

Third International Conference on Health and Biodiversity – Cohab 3

Galmont Hotel and Spa, Galway City, Ireland. Monday 14th – Thursday 17th September 2026

Overview of Parallel Sessions

1. Main conference theme

The overarching theme of the conference is **Partnerships for People and Planet**. The conference aims to highlight opportunities for enhanced multilateral cooperation on planetary health, and new partnerships across disciplines, sectors, borders, and communities.

Each parallel session will address a specific cross-cutting theme linking biodiversity and health in a specific context, within which scientific and policy findings will be shared with examples from existing initiatives, on-the-ground experience and community perspectives.

2. Thematic pillars

In order to ensure that each session can contain a balance of content across science, policy and practical experience-sharing, and align with the main conference theme, the parallel sessions are framed by three specific pillars which help to provide a narrative structure within which knowledge and experience can be shared:

- I. ***The State of Knowledge*** – based on scientific research, policy experience, lessons from practical interventions, and local / community knowledge and needs
- II. ***Synergies and coherence*** – exploring opportunities for integrating the issues across multilateral agreements (on environment, health, human rights, and humanitarian assistance) and at national and subnational levels, and in research and practice
- III. ***Human-rights based approaches*** - ensuring that policy, science and practical interventions for health, biodiversity, climate food and water are designed, implemented and monitored in accordance with international human rights obligations and principles, with particular attention to the rights of Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and under-represented, marginalised or groups in situations of vulnerability.

Aligning discussions with these themes within each parallel session will also support cross-linking between sessions and facilitate preparation of the final conference report.

3. Session topics and key issues

A preliminary outline of key issues to be considered under each parallel session is provided below.

Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition

- a) The importance of agricultural biodiversity and wild biodiversity in realising the rights to adequate food, nutrition and health through diverse, resilient diets
- b) Agroecology, agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, and integrated crop–livestock systems for resilient, nutrition-sensitive food systems
- c) The value of agrobiodiversity in school gardens, and education on agrobiodiversity for children’s diets; realizing children’s rights to food, health, education and development, while shaping healthy and sustainable diets.
- d) Conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture, local seeds and native food crops, crop wild relatives, and the role of underutilised species, as the foundation for the right to food, climate resilience and intergenerational equity
- e) Addressing perverse incentives and agribusiness practices which impact biodiversity and ecosystem health,, culturally appropriate diets, food diversity, and food sovereignty
- f) Opportunities for human rights-based coherence between policies on biodiversity, food, climate and health, and synergies between multilateral agreements
- g) Linking soil health, food diversity and dietary health
- h) Water resource security for agroecosystems
- i) Foodborne diseases, zoonotic risks in food systems, and antimicrobial resistance across the food chain
- j) Recognising and promoting the right to adequate food, nutrition and health through diverse, resilient diets
- k) The role of local and indigenous food systems and wider biocultural aspects of food production, preparation, and trade
- l) Upholding the rights to culture, food, health and self-determination within biocultural systems, and addressing threats to culturally appropriate diets, local and traditional food systems, and food sovereignty

Pandemic prevention

- a) Relationships between biodiversity, ecosystem change and risks of disease emergence, including consideration of climate change and other key drivers of emergence (and including diseases of humans, domesticated animals, crops and wildlife)
- b) Priority research and action areas for pandemic prevention that are grounded in human rights, equity and prevention-oriented approaches

- c) Foodborne diseases, zoonotic risks in food systems, and antimicrobial resistance across the food chain
- d) Practical experience from One Health approaches at national and local levels, integrating human rights, biodiversity protection and public health outcomes
- e) Synergies at global, regional and national level – Global Pandemic Agreement, UNFCCC, UN CBD, CMS, Ramsar etc
- f) Integrated and intersectional solutions for addressing pandemic risk through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including community-led initiatives
- g) Pandemic risk, protected areas, and right-based approaches
- h) The use of integrated surveillance and data-sharing systems for early detection; ecological countermeasures etc.
- i) Community perspectives: linking biodiversity, livelihoods, poverty and disease risk with attention to equity, participation and the rights of those most affected.

Health Equity for Women and Youth

- a) The differential impacts of biodiversity loss on the health of women and youth, including consideration of biocultural aspects and the additive impacts of climate change
- b) The contributions of women and youth across all communities to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as key rights holders, knowledge holders, and agents of change
- c) Advancing women's economic empowerment and biodiversity goals through sustainable resource use and equitable benefit sharing
- d) Empowering women and youth in leadership roles for planetary health science, policy, and action plans
- e) Supporting intergenerational knowledge transfer on biodiversity and health
- f) Gender and youth-responsive policy development and implementation - enhancing equitable, effective and inclusive biodiversity and health outcomes
- g) Gender and youth health priorities as drivers of policy coherence, synergy and transformative change
- h) Dimensions of justice for women and youth addressing recognition, participation, distributional and contextual dimensions, and ensuring their effective engagement in policy implementation and decision-making processes.
- i) Distributive health impacts of pollution on women and youth

Oceans and Health

- a) Relationships between coastal and marine ecosystems and health, highlighting their significance for wellbeing, livelihoods and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- b) The role of oceans and coastal ecosystems in mediating climate-related health risks
- c) Ocean resource exploration and exploitation – opportunities and risks for health with attention to harm, equity and accountability
- d) Marine and coastal food resources, food systems and food safety, and risks from contaminants, harmful algal blooms, and foodborne diseases
- e) Policy synergies and opportunities to enhance coherence – including via CBD, UNFCCC, UNCLOS and the High Seas Treaty, OSPAR etc - to advance rights-based and integrated action on oceans, climate and health
- f) Coastal community perspectives, particularly from small island developing states, highlighting lived experiences linking marine biodiversity, right to health, and right to food
- g) Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) and artisanal livelihoods, especially those led by women
- h) Human, wildlife and ecosystem health implications of ocean plastics, wastewater, chemicals and other forms of pollution, and related health aspects of global contaminant transport
- i) Cultural and social well-being dimensions of ocean ecosystems

Urban Community Health and Well-being

- a) Environmental drivers shaping community health outcomes, including through biodiversity loss, pollution, unequal access to green and blue urban environments, climate change, invasive alien species etc.
- b) Epidemiology of mental well-being and physical fitness in urban environments, including socio-cultural aspects of access to nature
- c) Cardiovascular disease, allergy, respiratory disease,
- d) Long term, nature-based solutions for biodiversity, climate change and health for growing urban populations, in the same line -- highlighting the role of biodiversity and social determinants of health
- e) Identifying and addressing the specific risks and needs for the health of women and girls in urban areas
- f) Linking health and biodiversity in impact and risk assessment for urban planning, and linking with climate action
- g) Accessibility of green and blue urban environments and implications for health equity
- h) Implications of migration to and from cities and other demographic changes in urban communities for the design and quality of green and blue urban environments
- i) Biocultural competence in urban health care

- j) Urban food systems and food sovereignty, including women-led community initiatives and urban school gardens

Disaster Risk Reduction, Relief and Recovery

- a) Nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches and ecosystem services in disaster risk reduction
- b) Health benefits of nature-based climate risk mitigation and adaptation - supporting the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment
- c) Ecosystem approaches in multi-hazard early warning systems, risk assessment, and cross-sector coordination for prevention and preparedness
- d) Conflict, biodiversity and health including impacts on vulnerability, access to resources and the protection of civilians
- e) Addressing the health impacts of ecosystem disruption associated with conflict, and the role of biodiversity conservation in post-conflict recovery and peace-building
- f) Differentiated impacts of ecosystem disruption from armed conflict and colonial legacies on indigenous peoples
- g) Delivering relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, supporting equitable and sustainable post-disaster outcomes
- h) Addressing inequalities in relative risk across communities and social groups, and the use of rights-based approaches to reduce disproportionate impacts and strengthen resilience.
- i) Social and health implications of biocultural dislocation for refugees and displaced people

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