

**AlterNet Conference 2022**  
**Session**

**Name and Institutions of Chairs and Co-Chairs**

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**Session title**

Biodiversity and human health

**Session abstract**

The impact of environmental, climate, ecosystem change, and degradation on human health is increasingly recognized. Human wellbeing depends upon well-functioned ecosystems which are prerequisites for good human health. The role of biodiversity in providing essential goods and services to human health has been widely discussed over the past decades, but only recently has attention been paid, due to the pandemic, to the direct and serious effects of biodiversity loss on physical human health. Biodiversity is additionally integral to key development sectors that modulate health outcomes. Changes in biodiversity may impact the economy, physical security, freedom of choice, and action, which are affecting directly or indirectly the physical, mental health and social wellbeing of people. The latter are the three elements of human health according to the World Health Organization. The loss of biodiversity along with socio-economic impacts can profoundly affect the transmission of infectious diseases to humans. Much attention has been given to the relationship between physical health and biodiversity loss, however, the linkages between mental health and social wellbeing with biodiversity are still underexplored. Finally, human health is a fundamental human right and a key indicator of sustainable development and has a central place in the Sustainable Development Goals agenda calling on all stakeholders to “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages”. In this session, we want to bring together scientists and leading thinkers to explore the human health consequences of the loss of biodiversity or the human health benefits people obtain by it. The session will combine scientific presentations, and a discussion aiming to answer the questions presented below and produce a paper on biodiversity and human health.

**Main Workshop session theme:** Examining the links between Biodiversity and human health

This session will be framed around three main questions:

- How can biodiversity affect human health?
- How can we better capture the linkages and dependencies between biodiversity and human health?
- How can we better incorporate human health into the decision-making process and urban planning?

**Type of session: presentation, workshop, other**

- Blended: 8 x 10 min presentations + 5 min questions + 50 min panel discussion and synthesis.
- The three questions will be provided to all participants in advance and will be the core themes for the discussion

**Intended outputs**

- Session summary document which may form the core of a perspective paper
- Key outcomes AlterNet webpage and media

**Duration (3 hours)**