

Localising the Global

A CLIMATE AND HEALTH INDEX ©



Background

In the **Anthropocene** new indicators of progress are required to **promote community engagement** with and measurement of **healthy and sustainable wellbeing** in a climate-affected world.

This feasibility study explored the need for and constituents of a local index, such as a **rescaled/modified global Happy Planet Index** (created by the New Economics Foundation) that explicitly links human health to health of the environment to a local level in Victoria, Australia.

Method

The study was undertaken by the **Health Nature Sustainability Research Group, Deakin University**, Australia (Ethics Approval No: HEAG-H_60_2017). Qualitative description methods guided the study design involving key informant interviews (n=17) and four focus groups (n= 27 participants) with health and/or sustainability academics, practitioners and policy-makers.

Document analysis of health and environment indexes and policy mandates augmented the analysis. Qualitative content analysis techniques were used to analyse and interpret key findings.

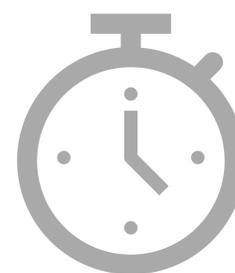
Findings

Participants saw **immense value** in the use of such an index at a local level for the purposes of **community engagement**, instigating **policy change**, promoting co-benefit **action on climate change and health** as well as a comparative tool. It was determined for Victoria, that **life expectancy** and **life satisfaction** data are readily accessible for the human health part of an equation, whereas there was uncertainty expressed regarding the value of the equity adjustment and availability and ease of generating ecological footprint data.

The solution may lie in using **carbon emissions as a proxy**, with data derived from local councils participating in the *Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy* and the use of the **Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA)**. The proposed formula for use at a local level is highlighted to the right.



Life satisfaction



Life expectancy



Socio-Economic Index for Areas



Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions



Climate & Health Index