

# Commercial determinants and geopolitics

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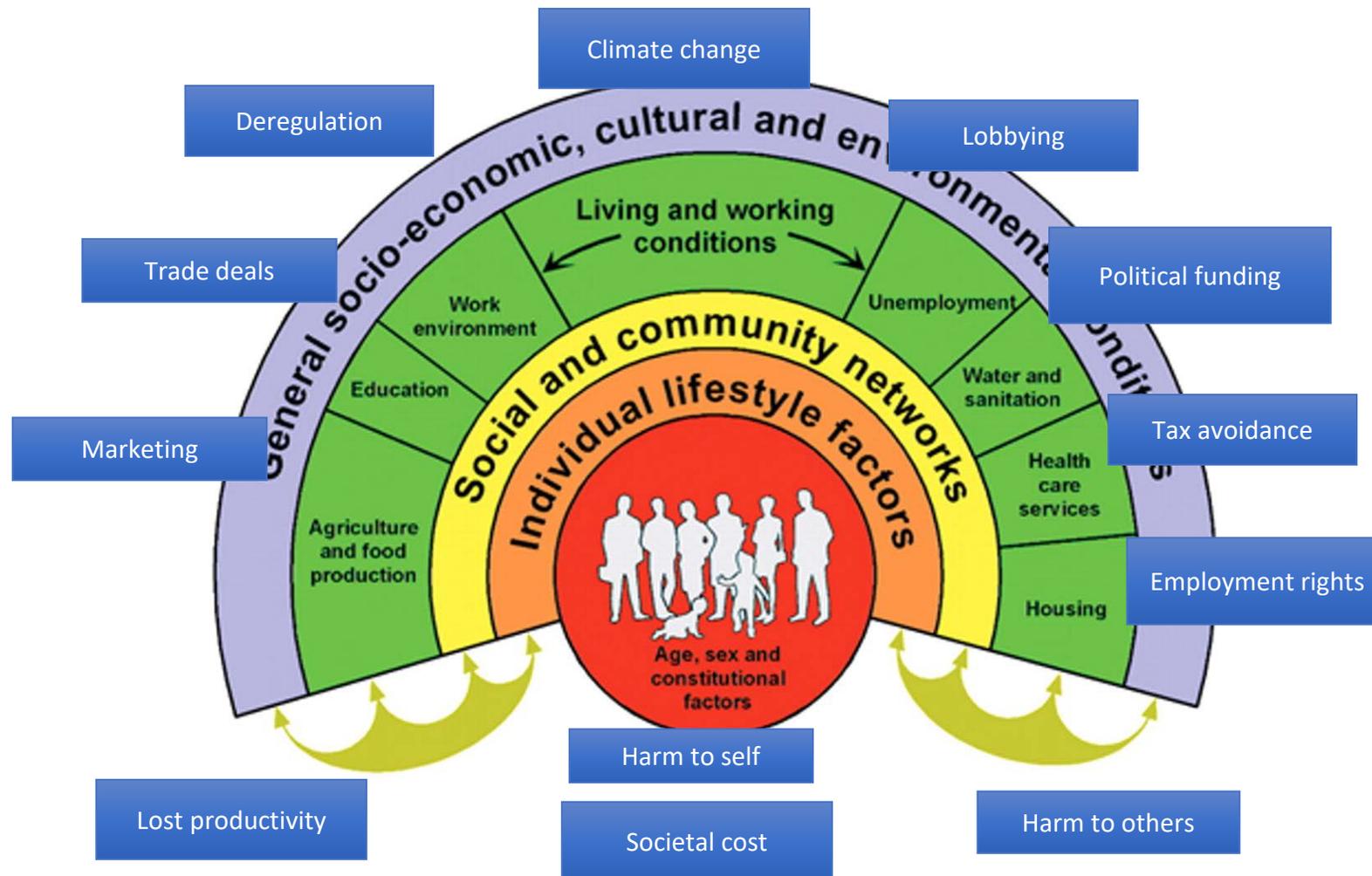
# Outline

- The commercial determinants of health
- Moving upstream and implications for geopolitics

# What is health?



# Social determinants of health



# There is a growing understanding of the relevance of commercial determinants

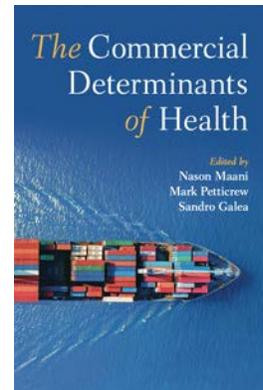
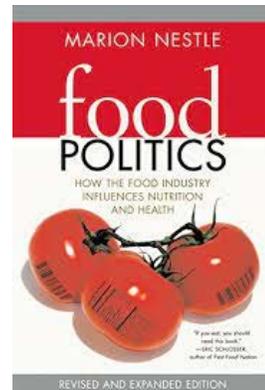
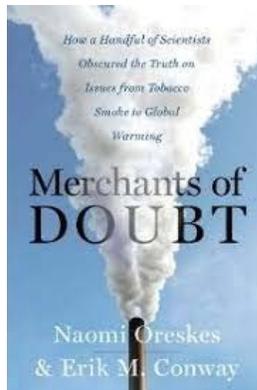
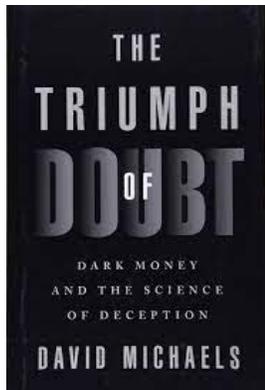
- Interest from WHO
- Coalitions among advocacy groups
- Emergence of research groups and communities
- Increasing research, reports and policy briefs



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Commercial determinants of health



SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN®

CLIMATE CHANGE

Exxon Knew about Climate Change almost 40 years ago

A new investigation shows the oil company understood the science before it became a public issue and spent millions to promote misinformation

THE TIMES

Drinks firms 'downplay alcohol link to cancer'

Food industry sway over public health gets new scrutiny

By CANDICE CHOI January 30, 2019

AP

# Casting doubt on evidence of harm

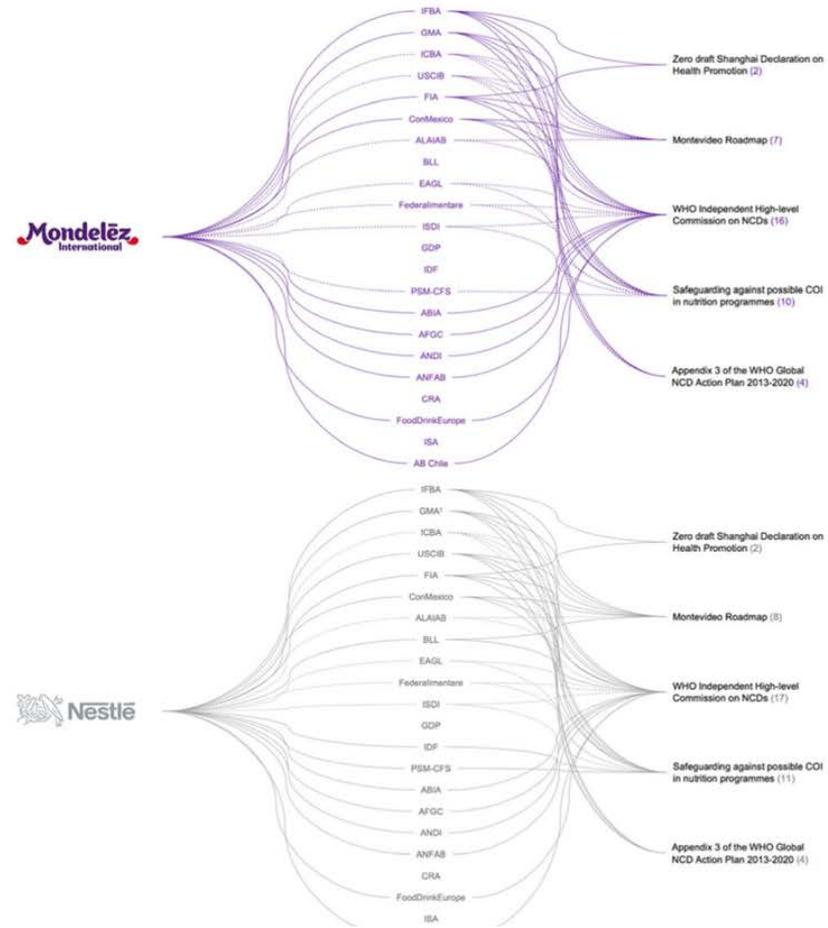
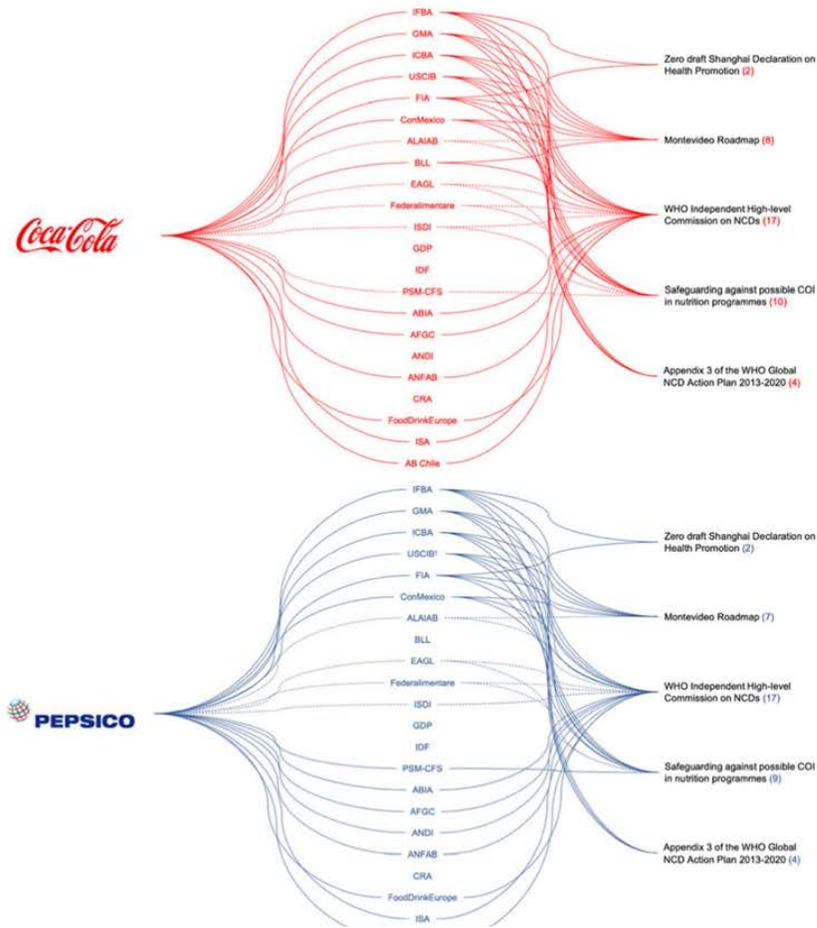
*“Cancer is a very complex disease. Many factors have been associated with this disease besides smoking, including occupational and environmental exposures, diet, viruses, heredity and stress. Clearly there are many gaps in knowledge about lung cancer that only further research will resolve.” BAT, 1992*

*“Earth’s climate is affected by many complex variables, such as sunlight, clouds, rain, wind, ice, storms, lightning, volcanoes, comets, magnetic fields and living organisms, including humans. Throughout history, climate has fluctuated between periods of cooling and periods of warming.” ExxonMobil, 1998*

*“We believe obesity is a complex problem which cannot be reduced to the demonization of one ingredient... there is no simple answer to the complex problems of obesity” Food and Drink Federation, 2015*

*“Is there a cause-and-effect relationship between firearms and suicide? Nearly everything gets blamed for suicide at one time or another--love, hate, religion, pain, boredom, fear, shame, guilt, alcoholism, drug addiction, family dissolution, loss of a job, a new job, the news media, music, the time of year, terminal illness, old age and even the weather.” NRA-ILA, 1999*

# Analysis of food industry framing in WHO consultations



Commonalities in responses to WHO consultations:

- Regulation too simplistic
- Self-regulation preferable
- Restricting engagement harmful
- WHO overstepping mandate
- Policies infringe on national sovereignty
- NCDs are national responsibility
- In some cases responses almost identical across a range of trade groups

# Lancet Series on commercial determinants

Editorial by WHO DG

Articles on:

-Defining commercial determinants of health

-Going beyond unhealthy commodities

-Future directions for research

## Commercial determinants of health

Published: March 23, 2023

### Executive Summary

Commercial actors can contribute positively to health and society, and many do, providing essential products and services. However, a substantial group of commercial actors are escalating avoidable levels of ill health, planetary damage, and inequity—the commercial determinants of health. While policy solutions are available, they are not currently being implemented, and the costs of harm caused by some products and practices are coming at a great cost to individuals and society.

A new *Lancet* Series on the commercial determinants of health provides recommendations and frameworks to foster a better understanding of the diversity of the commercial world, potential pathways to health harms or benefits, and the need for regulatory action and investment in enterprises that advance health, wellbeing, equity, and society.

### Editorial

#### Unravelling the commercial determinants of health

The Lancet

*The Lancet*, Vol. 401, No. 10383

Published: March 23, 2023

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### Series

#### Defining and conceptualising the commercial determinants of health

Anna B Gilmore, Alice Fabbri, Fran Baum, Adam Bertscher, Krista Bondy, Ha-Joon Chang, Sandro Demaio, Agnes Erzse, Nicholas Freudenberg, Sharon Friel, Karen J Hofman, Paula Johns, Safura Abdool Karim, Jennifer Lacy-Nichols, Camila Maranhã Paes de Carvalho, Robert Marten, Martin McKee, Mark Petticrew, Lindsay Robertson, Viroj Tangcharoensathien, Anne Marie Thow  
*The Lancet*, Vol. 401, No. 10383



### Related Content

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Jennifer Lacy-Nichols, Robert Marten, Eric Crosbie, Rob Moodie

*The Lancet Global Health*, Vol. 10, No. 7

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#### PERSONAL VIEW

##### Conceptualising the commercial determinants of suicide: broadening the lens on suicide and self-harm prevention

May C I van Schalkwyk, Jeff Collin, Michael Eddleston, Mark Petticrew, Melissa Pearson, Lisa Schölin, Nason Maani, Flemming Konradsen, David Gunnell, Duleeka Knipe

*The Lancet Psychiatry*, Vol. 10, No. 5

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### Infographics



# Global strategies in response to the threats of evidence and regulation

## Plain packaging – becoming a mainstream issue



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## Overall regional fiscal priorities

- Ensure that tobacco taxation policy remains driven by MoFs
- Safeguard national fiscal sovereignty
- Prevent regional tax initiatives (tax harmonization, earmarking)

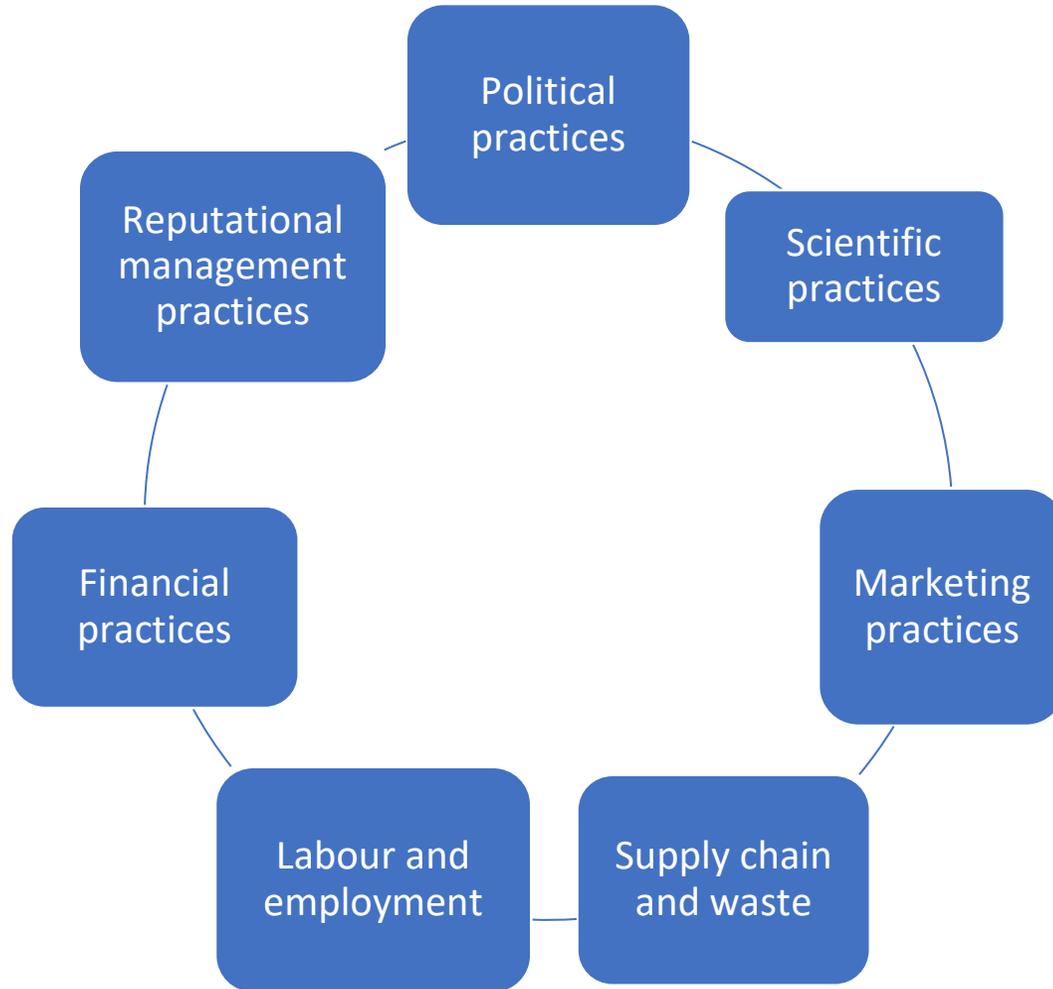
## Components of a preventive plain packaging plan



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# Geopolitical implications



## [2023 Bridgetown Declaration on NCDs and Mental Health](#)

To address negative trade-related and commercial determinants of health, SIDS need to act both individually and collectively to protect their regulatory and policy space in trade and investment agreements, and safeguard policymaking from industry interference and conflicts of interest. SIDS also need to support and enhance sustainable local food production and processing by responsible local commercial actors, including small-holders and family farms.

# Applying evidence toward greater policy coherence

- A great deal of nuance and complexity among private sector actors, across geographic contexts
- Strong parallels emerging in key harmful product industries in terms of strategies and impacts, that are not reflected in regulatory approaches, or conflicts of interest guidance
- This has a range of potential risks
  - Undermining partnerships more broadly
  - Ignores role in preserving between or within country inequalities
  - Undermining efforts to build more sustainable economic systems

# Potential opportunities moving forward

- Building of greater coalitions (including between member states/regions)
- Tools to aid member states in assessing impact of CDoH at regional, national and subnational levels
  - Widening access to essential goods and services
  - Building more equitable trade and IP frameworks
  - Greater monitoring of cross-border externalities

# Thank you

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