

Lesson Plan

# Climate Change and Infectious Diseases

## Length

one 45-minute period

## Grade Level

High School

## Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to identify the wide range of ways in which climate change is affecting our health
- Students will be able to articulate how these effects can be addressed

### [How Climate Change Affects Our Health](#)



[Perilous Pathogens: How Climate Change Is Increasing the Threat of Diseases \(cfr.org\)](#)



### [Handout](#)



[Google Slides template for activity](#)



## Homework

- Read: CFR Education | “How Climate Change Affects Our Health”
- Complete the handout (attached)

## Class

- **(5 minutes) Review homework:** Make sure that students:
  - Have identified the full range of harms
  - Are considering both adaptation and mitigation as responses
- **(25 minutes)** Break students into four groups and assign each group one of the diseases discussed in Perilous Pathogens. Share a copy of the attached slideshow template with students—it contains a section for each group, already labeled with their disease. If you teach multiple sections, create a separate copy of the template for each section. Ask students to complete the following tasks and fill in the corresponding slides in their section of the template:
  - Explain what the disease is
  - Explain the impact of climate change on the disease
  - Explain what can be done about the disease
- **(15 minutes)** Have each group briefly present their findings
  - As students listen to the presentations, they should consider: what more could/should countries be doing to address the threat of climate change on diseases more effectively? If time allows, lead a short discussion on this question.

# Vocabulary

## infectious disease

also called communicable, a disease that spreads via people, animals, insects, or contaminated food and water —such as the flu, chickenpox, or Ebola.

## World Health Organization

UN agency meant to lead global public health research and response.

## emissions

refers to the amount of greenhouse gases an entity, such as a country or company, produces.

## fossil fuels

hydrocarbon energy sources such as oil, coal, or natural gas.

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. federal agency that researches and responds to outbreaks of infectious diseases and researches some noninfectious diseases.

## deforestation

the clearing or thinning of forests by people for materials, land-use, medicinal ingredients, farming, paper production, or other non-forest purposes.

## adaptation

term for the actions and strategies that aim to reduce the exposure of people and places to climate change's effects.