

The Impact of Climate Change on Animal Health

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Abstract

Climate change poses new challenges to animal health, altering disease patterns and stress levels. This article explores the effects of temperature fluctuations, habitat changes, and extreme weather events on livestock and wildlife.

Keywords: Climate Change; Animal Health; Disease Patterns; Livestock; Wildlife

Introduction

As the climate shifts, animals face increased susceptibility to diseases and environmental stress. This study highlights the consequences and potential adaptive measures to protect animal populations [1]. Climate change is emerging as one of the most significant challenges to animal health, influencing both domestic and wild species across the globe [2]. Rising temperatures, shifting weather patterns, extreme weather events, and changes in ecosystems are all having profound effects on the health and well-being of animals. As climate change accelerates, it disrupts habitats, alters the availability of food and water, and influences the spread of diseases, creating new risks for animal populations. For livestock, climate change can lead to heat stress, reduced productivity, and increased vulnerability to infectious diseases. For wildlife, changing environments can force species to migrate [3], potentially exposing them to new pathogens and predators. Furthermore, climate change also affects the abundance and distribution of vectors, such as mosquitoes and ticks, which are responsible for spreading diseases like West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and avian malaria. The interconnectedness of climate, ecology, and animal health underscores the importance of understanding these impacts, as they not only affect animal populations but also have direct consequences for human health, food security [4], and biodiversity.

This article explores the diverse ways in which climate change is affecting animal health, with a focus on the challenges it presents to veterinary care, wildlife conservation, and global ecosystems.

1.1. Vector-Borne Diseases and Climate Change

One of the most concerning impacts of climate change on animal health is the rising prevalence of vector-borne diseases. Climate change, through rising temperatures and shifting weather patterns, has created more favorable conditions for vectors such as mosquitoes [5], ticks, and fleas to thrive in new regions. These vectors, which are responsible for transmitting diseases like Lyme disease, West Nile virus, heartworm, and avian malaria, are expanding their range as warmer temperatures and altered precipitation patterns allow them to survive in areas previously unsuitable for their proliferation [6].

As these vectors spread to new regions, animals that were once free from these diseases are now at risk. Livestock populations, for instance, are increasingly vulnerable to diseases transmitted by ticks, such as babesiosis and anaplasmosis [7], which can have devastating effects on animal health and agricultural productivity. Similarly, companion animals, such as dogs and cats, are seeing an increase in cases of heartworm and tick-borne illnesses due to the expansion of these vectors into previously unaffected areas. The growing prevalence of these diseases poses a significant challenge for veterinary care,

as it requires new strategies for prevention, early detection, and

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