

# Swiss Manifesto for a Healthy Future

swimsa (Swiss Medical Students' Association)

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The current COVID-19 pandemic is a powerful reminder of the close, complex interconnection of human and animal health with their environment and the economy. In times of a drastically warming climate, the decisions made now will fundamentally determine the health of all future creatures. All efforts for a safe, healthy and sustainable future are doomed to fail if health protection is not placed at the center of economy support packages.

Thus in May 2020, organisations representing more than 40 million health care workers issued an open letter calling for a Green and Healthy Recovery. The comprehensive public policy measures in response to the global economic downturn caused by COVID-19 offer a chance to prevent further crises from climate change and environmental degradation. The current situation urgently calls for sustainable, health-oriented strategies in the sense of the „One Health“ approach with a focus on increased interprofessional, transdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue within the health care system.

The undersigned organisations and people, therefore, advocate for the protection and promotion of public health, recognize climate change as a substantial threat for regional and global health, and call for a healthy and sustainable future. They demand with great urgency that Swiss politicians adhere to the following principles in their decisions:

- Prioritisation of human, animal and environmental health:
- In all political decisions, the health and environmental impacts must be taken into consideration in addition to the economical ones („Health in All Policies“ approach). Health professionals are to be involved in the development of the COVID-19 economic stimulus packages, be able to report on the potential short- and long-term effects on health, and take part in decision-making wherever possible. The public is to be informed of the considerable health benefits going hand in hand with climate protection measures that will reduce their disease burden.
- Rapid orientation of the economy toward health and sustainability:
- The current climate protection measures must be rapidly accelerated and harmful greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced to „net zero“ as quickly as possible, meaning well before 2050, in order to minimize the life-threatening health risks of climate change. Subventions and investments that are harmful to health and the environment, especially fossil energy production, are to be ended as quickly as possible in a socially responsible manner.
- Strengthening the healthcare system:

- To enable a more sustainable healthcare system in Switzerland with equal access for all and to further increase its resilience in the event of future crises, the people working in the healthcare sector must also be healthy. This requires better working conditions, equal opportunities and the expansion of high-quality training positions for medical staff. Inequalities in access to the healthcare system are to be minimized. Climate pollution caused by the healthcare sector in this country is to be reduced through measures such as the promotion of a healthy, ecologically produced diet, the reduction of waste and the usage of environmentally friendly anesthetic gases.

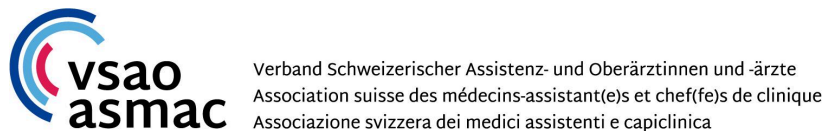
In this current crisis, we still have the opportunity to set the right course for a healthy and sustainable future. Besides us as a society, the politics and economy are now needed to make this vision a reality.

We thank you for the support!

Undersigned organisations:



- Swiss Medical Students' Association swimsa



- Swiss Resident and Attending physician Association vsao



- Swiss Medical Association FMH