

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Healthy, Regenerative and Just



Climate and Health Alliance
caha.org.au

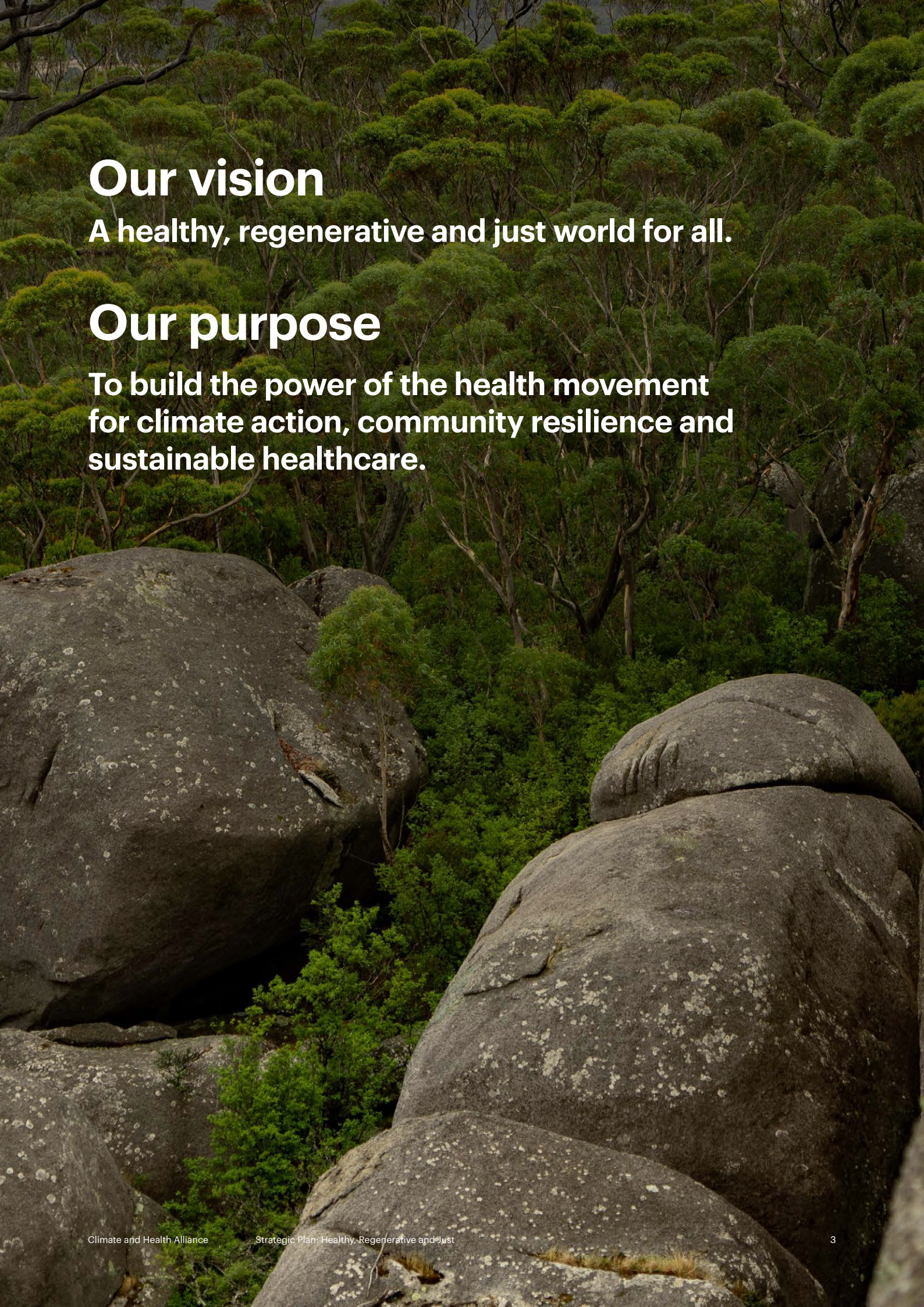
Recognition and Commitment

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across the region, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia, Māori in Aotearoa, and the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific. We recognise their enduring sovereignty, deep cultural knowledge, and continuing connection to place. We commit to listening, learning, and working in ways that honour and reflect Indigenous ways of being and knowing in our shared pursuit of health equity.



ABN 75 260 386 455

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Our vision

A healthy, regenerative and just world for all.

Our purpose

**To build the power of the health movement
for climate action, community resilience and
sustainable healthcare.**

About us

The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) is recognised as the peak body of climate change and health in Australia. Our membership also extends to Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. We are independent, non-partisan and non-profit.

We represent health professionals in the broadest sense: from doctors and nurses to health executives, to physiotherapists, to psychologists, to health researchers, to social workers, to support staff, and more. We understand that good health outcomes are achieved by a holistic approach informed by diverse views.

We represent 90 medical and health organisations as paid CAHA members, and 5,000 hospitals and health services in our freely accessible sustainable healthcare network.

We are a member of Climate Action Network Australia. We are the Pacific region partner and affiliate of Health Care Without Harm, and we are founding members of the Global Climate and Health Alliance.



“It is time for climate to be central to Australia’s health policy.”

- Professor Paul Kelly,
former Chief Medical
Officer, CAHA board
member



How we work

At the heart of CAHA's vast membership is a lean, high-impact team providing strategic leadership, expertise and support. Collectively:

- We pursue fair and equal access to health by tackling the environmental and social determinants of health.
- We are dedicated to our purpose, take responsibility for our actions and honour our commitments.
- We create greater impact through respectful collaboration, drawing out the collective wisdom of our alliance
- We partner with sovereign Indigenous Peoples across Australia, Aotearoa and the Pacific Islands, acknowledging their ways of knowing, being and doing.
- We are driven by evidence and transparent about our work.
- We prioritise wellbeing and resilience to sustain our impact over time.

The opportunity

The biggest threat we face

Climate change is the biggest threat we face – driving escalating harms to public health and straining healthcare systems.



Smoke pollution from the 2019-20 bushfires led to 4,753 hospital admissions and 429 deaths, with health damages amounting to \$1.95 billion



The Australian Government recognises that health and social support systems will be at “severe risk” from climate change by 2050



At 3 °C temperature rise, the time spent in heatwaves in Australia will quadruple and deaths from extreme heat will rise fivefold by 2050



Higher sea surface temperatures and coral reef bleaching threaten capture fisheries, with serious consequences for food security in the Pacific Islands

Our window of opportunity

The health sector wants to do this work.

Climate change is forcing the health and medical community to think beyond care for individual patients — expanding their duty of care to protecting the Earth's natural systems on which health and wellbeing depend.

Health is emerging in international climate negotiations and domestic climate policy.

100+ countries have committed to integrate health into their national climate change plans, including Australia.

Climate action to protect health is a uniquely compelling call to action

We have the opportunity to reframe climate change as a public health issue. Health is universally valued by all people, regardless of political preference or ideology. Health professionals are trusted by the community. They have the authority to effectively inform the public and decision-makers about:

- The urgent need for action on climate change
- The benefits to human health if we act
- The risks to human health if we do not act



Our history

Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century.
- The Lancet, vol 373, May 2009

In May 2009, top medical journal The Lancet released a major report, concluding with an unequivocal assertion: Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century. The Lancet also noted health professionals “had barely begun to engage with an issue that should be a major focal point for their research, preparedness planning, and advocacy.”

In August 2010, over 40 organisations and individuals met in Melbourne to meet this call to action. The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) was formed and put out its first public statement, calling for urgent emissions reduction.

“As health professionals, we value science and its inclusion in the development of public policy, and we expect our governments to do the same”
- Fiona Armstrong in 2010, CAHA founder and nurse

CAHA was almost entirely volunteer-led in its early years and secured its first major philanthropic grant in 2017. It has grown steadily in size and influence by drawing on its extensive networks. Today CAHA’s network extends to every state and territory in Australia, to Aotearoa New Zealand, the Pacific Islands and around the world.



Our impact

We have a strong record of galvanising sector support for ambitious policy asks, influencing national narratives, supporting sustainability in health systems, and enabling climate leadership in health professionals.

Key highlights since our inception include:

- **The National Health and Climate Strategy:** We secured a commitment from the Albanese Government for the National Health and Climate Strategy, released in December 2023. The strategy is a culmination of a decade of work, and a testament to CAHA's collaboration, innovation and perseverance. This work has led to interest from state and local governments for climate-health policy plans and guidance, and is considered an international exemplar for climate-health policymaking.
- **New sustainable healthcare module:** We have been a key partner in the development of a new sustainable healthcare module for health services, released in August 2025 by the *Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care*. This module will support health service organisations to better understand the climate-related safety and quality risks and solutions.
- **Global Green & Healthy Hospitals Pacific Network:** We have built a regional network of 173 health systems and health services, representing over 2,900 hospitals across Australia and New Zealand. This network works together to reduce their waste, greenhouse emissions and other environmental impacts.
- **Leaders in climate-health communications:** After extensive sectoral and academic consultation, we produced a world-leading communication guide on climate and health. This led to the World Health Organization producing a toolkit for health professionals to guide climate-health communication, co-produced with CAHA.
- **Empowering champions:** We have activated 500+ health professionals as climate champions via training in communications and campaigning. This work has increased the pool of climate-health champions working in hospitals, health associations, medical practices and academia across the region.

Our plan

Our theory of change

If the health movement leads on equitable climate solutions, decision-makers will act because the community cares about health and trusts health voices.

Our Strategic Priorities

Health In All Policies

Health is integrated into policy areas to maximise equitable health outcomes

Health Sector Transformation

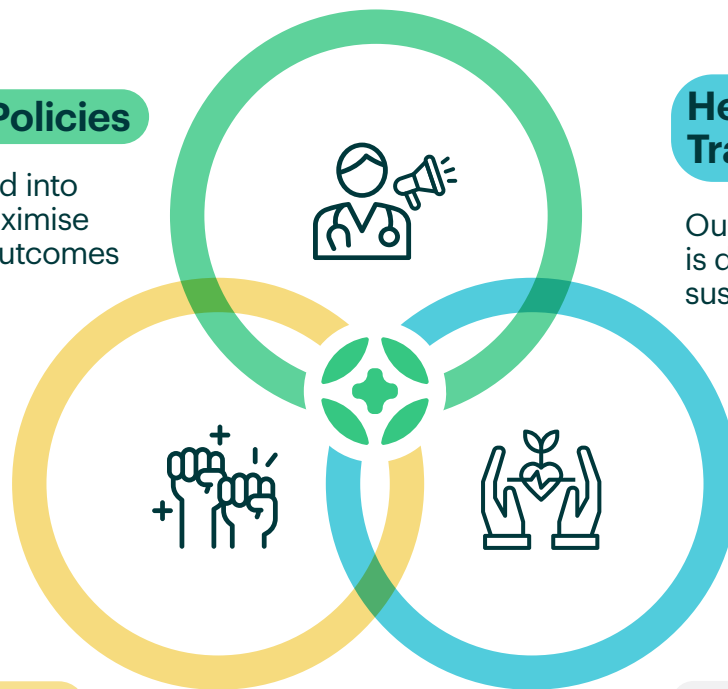
Our health system is decarbonised, sustainable and resilient

Thriving Alliance

A strong, sustainable organisation and engaged membership pursue our purpose

Our capabilities

- Coordinating alliances
- Communicating with purpose
- Translating new research
- Delivering projects
- Enabling climate leadership
- Measuring impact



Our capabilities

Over a decade of work, CAHA has achieved a strong foundation with which to deliver on our priorities.

Coordinating alliances

We excel in our role of connecting and coordinating multidisciplinary stakeholders, coalescing around shared goals for greater impact.

Communicating with purpose

We communicate broadly and purposefully to leverage community trust in health leaders.

Translating new research

We are on top of the latest research in an emerging field, and can translate it quickly for time-poor executives in the health sector.

Delivering projects

We consistently deliver on our commitments on time and to budget.

Enabling climate leadership

We train health professionals at every level to communicate and advocate effectively for change in the workplace, the parliament and the media.

Measuring our impact

We transparently measure and report our impact, so our allies and members can apply the lessons learned.



Our priorities



Health In All Policies

Health is integrated into policy areas to maximise equitable health outcomes.

We understand that fair health outcomes are often achieved outside the health sector. That's why we are striving for **health in all policies** – ensuring that our country's policies are good for our health, whether they focus on transport, energy, housing or food.

We'll influence policy to promote equitable health outcomes by:

- Capitalising on the high trust placed in health leaders to communicate our message
- Developing evidence-based policy with broad health sector support
- Ensuring the National Health and Climate Strategy is delivered in full, following a decade of successful advocacy
- Supporting decision-makers to embed a health focus at COP 31
- Shaping the national conversation to emphasise health benefits of our core policy areas: clean air, clean energy, climate adaptation and plastics



Health Sector Transformation

Our health system is decarbonised, sustainable and resilient.

We understand that the health sector needs to rapidly decarbonise, improve resilience to cope with climate impacts and improve the value of the care we provide. But the huge learning curve and constrained resources means progress is too slow. That's why we provide cutting-edge knowledge and expertise to health leaders and workers to achieve **health sector transformation**.

We accelerate the transition to a decarbonised, sustainable, resilient health system by:

- Growing and strengthening our celebrated sustainable healthcare network
- Increasing access to education which empowers healthcare professionals to tackle climate change from the ward to the boardroom
- Helping healthcare systems handle emerging requirements, like measuring emissions, decarbonising and assessing vulnerability
- Increasing public support for sustainability by publicising the proactive approach of the health sector



A Thriving Alliance

A strong, sustainable organisation and engaged membership work together to pursue our purpose.

We understand that this work will be necessary for the long-term health and wellbeing of all people. That's why we are committed to supporting a strong, sustainable team and a diverse, engaged membership base to achieve a **thriving alliance**.

We'll cultivate a high-performance team and ensure a thriving alliance by:

- Securing funding to realise our goals now and in the future
- Hiring the best staff and give them what they need to succeed
- Leveraging our Board's skills, networks and passion to provide stable, forward-looking governance
- Deepening regional collaboration with Aotearoa New Zealand and Pacific Islands to advance shared health and equity goals
- Supporting an engaged, diverse membership base through collaboration and education
- Striving for intergenerational justice in our movement by centring First Peoples and young people



We'd love to work with you.

Please reach out to CAHA CEO

Michelle Isles at michelle.isles@caha.org.au

For more information, see
www.caha.org.au



Our plan

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Our strategic priorities

