



Government of Malta

Parliamentary Secretariat for Health
Ministry for Social Policy

“ Up to now, the polar bear has been the poster child for climate change. We must use every scientifically sound and politically correct mechanism in the book to convince leaders that **humanity** really is the most important species endangered by climate change. ”

Dr Margaret Chan
Director-General, World Health Organization

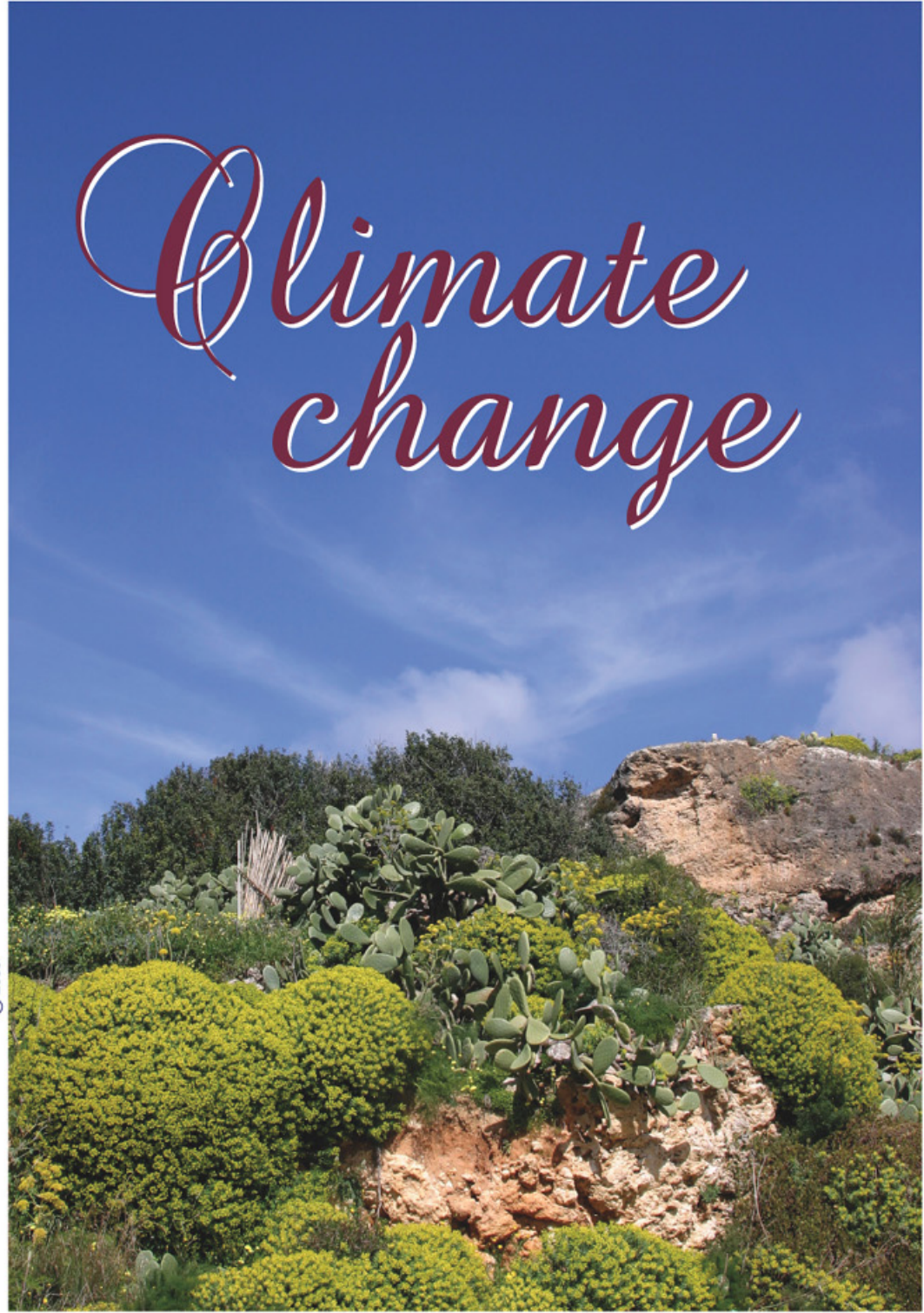


Department for
Environmental Health

Compiled by Dr Roberto Debono, Dr Karen Vincenti, Dr Charmaine Gauci, Mr John Attard Kingswell, Ms Maryanne Massa
Design and Photography: Mr Stefan Attard

© 2009

Climate change



Climate change

What is climate change?

Climate change is a long-term change in the 'average weather' and it is occurring now. We are the main contributors to climate change through the burning of *fossil fuels* by:

- ▶ Power plants which supply us with **electricity** and potable **water** in our homes
- ▶ Transport vehicles such as **cars** and aeroplanes

The burning of fossil fuels produces greenhouse gases (GHGs) like carbon dioxide (CO₂), which accumulate in the atmosphere and cause global warming.

Health impacts

Climate change is having a negative effect on health. In 2003, thousands of people in Europe died because of an unexpected intense heat wave, which was probably related to climate change.

If global warming continues at this rate, we may expect human health to be affected in the following ways:

- ▶ Directly by more frequent and more intense **heat waves** and **cold spells**
- ▶ Injuries from extreme weather events such as **flooding** and storms
- ▶ Re-appearance of **infectious diseases** which are transmitted by vectors such as insects
- ▶ **Food and water shortages**
- ▶ Loss of homes and livelihoods

What am I doing to mitigate the effects of climate change?

Answer the questions below and see how much you are helping out in the fight against climate change

Which one of these is your main mode of transport?

(choose only one)

- I cycle or walk (3 points)
I use public transport (2 points)
I go by car (1 point)
- Do you drive a car? **yes** (go to next question)
 no (3 points)

If you drive a car, which one of these applies mostly to you?

(choose only one)

- I have an electric car (3 points)
I drive a car with low fuel consumption (2 points)
I use my car the least possible/car sharing (1 point)
None of the above (0 points)

For each of these tick yes or no:

- My house is insulated **yes** (1 point) **no** (0 points)
I have solar panels installed **yes** (1 point) **no** (0 points)
I use energy-saving bulbs **yes** (1 point) **no** (0 points)
I have planted one or more trees **yes** (1 point) **no** (0 points)
I like to wash with the bath tub filled up to the brim or leave water running **yes** (0 points) **no** (1 point)
I leave lights on unnecessarily **yes** (0 points) **no** (1 point)
I leave air-conditioning on unnecessarily **yes** (0 points) **no** (1 point)

Score:

- 11-13 **Excellent:** Your contribution to mitigate the effects of climate change is priceless. You serve as an example to the rest of society.
8-10 **Good:** Your contribution to mitigate the effects of climate change is good, however, there is still a lot you can do.
5-7 **Fair:** You need to roll up your sleeves and see how you can improve your score.
<4 **Poor:** You are not putting enough effort into the fight against climate change. Change your lifestyle before it is too late!