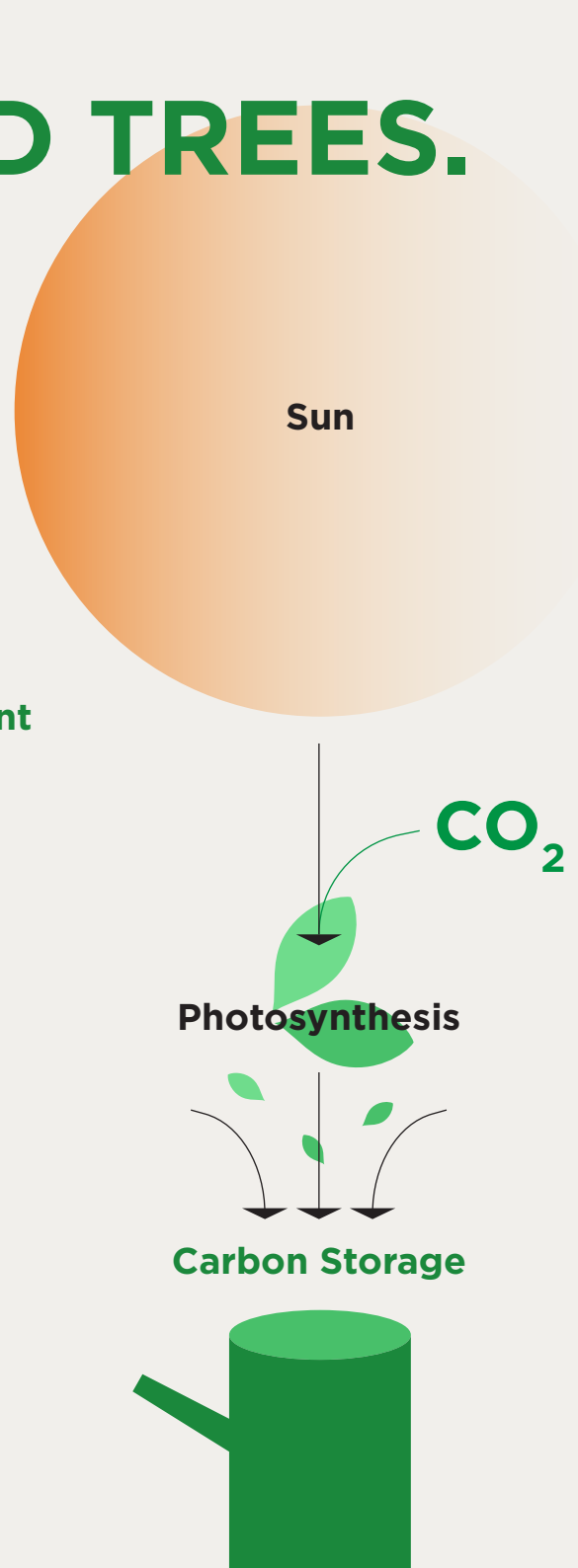
Ordering takeaways in Hong Kong is convenient and relatively affordable. However, it comes with the weekly cost of using 100 million pieces of single-use plastic tableware and plastic bags in 2020.¹⁰

WE NEED TREES.

Trees and the environment

With the energy provided by sunlight, leaves use carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air to produce oxygen, which humans and all other species need.

Trees also act as carbon stores where the absorbed CO₂ is stored for long periods of time for later use.^{11,12} On average, a tree can sequester up to 150 kg of carbon dioxide every year¹³. It is important to maintain the forests we have, because as well as storing carbon, they can also control temperature and rainfall within the area. For example, forests can bring a cooling effect to the land in warmer, tropical areas¹⁴.



Woodlands safeguard our health.

Trees also contribute other benefits to human health. Forests provide a range of nutritional food sources and are a large source of medicinal plants, with 25% of medicines used in some developed countries being plant based, while in China, it can be up to 80%.¹⁵

Forests also play a role in reducing the stresses that may be experienced in urban life by lowering heat in warmer urban areas, buffering noise, and absorbing air pollution from traffic

and industry. Green spaces provide opportunities for outdoor activities that promote physical, mental, and social well-being and overall good health.

The woodland also provides a home for animals and plants through keeping a healthy balance of “biodiversity”.

Why is biodiversity important?

Biodiversity is a shortened form of ‘biological’ and “diversity”. It means the variety of living species within an environment, including plants, animals, bacteria and fungi. It describes the diversity within species, between species, and within ecosystems.¹⁶

By focusing on biodiversity, we can progress the health of the planet and everything living in it.



The number of **extinct species** on earth since 1970


40%
ON LAND


84%
FRESH WATER


35%
MARINE

How does biodiversity impact human health?

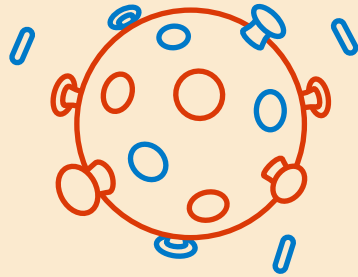
Unfortunately, the global biodiversity rate is declining at an unprecedented rate due to human impact.

Biodiversity loss is not only devastating to see, but poses serious risks for societies, economies and the health of the planet and its inhabitants.

Clare Scully,
Director of Healthcare Insight, Bupa¹⁷

continue ▼

How does biodiversity impact human health?



Increased risk of infectious disease

Biodiversity loss and an increasing rate of wildlife-human contacts all contribute to increasing risks of infectious disease. As a result of human actions, wild animals are shifting their geographical reach and moving ever closer to humans and livestock. This increases the risk of trans-species transmission of diseases, and the potential for infectious agents to crossover to human populations.



Food insecurity and poor nutrition

Biodiversity supports agriculture and the production of food through services such as pollination, maintaining healthy soils, controlling pests, and providing habitat for wildlife that are vital for food production.

Availability of food and good nutrition is key to human health. We might face food insecurity due to habitat destruction and biodiversity loss.

It is anticipated that, by 2050 the world will be home to 10 billion inhabitants, meaning an extra 3 billion more mouths to feed since 2010.



Compromised medicines supply and research

It is estimated that between 50,000-70,000 plant species are harvested for traditional or modern medicine.

With around half of all modern drugs developed from natural products, the natural world plays a critical part in supporting human health.

Decreased biodiversity poses a real threat to new and emerging therapeutic options and some estimates state that one important drug is lost every two years due to biodiversity loss.



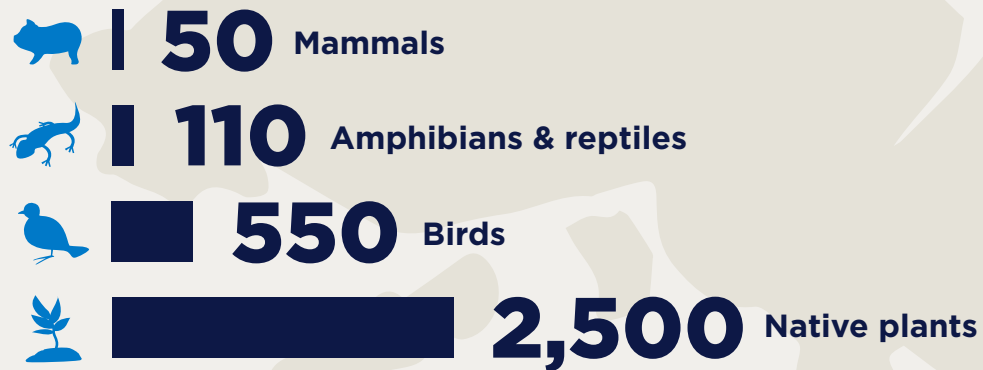
Nature plays a key role in maintaining our holistic health and wellbeing

It is important to recognise that nature can contribute to non-material aspects of quality of life, including inspiration and learning, physical and psychological experiences, and helping to support people's identities. As we lose biodiversity, this will impact mental wellbeing and learning.



Get to know Hong Kong and its biodiversity

How healthy is our local environment?



Did you know?

Although Hong Kong is small, **40%** of the city is protected country parks and nature reserves.¹⁸

Different habitats, such as wetlands, rivers and woodlands provide a home for more than **98%** of animals, plants and insects in Hong Kong.

**It's important
to keep Hong Kong's
biodiversity healthy.**

How healthy is our local environment?



Hong Kong's primary woodland has almost disappeared. Fifty years ago, Hong Kong's mountain tops were once bare due to human activities.

Did you know?

To accelerate its restoration, the government introduced fast-growing exotic tree species, such as Taiwan Acacia, Brisbane Box, and Slash Pine, to improve the density of woodlands and prevent soil erosion.

Did you know why? Click here to find out why. >

Click here to learn more about the exotic trees available in Hong Kong. >



Despite "greening" our countryside, forestation with exotic tree species has decreased the land's ecological value and therefore the biodiversity level of Hong Kong.

Even though the forest is greener, where are all the birds and animals? >

The problem with exotic tree species >

Threats of human-induced hill fires >

To create a more sustainable environment, we need to take action, such as replacing exotic species with local tree seedlings, which will help enhance the biodiversity of Hong Kong.



Plantation Enrichment Programme as a sustainable way for healthier country parks in Hong Kong


Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the "Country Parks Plantation Enrichment Programme (PEP)" in 2009, to increase biodiversity and ecological values of plantations in country parks.

To support's AFCD's program, Bupa committed to a 5-year plantation programme with a local NGO, The Green Earth in 2022 -2026.

Planting local tree seedlings >

Caring for tree seedlings >

A live stream of what local wild animals you can meet >



Sustainable and healthy living tips

For a healthy planet and a healthier you

1

Shape an eco-friendly home

According to the 2020 Policy Address, Hong Kong pledged to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, but how can we play a role in shaping a better city?

Let's protect our city together by putting "One Health" into practice today.

In return, the earth will take care of you. To get started you should always:



There are a lot of things you can do around the house to help create a healthy living environment. Check out some ideas below:

■ **Explore the use of natural cleansers. They can help you dump less.**

Did you know?

Most of the detergents available on the market are products derived from fossil fuels which are not degradable when discarded into the environment.¹⁹

Replace cleaning products with natural cleansers, such as baking soda, tea seed powder and eco-enzyme cleansers. They are affordable, multi-purpose, non-toxic alternatives to chemical cleaners. They can also help you with clean recycling, which is the key to saving resources for the planet.^{20,21}



If everyone on earth lives the lifestyle of people living in Hong Kong, we will require the resources of 4.2 planets.



[Hong Kong 2050 is now](#)

■ **First of all, bringing your own 'bag, bottle or box' is an easy way to live more sustainably while keeping your health in good shape.**

Plastic has brought us convenience, but it takes hundreds of years to decompose. By opting to bring your own you'll contribute to a healthier planet by reducing microplastic pollution in our food chain.

Did you know?

Less than **1%** of the **1.55 billion** plastic bottles we consume every year are properly recycled in Hong Kong.

<1%
1.55 billion



12minutes



Average usage of a plastic bag in Hong Kong is 12 minutes.



100 million pieces of single-use plastic tableware and plastic bags were used every week in 2020.

100
million
in 2020



2 Reduce our everyday carbon footprint



■ If you can't avoid takeout?

Make it more sustainable with natural cleansers.

To save more plastics from the landfill, you can try out more natural methods to clean your used plastic bags, bottles and take-away containers, then recycle.

[Click here to learn more practical cleaning tips and information.](#)

■ Get creative with your household problems.

- Wipe off dreaded bathroom mould by making a mixture of 75% vinegar and 25% water. Try

to keep windows and doors open to allow ventilation and keep your bathroom dry.

- Eucalyptus oil mixed with water is also great for keeping away flies, bees and wasps.
- Fight mosquitos the natural way by investing in some citronella candles to keep the tiny blood-suckers away.
- Using chemical-free cleaning products can improve the air quality at home and ultimately minimise health effects such as asthma, allergies, headaches, and tiredness.

59% of the One Health survey respondents say the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a higher awareness of environmental issues. Have you done any of these actions at least twice a week?^{5,22}

■ Reduce use of single-use plastic straws/ cutlery



■ Recycle bottles/cans/paper



■ Bring your own bags, boxes and bottles



■ Taking a daily digital detox gives your brain, eyes, and your devices a break. Use the break to talk to your family and friends in person.



Check out The Green Earth and Bupa websites and social media channels for more tips.

3

Set a goal with the Low Carbon Living Calculator²³

Looking for a deeper understanding
of how your lifestyle has impacted
the environment?

Did you know?

Household consumption
accounts for 78% of Hong
Kong's carbon footprint²⁴.

Check out the Low Carbon Living Calculator to get a
sense from your clothing, food, living and travel
habits over the past year.



4

Take care of our countryside

We learnt a lot about how
beautiful our Hong Kong
woodland is.

More tips to make our
countryside more
sustainable >

Support
The Green Earth's
plantation activities
through



Volunteer >

or

Donate >

Check out how we converted steps into trees in
our One Health Step Challenge.

It's a perfect platform to learn about our local plants and
animals living in our countryside!

 One Health

Find out about our >
One Health Woodland

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**Small changes start from here.
Let's show nature some love.**

A healthier planet. A healthier you.



Bupa



The Green Earth