

DECLARATION FOR COP30: BRAZIL'S UNIFIED HEALTH SYSTEM (SUS) AS A GLOBAL PARADIGM FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Recognizing that the climate crisis is a public health crisis, which threatens decades of progress in global health and deepens inequalities;

Considering that, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 4.5 billion people still lacked full access to essential health services in 2021, and that progress toward Universal Health Coverage (SDG 3.8) has stagnated, exacerbating the suffering of the most vulnerable populations;

Alarmed that strategies based mainly on market mechanisms have proven insufficient to ensure financial protection and equitable access, leaving billions behind;

Inspired by the Brazilian constitutional precept that states: "Health is a right of all and a duty of the State," a principle that guides one of the largest public, universal and free health systems in the world;

We affirm that Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS), established in the 1988 Citizen Constitution, constitutes one of the most advanced and prepared solutions to confront the impacts of climate change on human health, particularly in the critical pillar of adaptation.

Why the SUS is a Structural Solution for Climate Adaptation

The SUS is not merely a health service but a social protection network intrinsic to national resilience.

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Its principles of **universality, comprehensiveness, and equity** provide the necessary framework to protect the population from the ongoing effects of climate change:

1 - Health Surveillance as an Early Warning System: The SUS maintains a robust health surveillance infrastructure that continuously monitors climate-sensitive diseases such as dengue, leptospirosis, and respiratory illnesses aggravated by wildfires and air pollution. This capacity is the first line of defense, enabling rapid, evidence-based responses to outbreaks and emergencies.

2 - Primary Care as a Portal for Community Resilience: The reach of Primary Care, present in the most remote Amazonian territories and in thousands of municipalities, makes it the backbone of local adaptation. The Family Health Strategy provides continuous care, prevention, and guidance directly to communities, strengthening them against food insecurity, water scarcity, and disease proliferation.



3 - Emergency and Disaster Response:

The SUS maintains the National SUS Force and strategic reserves, enabling swift and coordinated action in the face of increasingly frequent and intense natural disasters such as floods, prolonged droughts, and landslides. This capacity saves lives and ensures continuity of care during times of greatest crisis.

4 - Focus on the Most Vulnerable Populations:

Guided by the principle of equity, the SUS pays special attention to Indigenous peoples, black population, traditional communities, riverine populations, children, and the elderly — precisely those most affected by climate impacts. This focus is a direct antidote to climate injustice.

5 - Integration between Health and Environment:

The Ministry of Health of Brazil, through initiatives such as AdaptaSUS and the Strategic Agenda +Health Amazon Brazil, demonstrates an integrated vision that places public health at the center of climate adaptation policies.

Brazil at the Forefront: From SUS to COP30

Brazil's leadership in hosting COP30 in Belém, at the heart of the Amazon, represents a historic opportunity to present this concrete policy to the world.

The Belém Health Action Plan,

developed by the Brazilian government with support from the **WHO** and **PAHO**, is a direct legacy of the SUS's expertise. This voluntary plan calls on nations to:

- Integrate health and climate surveillance systems;
- Develop evidence-based public policies;
- Promote innovation and capacity building, always guided by **health equity** and **climate justice**.

Conclusion and Call to Action

While the world debates how to finance and structure health system resilience, Brazil offers a tested and ever-evolving model. The SUS embodies the understanding that **health is a public good, not a commodity**, and that a strong, publicly funded, and extensive public sector is the only way to ensure that **no one is left behind** in the climate crisis.

Therefore, we defend that the principles of Brazil's Unified Health System serve as a **global reference**, the most solid and ethical path to guarantee the **Human Right to Health** on a warming planet.

Climate adaptation requires more than technology — it requires **institutionalized solidarity**.

And the SUS is proof that this is possible.



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