

How have people been affected by global climate change?

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THE WORLD HAS WOKEN UP TO CLIMATE CHANGE



A report published today by NOAA and NASA confirmed that 2010 to 2019 was the hottest decade since record keeping began 140 years ago. The analysis also revealed that 2019 was the second hottest year ever recorded and that ocean temperatures were the highest they've ever been. The scientists behind the report point to carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions as the sources of continued global warming.

These hotter temperatures helped fuel a slew of natural disasters as the world finally confronted the realities of climate change. The research is the latest to confirm that conditions could worsen unless action to reduce emissions are taken.

This decade, many people around the world woke up to a grim reality: Climate change is here, it's happening now, and it could very easily get much, much worse.

These 10 years were punctuated by a series of deadly, dramatic, devastating events.

Hurricanes like Sandy, Maria, and Harvey fundamentally changed the communities they barreled into, leaving behind scars that have yet to heal. Stronger and stronger heat waves forced communities across the country and world into dangerous swelter. Wildfires tore up hundreds of thousands of acres in a flash.

Climate records fell left and right. Hottest-ever year for the planet's atmosphere? Check. Hottest-ever year for its oceans? Also check. Puny, unprecedentedly tiny stretches of Arctic sea ice? Check, check, check.

The underlying force beneath the changes is indisputable. Steadily increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, caused primarily by humans burning fossil fuels, are trapping extra heat near Earth's surface. That warms Earth as a whole. The outcome is both straightforward—a hotter planet—and incredibly complex, as changes cascade through the oceans, atmosphere, soil, rocks, trees, and every living thing on the planet.

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How do green house gases affect the planet?