

## Symposium

📅 Sun. Sep 28, 2025 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM JST | Sun. Sep 28, 2025 12:00 AM - 1:30 AM UTC 🏛️ Session  
Room 2 (Main Hall B)

**[Symposium 79] Symposium on Climate change and mental health**

Moderator: Meryam Schouler-Ocak (Charité University), Tsuyoshi Akiyama (World Federation for Mental Health)

[SY-79]

**Symposium on Climate change and mental health**

Misari Oe<sup>1</sup>, Ruta Karaliuniene<sup>2</sup>, Susanna Every-Palmer<sup>3</sup>, Sefanaia Qaloewai<sup>4</sup>, Meryam Schouler-Ocak<sup>5</sup> (1.Kurume University(Japan), 2.Rheinmosel Fachklinik, Academic Hospital at Mainz University(Germany), 3.University of Otago(New Zealand), 4.Department of Mental Health, Child Care and Adult Medicine, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Fiji National University(Japan), 5.Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin(Germany))

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[SY-79-01]

**Awareness of Climate Change Issues in Japan, a Country Frequently Affected by Natural Disasters**

\*Misari Oe (Kurume University(Japan))

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### [SY-79] Symposium on Climate change and mental health

Misari Oe<sup>1</sup>, Ruta Karaliuniene<sup>2</sup>, Susanna Every-Palmer<sup>3</sup>, Sefanaia Qaloewai<sup>4</sup>, Meryam Schouler-Ocak<sup>5</sup> (1.Kurume University(Japan), 2.Rheinmosel Fachklinik, Academic Hospital at Mainz University(Germany), 3.University of Otago(New Zealand), 4.Department of Mental Health, Child Care and Adult Medicine, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Fiji National University(Japan), 5.Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin(Germany))

The consequences of climate change are stress factors for mental health. Therefore, as global warming progresses, an increasing incidence and prevalence of mental illness is to be expected. Thus, climate change is likely to have a significant impact on population mental health. Vulnerable groups, such as those with pre-existing mental illness, children, and adolescents, need to be protected. People affected by climate change and involuntary migration are significantly more mentally stressed than the general population. Furthermore, people in low income countries and minority communities are particularly vulnerable to experience the most severe impacts now and in the coming decades. While most climate-related events cannot be completely avoided, many of the health risks could be prevented through building climate-resilient health systems with improved risk reduction, preparation, response, and recovery. Conducting vulnerability and adaptation assessments and developing health system adaptation plans can identify priority actions to effectively reduce risks, such as disaster risk management and more resilient infrastructure. Moreover, climate change and mental health represents a rapidly growing area of research, which needs to accelerate and broaden in scope to respond with evidence-based mitigation and adaptation strategies, e.g. resilience through community solidarity and cultural practices. To safeguard mental health, it is vital to integrate psychological support into climate adaptation strategies. In this context, psychiatrists have a role to play in preparing for, and developing mitigation strategies against such effects. At the same time, there is a need for further systematic research on the mechanisms of action and effects of climate change on mental function.

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## [Symposium 79] Symposium on Climate change and mental health

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### [SY-79-01] Awareness of Climate Change Issues in Japan, a Country Frequently Affected by Natural Disasters

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Keywords : impermanence、 climate change、 awareness

Located in the Pacific Rim, Japan is a country prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and typhoons. Data shows that 17.9% of earthquakes with a magnitude of 6.0 or higher occur in Japan. On the other hand, there are survey results showing that Japan is not at high risk from climate change related to global warming. In a 2023 public opinion poll on climate change, the percentage of people who are aware of the issue of climate change is high, and they are also aware of the heat in summer, but the perception that climate change affects flooding, etc. is not particularly high, especially among young people. Why is there not a high level of awareness of the effects of climate change in Japan? I will put forward three hypotheses: 1) There have been many natural disasters in the past and there is a sense that climate change is one of them, 2) There is a sense of the impermanence of nature that nothing can overcome (Hōjōki (1212)), 3) There is a mindset that if it can be scientifically proven, it can be dealt with. A sense of the impermanence of life may be a characteristic of the Japanese people, but it has both pros and cons, and in terms of preventing future disasters, it is a disadvantage.