



Top managers' uncertainty on how to navigate climate goals and actions: A qualitative study in a Swedish hospital

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4.4% of greenhouse gas emissions derive from healthcare

- Approx. 250 000 more deaths/year 2030-2050 due to malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat.
- Europe had the highest share of heat-related deaths in 2017-2022.
- Establishment of mosquito-borne viral diseases, e.g. Zika virus infection, dengue fever, chikungunya virus infection and yellow fever.

How do we tackle health care related emissions?

From global, to national mission & hospital goals

Sustainable development goals / EU Climate Act

National net-zero mission

Regional long-term climate and sustainability goals

Pay-for-performance hospital goals set by the Regional Health and Medical Administration ´

Local hospital goals set by the management team



Reduce consumption-based CO2 emissions



Reduce disposal of pharmaceuticals



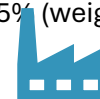
The proportion of organic food in the hospital's served patient meals should be at least 50% (monetary value) or 35% (weight)



Food waste from patient meals should have decreased by at least 45% compared to 2017

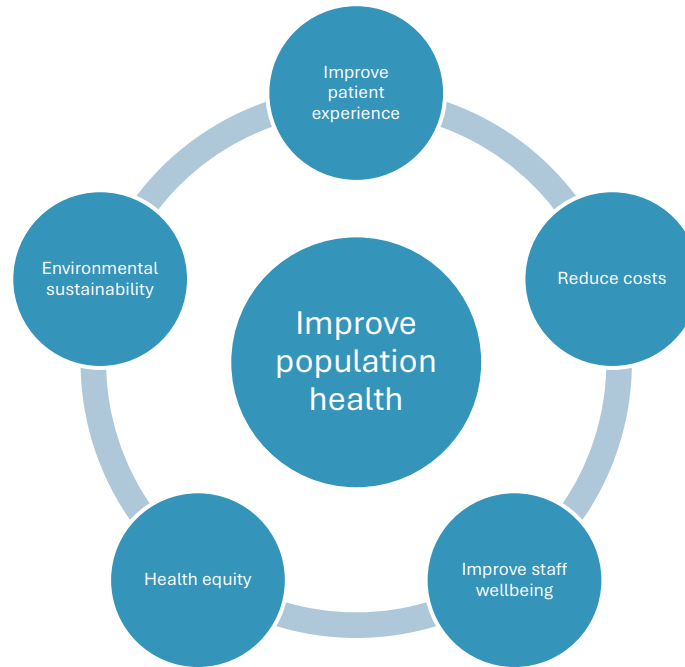


Reduce the environmental impact from the use of materials and products



Strengthen circular material flows

How do health care managers navigate climate goals among the multiple goals of healthcare?



Alami et al.. 2023

High expectations on managers, but little is known about their perceptions on climate goals and actions

Large expectations are put on leaders to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Tochkin et al. 2023; Kiang et al. 2021, Gerwig et al. 2022, Sergeant et al. 2023) but few empirical studies explore managers' experiences of climate climate goals and actions

Managers' understanding (beliefs, mental models) guide their behaviours and decision making (Schön and Rean 1999, Senge 1990)

Research conducted in other sectors found that managers' sensemaking, beliefs and values influence corporate environmental strategies and actions (Busch 2020, Tadoro 2020)

Aim and Methods

Explore how members of a hospital top management team perceive and respond to climate goals

Methods:

- 15 interviews with members of a top management team in a Swedish Hospital
- Thematic analysis
- Inductive approach

Climate goals are important but there are also divergent perceptions

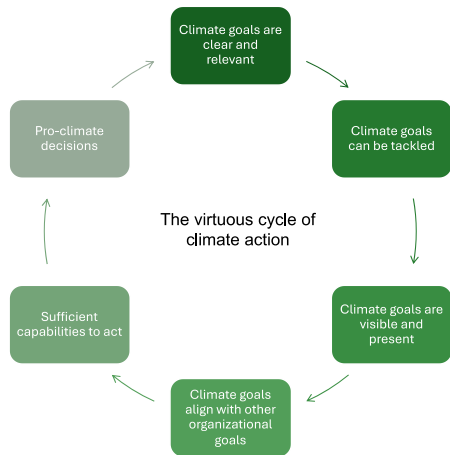
Climate goals are important, and the hospital can make a difference

From clear to abstract

From visible to invisible

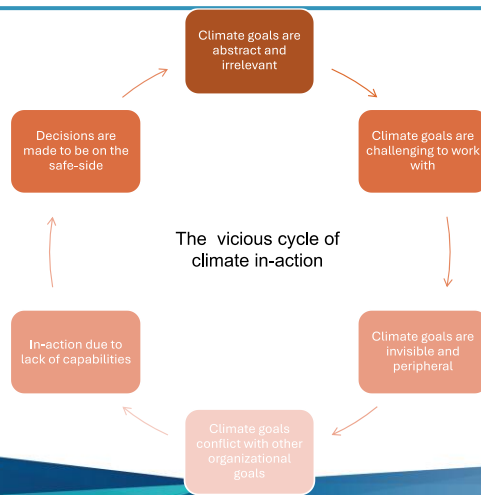
From alignment to conflict with other organizational goals

From action to inaction due to constraints in capabilities

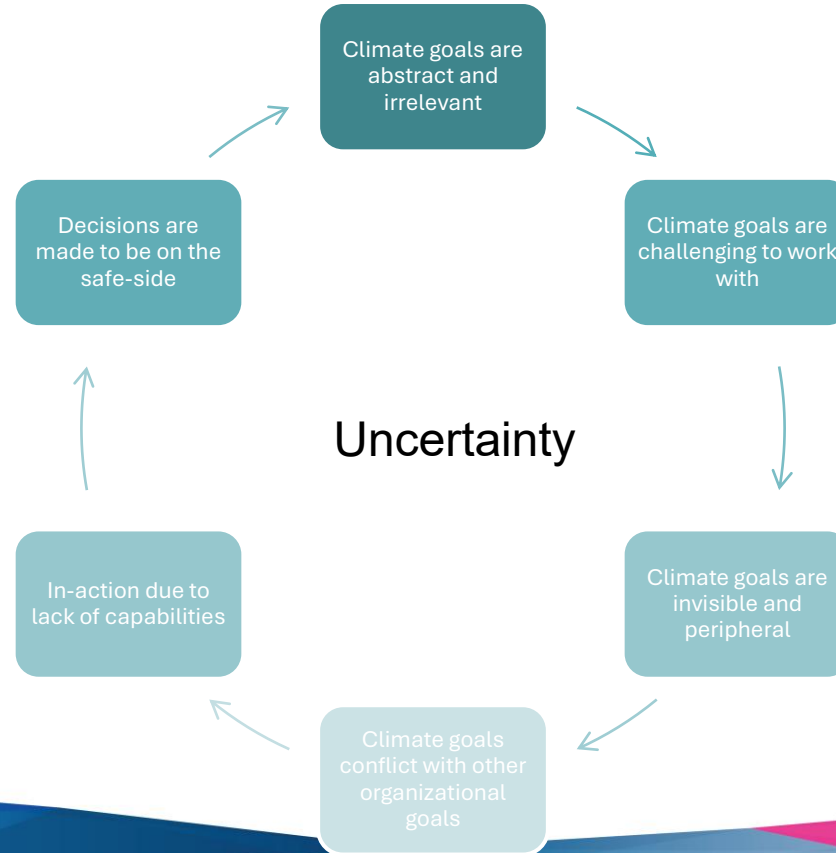


Managers who perceive climate goals as important

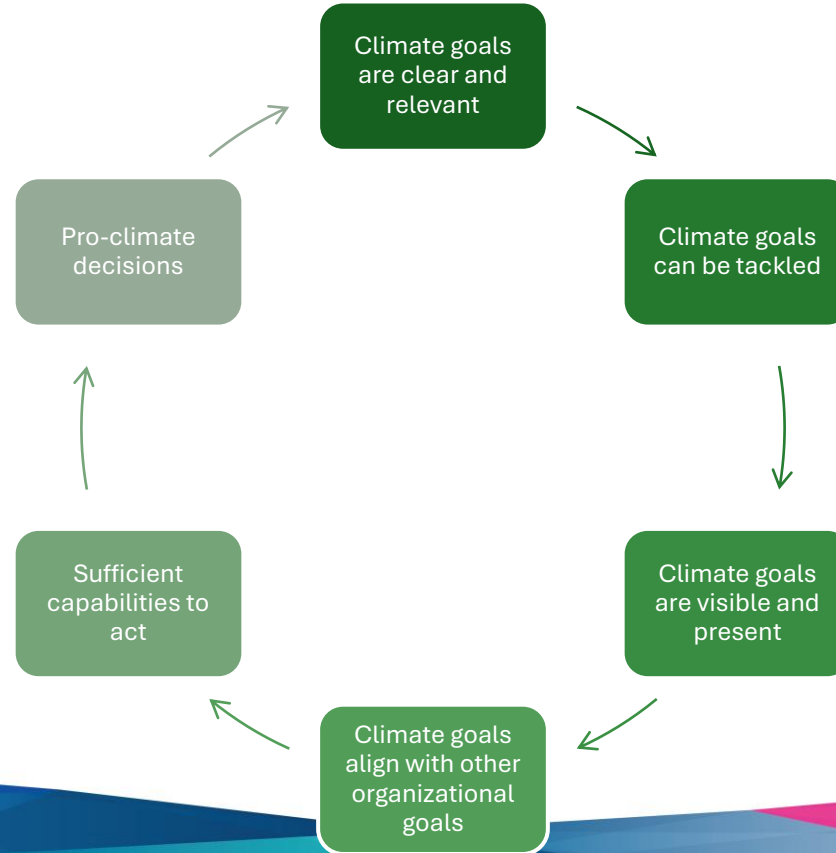
→ Reduce health care emissions



The vicious cycle of climate in-action



The virtuous cycle of climate action



Contribution

Climate goals as both catalysis and constraints for climate actions

Uncertainty can trigger climate in-action (Mourey, 2023)

- Choice uncertainty
- Outcome uncertainty

Surfacing and aligning managers understanding of climate goals may be important to move beyond “low hanging fruits”