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Climate Change, Ocean Health and Quality of Life - An Inextricable Connection in Large Ocean Island States

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Since time immemorial, nature, and by extension the ocean, have made positive contributions to the health of mankind. Whether it be fertile soil, pollination, medicine, taking part in mindfulness activities, or food, we as a species depend on the many services provided by the natural world. Our environment can be linked to some fundamental determinants of health, such as clean air, clean water, and balanced nutrition, and emotional wellbeing. Therefore, any environmental degradation as a result of climate change has undeniable tangible and intangible effects on human health all over the globe, and this is especially true in relation to mental health in populations occupying Large Ocean Island States (LOIS). As climate change has led to an increase in extreme weather events, and the accompanying devastation, there has been a corresponding decrease in health and quality of life. This presentation will explore how the impact of climate change and its corresponding impact on the ocean has enduring impacts, both physiologically and mentally. Therefore, all of the processes and recommendations to combat climate change will have important co-benefits to mental and physical health, and help to build resilience in the face of the dearth of resources faced by LOIS. This lack of resources must be urgently addressed, and solutions can be explored by fostering collaboration between mental health professionals and climate scientists to collect sufficient data. The resulting findings can be used to expedite access to the funds needed to implement the necessary levels of mitigation and adaptation specifically tailored to the infrastructural realities of LOIS.