Guide to the Science of Climate Change in the 21st Century

Chapter 16
Observations and Impacts of Recent Climate Change – Climate Change Indicators

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Eco-print, “Wildfire”, Nora Manz 2020

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Chapter 16.0 Observation and Impacts of Recent Climate Change – Climate Change Indicators

16.1 Introduction

The global temperatures of the atmosphere and ocean are increasing. These observations are indisputable considering the quality and thoroughness of current monitoring technologies. The temperature increase is occurring coincident with increasing concentration of greenhouse gases, GHG's, in the atmosphere, also an indisputable fact. The linkage between temperature increases and GHG increases are obvious when considering the energy budget. The observed consequences or impacts of increased concentration of GHG's in the atmosphere and increased temperature are predictable if not quantifiable. The past five years are the hottest years on record. 2020 ties 2016 for hottest ever.

The impacts of increased temperature and GHG's, individual and combined, are also apparent. They appear to be outside the range of probability associated with naturally occurring variations; that is, naturally occurring extremes.

Increases in GHG's are causing ocean acidification.

Global warming is causing accelerated global ice loss and sea level increase https://tc.copernicus.org/articles/15/233/2021/.

NASA has produced a summary of the effects of climate change in a web site titled Global Climate Change, Vital Signs of the Planet, https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/carbon-dioxide/ and https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/.
They discuss global temperature rise, warming ocean, shrinking ice sheets, glacial retreat, decreased snow cover, sea level rise, declining Arctic sea ice, frequent extreme events, ocean acidification, changes in precipitation patterns, more droughts and heat waves, more frequent, more intense and stronger hurricanes.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) recently published (November 1, 2021) their report, State of Global Climate 2021 WMO Provisional report https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WMO%20Provisional%20Report%20on%20the%20State%20of%20the%20Global%20Climate%202021.pdf. They discuss:

- Global climate indicators
  - Baselines
  - Greenhouse gases
  - Temperature
  - Ocean

    - Cryosphere
    - Stratospheric ozone
    - Drivers of short-term variability
- High impact events in 2021
    - Heatwaves and wildfires
    - Cold spells and snow
    - Precipitation
    - Flood
    - Drought
    - Tropical cyclones
    - Severe storms
    - Attribution
- Risks and impacts
    - State of disasters
    - Food security
    - Population displacement
    - Climate impacts on ecosystems

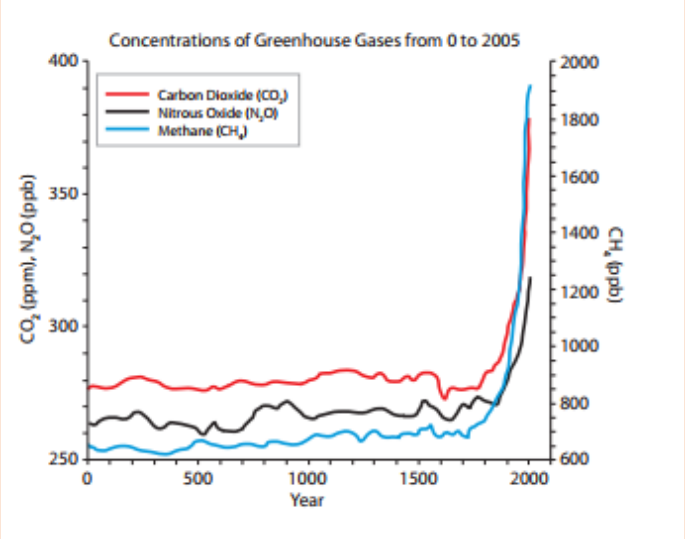
Peter Brannen in the book titled The Ends of the World provides a readable, scientifically informed description of the evolution of life on Earth and the circumstances that resulted in its evolution, extinction and redevelopment - five times since life on Earth first began. Chapter 8 titled The Near Future provides a particularly clear description of recent human caused impacts on biodiversity and climate change.

Colin P. Summerhayes in the book titled Paleoclimatology from Snowball Earth to the Anthropocene provides a detailed scientific/ technical description of the changing climate of Earth over the past 800 million years including recent human caused impacts.

16.2 Temperature and Greenhouse Gases

Increases in GHG concentration in Earth's atmosphere, particularly in the past two thousand years as shown in Figure 16.1, was made evident in a variety of proxy data of which the most precise and reliable were the result of ice core sampling in Antarctica and Greenland ice sheets and observations made using modern instrumentation over the past fifty years. The increases since the beginning of the industrial age, considered to be 1850, are rapid and significant. Carbon dioxide emissions in 2020 are greater than 413 ppm.

The effects of global warming are more pronounced at the poles in what is called polar amplification, http://www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2006/01/polar-amplification/ .



The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere November 2021 is greater than 417 ppm.

The forecast CO_2 concentration for 2021 at Mauna Loa, Hawaii is 417 ppm.

Figure 16.1 Atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide over the past 2000 years.
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/greenhouse_gas_basics_e3148

The changes in temperature of Earth's atmosphere over the past two thousand years and since 1850 are shown in Figures 16.2 and 16.3. Recent increases are unusual.

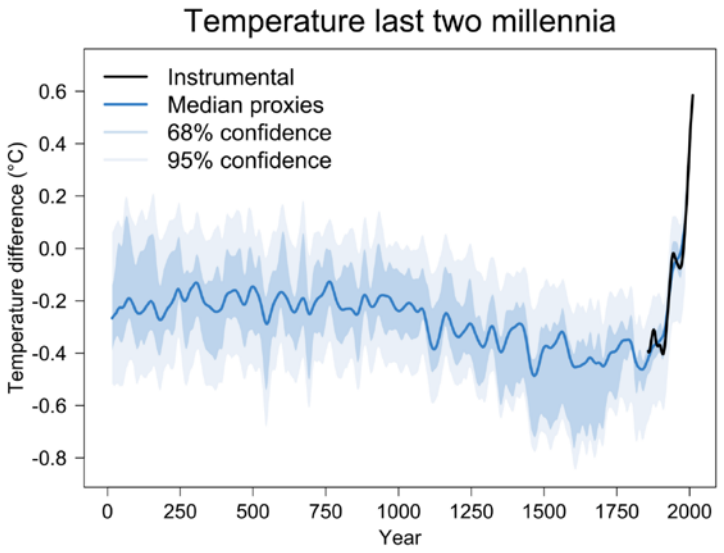


Figure 16.2 Variation of the temperature of Earth's atmosphere over the last two thousand years.

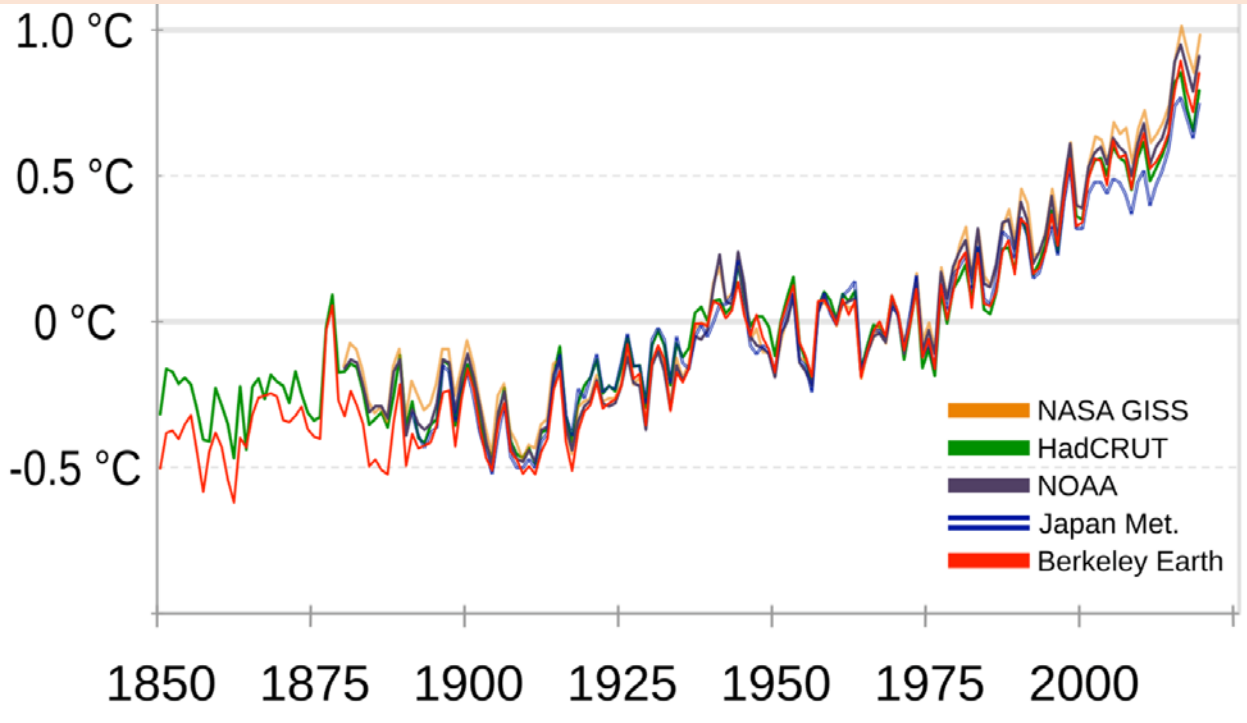


Figure 16.3 Global average temperature change since the beginning of the industrial period. https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/world-of-change/global-temperatures

The IPCC has updated Figure 16.2 and 16.3 in the recent IPCC AR6 WG1 report, Climate Change: The Physical Science Basis, as shown in Figure 16.4 taken from the Summary for Policy Makers.

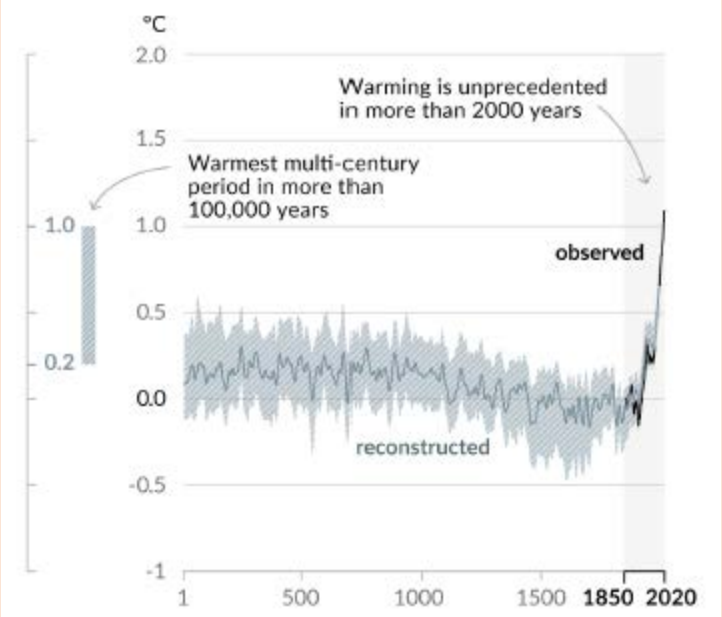
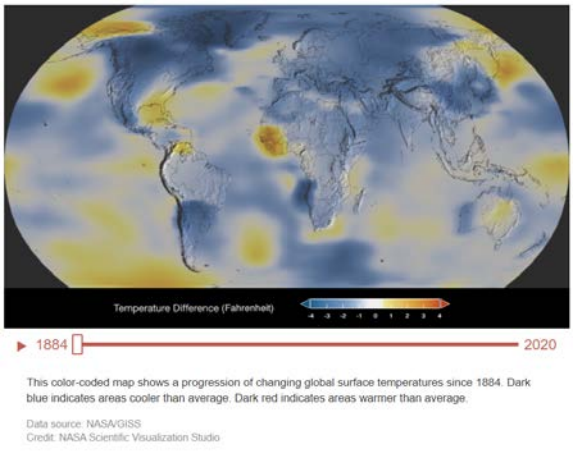


Figure 16.4 Change in global surface temperature (decadal average) as reconstructed (1-2000) and observed (1850-2020), taken from https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf.

It is important to note that reconstructions of temperatures 100,000 years in the past are less than observed present day temperatures.

NASA, as part of the 'Climate Time Machine', has published an interactive graphic of the map of the world showing how global temperature has varied from 1884 to 2020 https://climate.nasa.gov/interactives/climate-time-machine

Figure 16.5 shows a snapshot of global surface temperatures in 1884 and 2020 taken from the NASA 'Climate Time Machine', interactive graphic of the map of the world showing how global temperature has varied from 1884 to 2020 https://climate.nasa.gov/interactives/climate-time-machine .



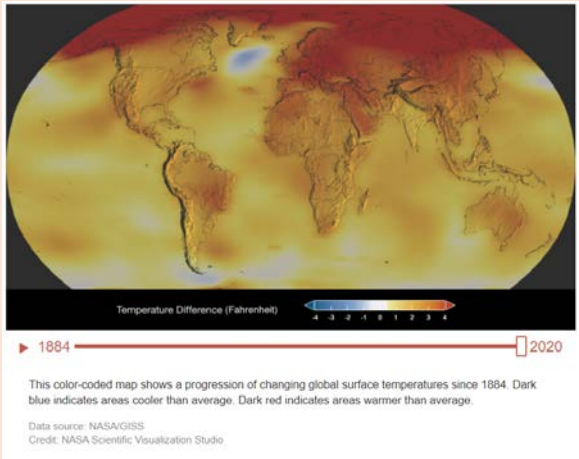


Figure 16.5 Snapshot of global surface temperatures in 1884 and 2020 taken from the NASA 'Climate Time Machine', interactive graphic of the map of the world showing how global temperature has varied from 1884 to 2020 https://climate.nasa.gov/interactives/climate-time-machine .

The Copernicus Climate Change Service reports that the last seven years to 2021 were the world's hottest on record https://climate.copernicus.eu/copernicus-globally-seven-hottest-years-record-were-last-seven.

News reports March 2022 report that Antarctica and Arctic hit temperatures 40°C and 30°C hotter than normal https://globalnews.ca/news/8698454/antarctica-arctic-temperatures-records/ and https://www.france24.com/en/science/20220324-polar-regions-record-absurd-high-temperatures-weather-quirk-or-unprecedented-bad-news.

16.3 Ocean acidification

Approximately 31% of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere are absorbed by the oceans (https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/global-ocean-absorbing-more-carbon) This amounts to a fourfold increase in ocean's annual carbon uptake between 1994 to 2007 compared to 1800 to 1994.

The ocean becomes more acidic as it absorbs carbon dioxide, as measured by pH (lower the pH the more acidic the ocean). This is illustrated in Figure 16.6. The carbon dioxide combines with water to form carbonic acid which will ultimately have an impact on aquatic life (shell forming organisms for example). Measurements of pH are taken in oceans over the Earth. Figure 16.7 shows the location of sampling points in the Pacific. Figure 16.8 shows how increases in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere correlates with decreases in pH (increased acidity). The acidification of the Arctic Ocean is discussed in a report by the Arctic Monitoring

and Assessment Program, AMAP, http://www.amap.no/documents/doc/Arctic-Ocean-Acidification-2013-An-Overview/1061.

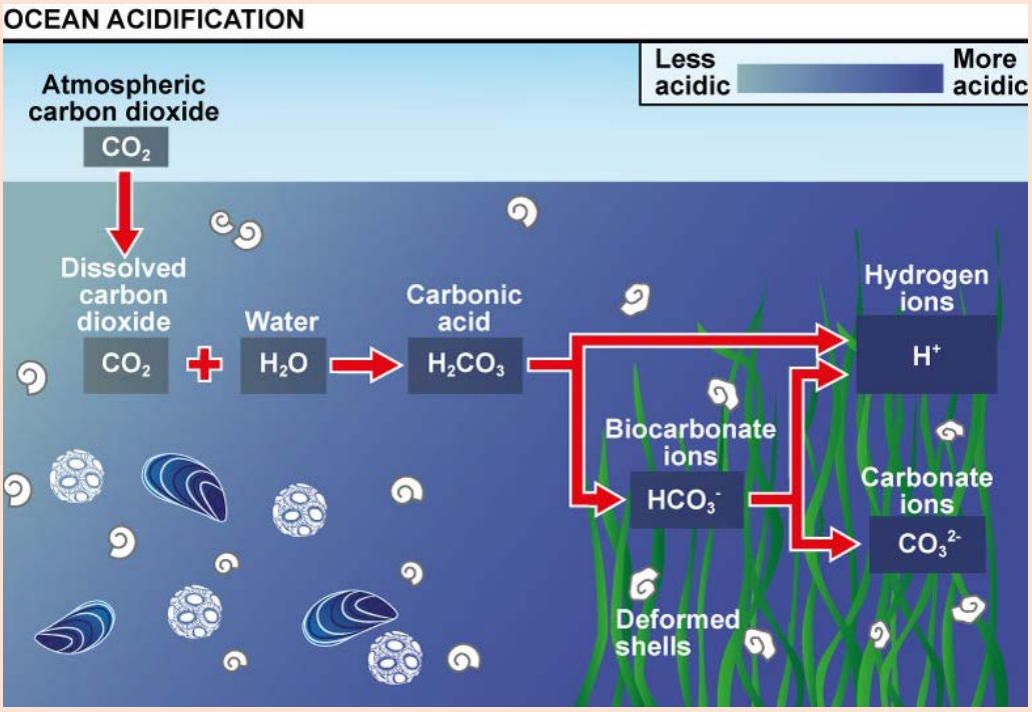


Figure 16.6 Ocean acidification.
https://www.oceanacidification.org.uk/

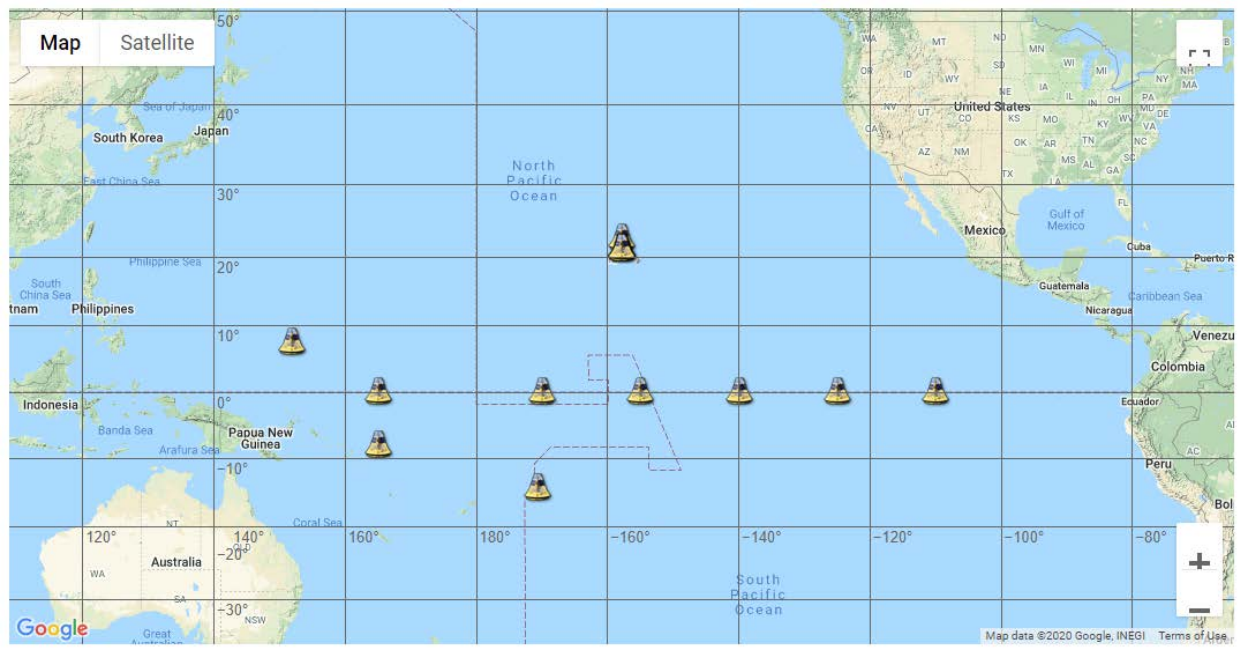


Figure 16.7 Buoys providing real-time data on ocean pH in north Pacific Ocean. https://www.pacioos.hawaii.edu/projects/acid/

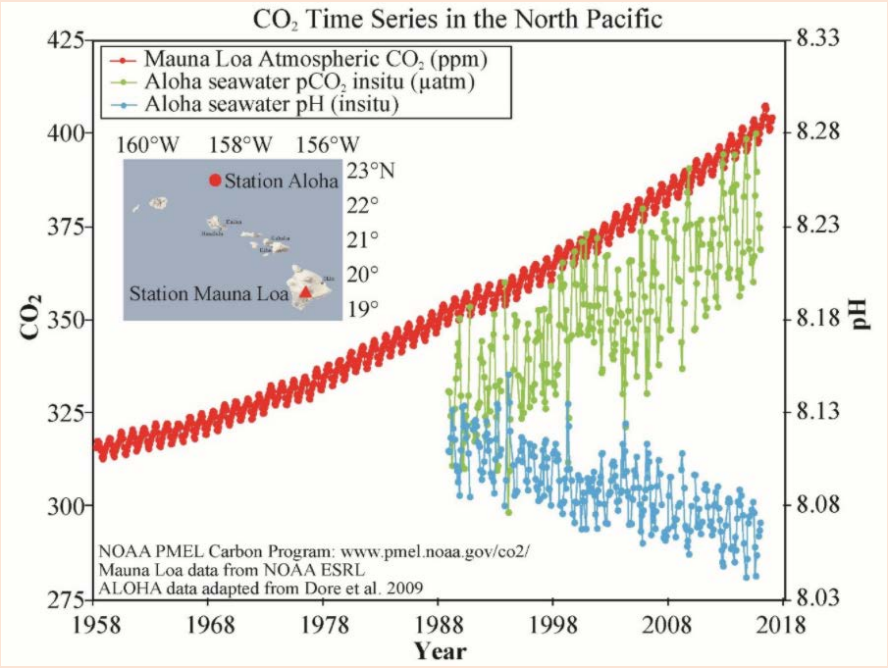


Figure 16.8 Changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide, Mauna Loa, Hawaii and pH of seawater of adjacent Station Aloha. https://en.unesco.org/ocean-acidification

December 12, 2020 – Fifth Anniversary of the Paris Agreement

August 9, 2021 – Publication of IPCC AR6 WG1, Climate Change, The Physical Science Basis, February 28, 2022 IPCC AR6 WGII, Climate Change: Impacts, Adaptability and Vulnerability and April 4, 2022 IPCC AR6 WGIII, Climate Change: Mitigation

16.4 Arctic

The Arctic is defined by the location of the North Pole (which is in Canada). The location maps shown in Figure 16.9 show that the Arctic is shared by Canada, USA, Denmark, Russia and Sweden and Finland to some extent. Greenland is considered separately.

Figure 16.9 Arctic region location maps.
https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion/Maps/Sea-Ice

The polar regions have experienced much greater temperature increases that the average global temperature and this is not completely understood (https://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/warmingpoles.html#:~:text=Taylor's%20research%20shows%20the%20Earth's, poles%20through%20large%20weather%20systems.&text=But%20the%20poles%20are%20warming, during%20the%20same%20time%20period.)

It is very important to note that the rapid warming being experienced in the Arctic will also affect the melting of the Greenland Ice Field and all ice caps in the Arctic, permafrost and animal habitat both terrestrial and sea.

See Figure 16.10 which shows the departure from average air temperature in the Arctic. Considerable study of the Arctic region has been performed under the auspices of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program, AMAP. They have published a report titled, Snow,

Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA) in 2017, http://www.amap.no/swipa which all nations sharing the Arctic have contributed. The World Wildlife Fund has published a report in 2008 titled, Arctic Climate Impact Science – an update since ACIA, https://wwfeu.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/final_climateimpact_22apr08.pdf. The temperature increase has resulted in major changes in sea ice cover, permafrost melt and glacier melt. These effects have impacted wildlife populations. There is also some concern over the volumes of freshwater that are flowing into the Arctic Ocean and the effects this might have on ocean circulation in the north Atlantic.

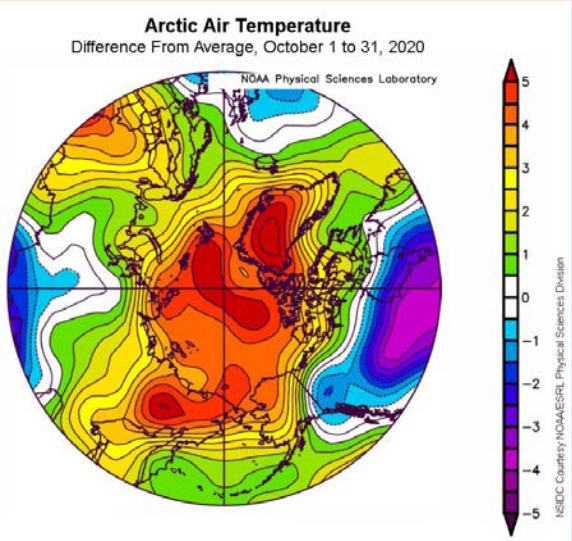


Figure 16.10 Arctic air temperature October 31, 2020. Yellows and reds indicate higher than average temperatures and blues and purples indicate lower than average temperatures. http://nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews/

A recent report from the Norwegian Centre for Climate Services provides an update on how Arctic Sea ice is decreasing and the impacts that this will have on the habitat for such animals as polar bears and walruses (https://www.bjerknes.uib.no/en/article/news/svalbard-have-experienced-warming-4c-last-50-years) where a reference is made to their report, 'Climate in Svalbard 2100'. This study is supported by a recently published paper in the 'communications earth and environment', titled 'Accelerated sea ice loss in the Wandel Sea points to a change in the Arctic's last ice area', https://www.nature.com/articles/s43247-021-00197-5?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210702&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, has published an Arctic Report Card since 2006; the most recent for 2021 may be found in https://www.arctic.noaa.gov/Report-card. The Report highlights the rapid warming, decline in sea ice extent, decrease in snow cover, accelerated melt of the Greenland ice sheet, retreating glaciers, and species migration resulting from habitat changes.

An explanation as to why the Arctic is warming faster than the global average may be found in an article published in the newsletter, Carbon Brief, 11.02.2022 by Dr. Matthew Henry, https://www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-why-does-the-arctic-warm-faster-than-the-rest-of-the-planet?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20220214&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily. This article is based on a paper titled 'Process Drivers, Inter-Model Spread, and the Path Forward: A Review of Amplified Arctic Warming, by Taylor, Patrick C., et al in the journal Frontiers of Earth Science, 09 February 2022, https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feart.2021.758361/full. The author(s) explain that the amplified Arctic warming is the result of a number of factors including decreased albedo as result of loss of sea ice, lack of strong convective circulation which would have otherwise circulated warm air on the surface to the upper atmosphere, increased warming due to increase in moisture laden air from the equatorial regions to the Arctic where it condenses and releases heat and seasonal differences where the increased heat content of the Arctic ocean (due to effects just listed) tends to result in a warmer winter.

16.4.1 Sea ice

Changes in sea ice extent and thickness in the Arctic are reported by the National Snow and Ice Data Center, NSIDC and the Canadian Ice Service (https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/ice-forecasts-observations/latest-conditions.html) and by NASA's Ice, Cloud and Land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2), https://climate.nasa.gov/news/3122/five-facts-to-help-you-understand-sea-ice/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly+newsletter. Figure 16.11 shows satellite images of the Arctic illustrating how sea ice cover changes from March to September. Figure 16.12 shows a graph indicating that Arctic Sea ice cover is at or near its historical low. Figure 16.13 shows a graph of average monthly Arctic Sea ice extent for the month of October from 1979 to 2020. Note the significant decrease.

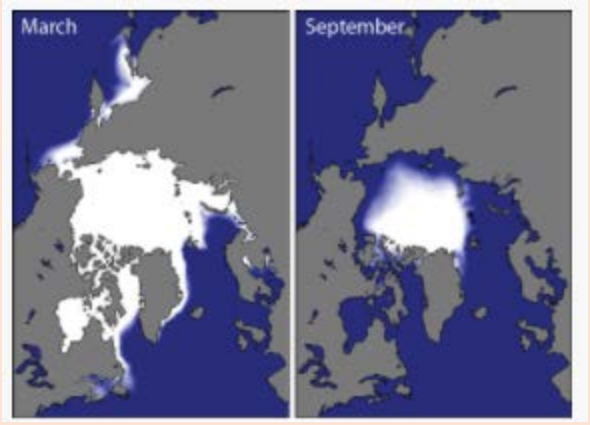


Figure 16.11 Satellite images of Arctic illustrating how sea cover changes from March to September. https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/sotc/sea_ice.html

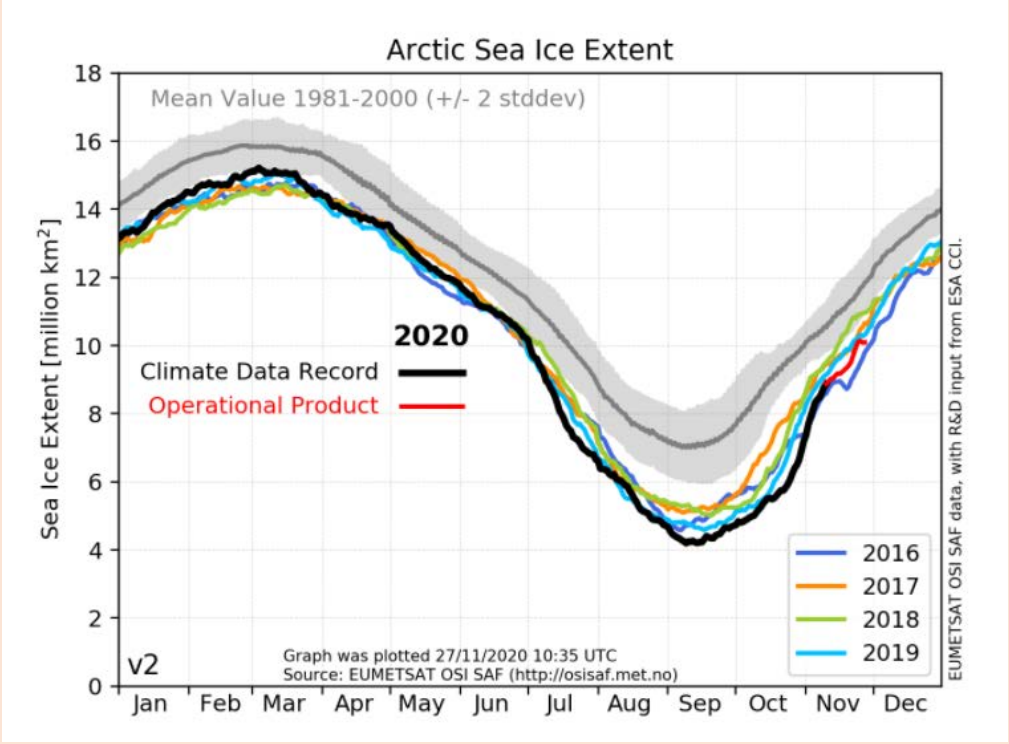


Figure 16.12 Arctic Sea ice extent by month to 2020. http://polarportal.dk/en/sea-ice-and-icebergs/sea-ice-extent0/

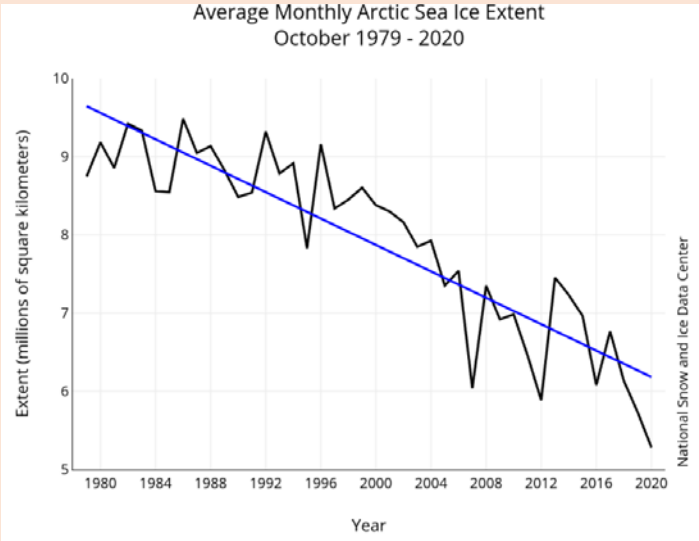


Figure 16.13 Average monthly Arctic Sea ice extent for month of October, 1979 to 2020. http://nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews/

The variation in sea ice volume is shown in Figure 16.14 illustrating that 2020 is at or near the historical low. ESA's CryoSat-2 satellite, https://earth.esa.int/web/eoportal/satellite-missions/c-missions/cryosat-2 , http://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/CryoSat , https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/cryosphere-oceans/sea-ice/measure, and NASA satellite ICESat-2, https://icesat-2.gsfc.nasa.gov/ https://www.nasa.gov/content/goddard/icesat-2 and https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/4734, measures sea ice thickness.
The downward trend in annual sea ice volume is clear from analysis performed by the Polar Science Center as shown in Figure 16.15.

The significance of sea ice to climate and habitat is discussed by NASA, https://climate.nasa.gov/news/3122/five-facts-to-help-you-understand-sea-ice/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly+newsletter. They state:

1. The sea ice minimum is declining at the rate of 13% per decade. This is significant because less solar radiation is reflected back to space and warms the water and the atmosphere above it (ice-albedo feedback cycle).
2. Sea ice acts as a blanket separating the ocean from the atmosphere preventing the warmer water from warming the atmosphere above it.
3. Sea ice is the habitat for Arctic Foxes, polar bears, walruses and seals.

They note that sea ice melt has very little impact on sea level rise.

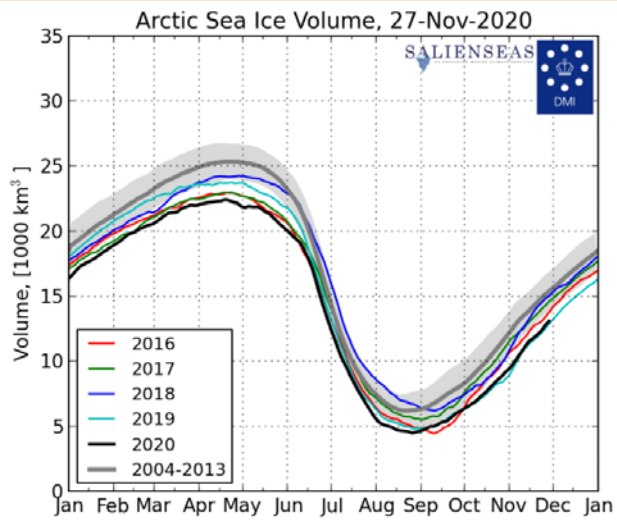


Figure 16.14 Arctic Sea ice volume. http://polarportal.dk/en/sea-ice-and-icebergs/sea-ice-thickness-and-volume/

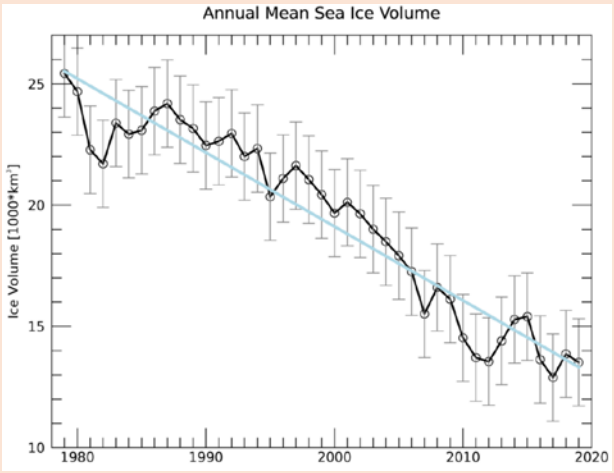


Figure 16.15 Arctic Sea ice volume from analysis by Polar Science Center. http://psc.apl.uw.edu/research/projects/arctic-sea-ice-volume-anomaly/

The significance of the seasonal extent of sea ice is the amount of short-wave radiation that will be reflected (albedo) and the effects on natural ecosystems (discussed later). This is illustrated in Figure 16.16. Open ocean has an albedo of 6% and will absorb 94% of short-wave radiation. Bare ice has an albedo of 50% and snow-covered ice (and ground) as high as 90%. The albedo of snow will decrease significantly if there is black carbon and inorganic aerosols in the snow. With the decrease in sea ice extent and observation of black carbon and inorganic aerosols in

snow the Arctic region is absorbing much more solar radiation, and is warming. This phenomenon is an example of the positive feedback effect of global warming – temperature increases. The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program has published a detailed report on the effects of black carbon and aerosols in their report titled, The Impact of Black Carbon on Arctic Climate, https://www.amap.no/documents/doc/the-impact-of-black-carbon-on-arctic-climate/746.

A recent study published in 'communications earth & environment', documenting the accelerating sea ice loss in the Arctic may be found in https://www.nature.com/articles/s43247-021-00197-5?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210702&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily . This study is supported by the Norwegian Centre for Climate Services which describes the rate of warming in the Arctic and how the climate has changed in their report titled "Climate in Svalbard 2100" https://www.nature.com/articles/s43247-021-00197-5?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210702&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily

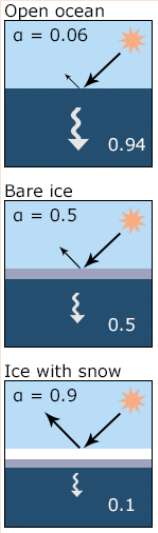


Figure 16.16 Albedo of open ocean, bare ice and snow cover in northern hemisphere.
http://nsidc.org/cryosphere/snow/climate.html
https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/seaice/processes/albedo.html

Two videos which describe how Arctic Sea ice circulates and moves into the North Atlantic are: Arctic sea ice decline 1984 to 2019, ESRI, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C17-Z_sl5cI and Mechanism for Arctic Sea ice decline, Yale, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNTLINqDG_E&feature=youtu.be .

NASA has published an interactive graphic showing how the extent of sea ice has changed from 1979 to present, https://climate.nasa.gov/interactives/climate-time-machine . Figure 16.17 shows a snapshot of sea ice extent in 1979 and in 2020.

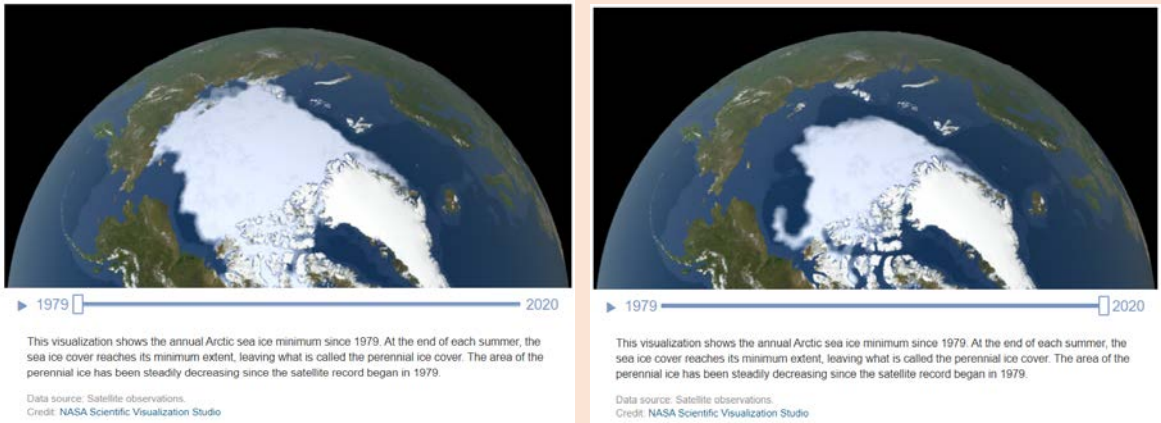


Figure 16.17 shows a snapshot of sea ice extent in 1979 and in 2020
https://climate.nasa.gov/interactives/climate-time-machine

16.4.2 Permafrost

National Geographic provides a very good description and discussion of permafrost, https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/permafrost/ . "Permafrost is a permanently frozen layer on or under Earth's surface. It consists of soil, gravel and sand usually bound together by ice. Permafrost usually remains at or below 0°C for a least two years.

Permafrost can be found on land and below the ocean floor. It is found in areas where temperatures rarely rise above freezing. This means permafrost is often found in Arctic regions such as Greenland, Canada, Alaska, Russia, China and Eastern Europe.

Permafrost thickness can range from one metre to more than 1,000 metres. Permafrost covers approximately 22.8 million square kilometres in Earth's Northern Hemisphere. Frozen ground is not always the same as permafrost. A layer of soil that freezes for more than 15 days per year is called "seasonally frozen ground". A layer of soil that freezes between one and 15 days a year is called "intermittently frozen ground".

Permafrost does not always form in one solid sheet. There are two major ways to describe its distribution: continuous and discontinuous.

Continuous permafrost is just what is sounds like: a continuous sheet of frozen material. Continuous permafrost extends under all surfaces except large bodies of water in the area. The

part of Russia known as Siberia has continuous permafrost.

Discontinuous permafrost is broken up into separate areas. Some permafrost, in the shadow of a mountain or thick vegetation, stays all year. In other areas of discontinuous permafrost, the summer sun thaws the permafrost for several weeks or months. The land near the southern shore of Hudson Bay, Canada, has discontinuous permafrost."

Permafrost areas in northern hemisphere are shown in Figure 16.18.

The part of the permafrost that thaws in the summer and re-freezes in the winter is called the active layer. The effect of temperature increase is to increase the depth of the active layer or make it structurally weaker. A thicker active layer will re-freeze later in the winter. Thawing permafrost may result in bogs or swamps or the water may drain, lakes or ponds that have formed over permafrost will disappear and the area becomes a grassland (Dr. Vladimir Romanovsky, http://www.sciencepoles.org/interview/the-current-state-of-permafrost). Figure 16.19 illustrates the disruption thawing permafrost may have on infrastructure built on once stable permafrost. The Canadian National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy produced a report titled 'True North: Adapting Infrastructure to Climate Change in Northern Canada' (http://nrt-trn.ca/climate/true-north) in which they describe the impacts thawing permafrost may have and how best to manage them. In many parts of permafrost regions winter roads are constructed over frozen permafrost and ice-covered lakes and rivers (https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/infographic-above-permafrost-winter-roads) to move goods to northern communities otherwise only accessible by air. The thicker the active layer and the warmer the winter, the later in the season the necessary conditions for winter road construction become available. Permafrost melt on coastal regions may result in substantial erosion as shown in Figure 16.20.

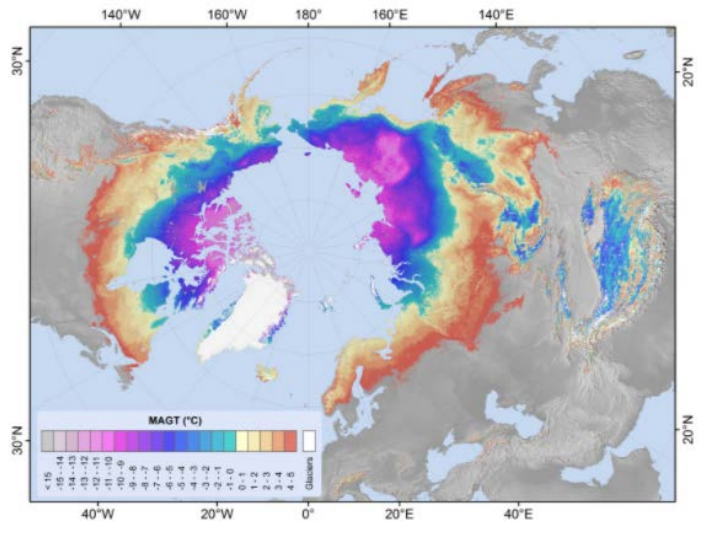


Figure 16.18 Permafrost areas in northern hemisphere.
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0012825218305907

Figure 16.19 Effect of increasing temperature on Arctic Infrastructure in Canada.
http://www.global-greenhouse-warming.com/permafrost.html and
https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/the-north/science/permafrost-ice-snow/permafrost/10961

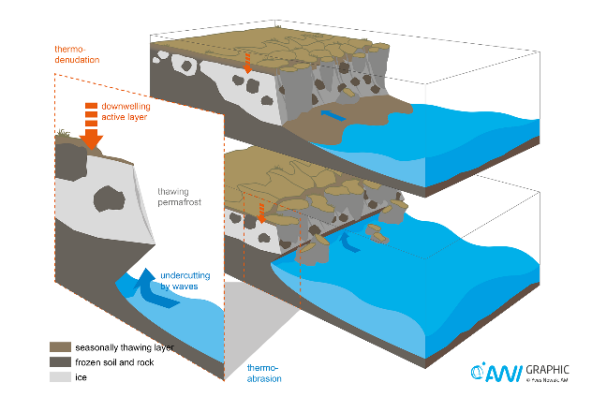


Figure 16.20 Coastal erosion due to permafrost melt.
https://skepticalscience.com/The-speed-of-coastal-erosion-in-Eastern-Siberia_AWI.html

16.4.3 Loss and change of habitat

The Arctic ecosystem is being affected by increased temperature. Two of these are:

1. Loss of marine habitat such as required by polar bears and walruses. (http://assets.worldwildlife.org/publications/398/files/original/Effects_of_Climate_Change_on_Polar_Bears_fact_sheet.pdf?1345754206 and https://www.mmc.gov/priority-topics/arctic/climate-change/#:~:text=The%20Arctic%20is%20warming%20at,to%20life%20in%20the%20Arctic.)
2. Arctic cod and changing sea ice. (https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2019.00179/full)
3. Vegetation typical of more southern latitudes are moving north (https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/ES14-00111.1)

16.4.4 Transportation

With the decrease in sea ice extent in late summer, shipping through Arctic waters has become possible and economical. Substantial shipping in the Arctic Ocean north of Russia and the shipping route through the islands of northern Canada is now feasible (Shipping route famously named the North-West Passage) and shown in Figure 16.21. There is some dispute over whether Canada has control over these sea routes.

Figure 16.21 Northwest passage.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial_claims_in_the_Arctic 16.4.5 Territorial claims

With the decrease in sea ice and improved transportation access, mineral deposits in the Arctic are becoming economically feasible to exploit. Territorial claims were not considered relevant when the region was inaccessible. Canada, Russia and Denmark are particularly involved and have basically made their 'claims'. Canada has defined the extent of its continental shelf and has made its submissions as shown in Figure 16.22. Others have done the same. These issues have yet to be resolved.

Figure 16.22 Canadian Territorial Claims in Arctic
https://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/can1_84_2019/CDA_ARC_ES_EN_secured.pdf

16.4.6 Methane and GHG's

As the permafrost thaws the previously frozen organic material in it will decompose releasing carbon dioxide as well as methane, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-much-worse-will-thawing-arctic-permafrost-make-climate-change/.

Methane in solid form is found in substantial quantities in permafrost, the ocean floor and several hundreds of meters below the surface or deep methane. (See essay on methane and frozen ground, https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/frozenground/methane.html and the U.S. Geological Survey Gas Hydrates Project, https://www.usgs.gov/centers/whcmsc/science/us-geological-survey-gas-hydrates-project.) The methane found on the ocean floor and deep below the surface is fossil methane, methyl clathrates or gas hydrates. Methane from permafrost (near the surface) results from the warming and decomposition of organic matter in the permafrost (along with carbon dioxide). Warming and associated permafrost thawing is having the effect of potentially thawing the deep methane and releasing it to the atmosphere and allowing normal decomposition of permafrost organic material which would result in the release of substantial quantities of carbon dioxide (as well as the methane). This is shown in Figure 16.23. Note that the carbon dioxide would be released from the organic rich top layer of the permafrost (shown in black).

A review of permafrost science in IPCC's AR6 was performed by the Woodell Climate Research Centre, https://www.woodwellclimate.org/review-of-permafrost-science-in-ipccs-ar6/. They report:

- With increasing warming, there is high confidence that thawing permafrost will lead to carbon release. Already, some regions of permafrost are net sources of carbon.

- The losses of permafrost carbon are irreversible at centennial timescales.

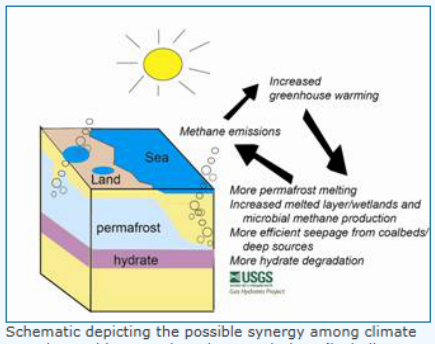
- There remains uncertainty on the timing and magnitude of emissions from permafrost.

- The carbon budget is the amount of carbon that can be released without overshooting temperature targets (1.5°C and 2°C) set under the Paris Accord.

- Most climate models still do not include permafrost processes. Nonetheless, the remaining carbon budgets (the amount of carbon that can be released without overshooting temperature targets) featured in AR6 do include emissions from permafrost for the first time.

- This is done using a simplified, preliminary estimate that both assumes a linear relationship between warming and permafrost emissions and excludes a number of critically important thaw processes—notably abrupt thaw (thaw-induced ground collapse that exposes deep permafrost) and fire-permafrost interactions. As a result, the projection (3–41 $GtCO_2$ per 1°C of warming by 2100) is underestimating permafrost carbon emissions potential in the budgets.

The concern is that underestimating GHG production from thawing and decomposing permafrost is the overestimation of how much GHG may be produced by human activities to meet 1.5 °C target.



Schematic depicting the possible synergy among climate warming and increased methane emissions (including from gas hydrate dissociation) in the Arctic.

Figure 16.23 Thawing of permafrost and release of carbon dioxide and methane. http://woodshole.er.usgs.gov/project-pages/hydrates/

December 12, 2020 – Fifth Anniversary of the Paris Agreement
August 9, 2021 – Publication of IPCC AR6 WG1, Climate Change, The Physical Science Basis, February 28, 2022 IPCC AR6 WGII, Climate Change: Impacts, Adaptability and Vulnerability and April 4, 2022 IPCC AR6 WGIII, Climate Change: Mitigation

An unexpected result of Arctic warming is the creation of methane craters believed to result from catastrophic release of deep (fossil) methane https://www.woodwellclimate.org/arctic-sinkholes-documentary-methane-craters/, as shown in the photograph in Figure 16.24. The amount of fossil methane released is considered significant.

Figure 16.24 Methane crater believed to result from catastrophic release of deep (fossil) methane, https://www.woodwellclimate.org/arctic-sinkholes-documentary-methane-craters/

A paper published in Scientific Reports December 2017 titled 'Strong geologic methane emissions from discontinuous terrestrial permafrost in the Mackenzie Delta, Canada' describes how "Arctic permafrost caps vast amounts of old, geologic methane in subsurface reservoirs." and how "Thawing permafrost opens pathways for the CH4 to migrate to the surface." https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-05783-2.

Another useful discussion on permafrost or frozen ground including; physics, occurrence, ecology, relationship with people, how it is studied, and formation and occurrence of methane and frozen ground may be found in https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/frozenground/climate.html.

16.4.7 Glaciers

The glaciers on Baffin Island, high in the Canadian Arctic, are disappearing. (https://blogs.agu.org/fromaglaciersperspective/2019/08/22/the-disappearance-of-multiple-baffin-island-glaciers-2002-2019/ and https://www.livescience.com/64602-arctic-baffin-island-ice-photos.html).

16.5 Greenland

Greenland is the world's largest island. It is located northeast of Canada and west of Iceland as shown in Figure 16.25. Approximately 79% of its surface is covered by what is known as the Greenland Ice Sheet containing 2,850,000 cubic kilometres of ice. Its thickness varies from 2,000 to 3,000 metres. A large percentage of glaciers, worldwide, drain the Greenland Ice Sheet. The Greenland Ice Sheet contains sufficient water to raise ocean levels by as much as 7 metres.

The Greenland Ice Sheet is losing mass due to:

- Outlet glaciers calving icebergs into the ocean.
- Melt water from areas adjacent to the ocean surrounding Greenland, draining into moulins, Figure 16.26, which flow to bedrock where the running water lubricates the base of glaciers and increases the speed with which they move into the ocean. The melt water may also flow into sub-glacial lakes and then into the ocean.
- Ice streams, a type of glacier flowing from an ice sheet (not to be confused with water flowing under or over the ice). Ice streams may flow into marine terminating glaciers or directly into the ocean itself. The flow of the ice stream, a type of glacier flowing from an ice sheet, may be slowed by a blocking ice shelf. The Northeast Greenland Ice Stream is shown in Figure 16.27.

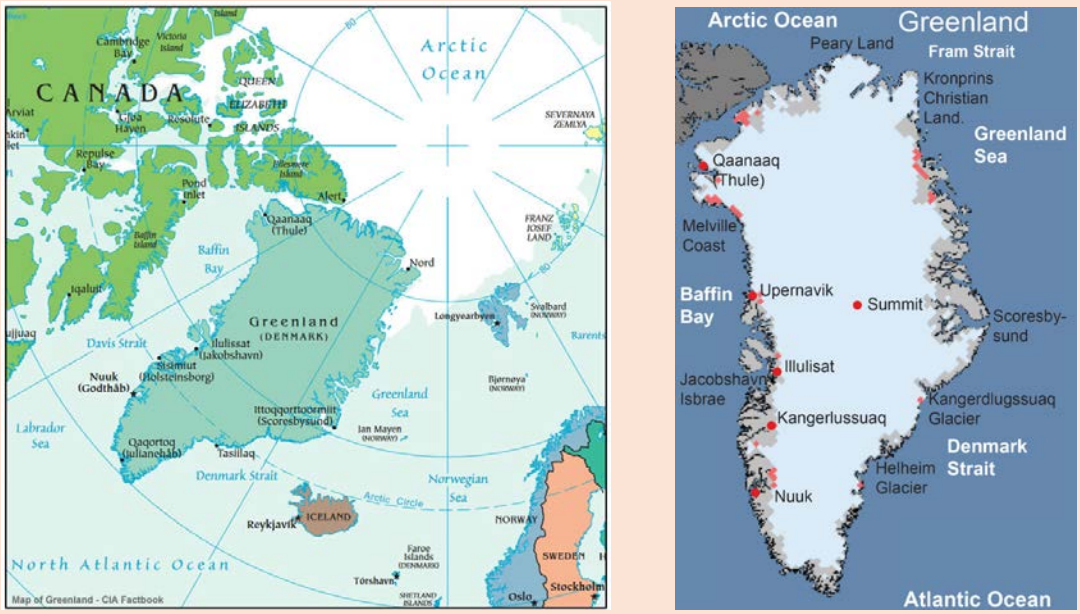


Figure 16.25 Greenland location maps.

Figure 16.26 Melt water on the surface of Greenland ice sheet flowing into a moulin.
https://scitechdaily.com/researchers-investigate-giant-holes-in-greenland-ice-sheet/

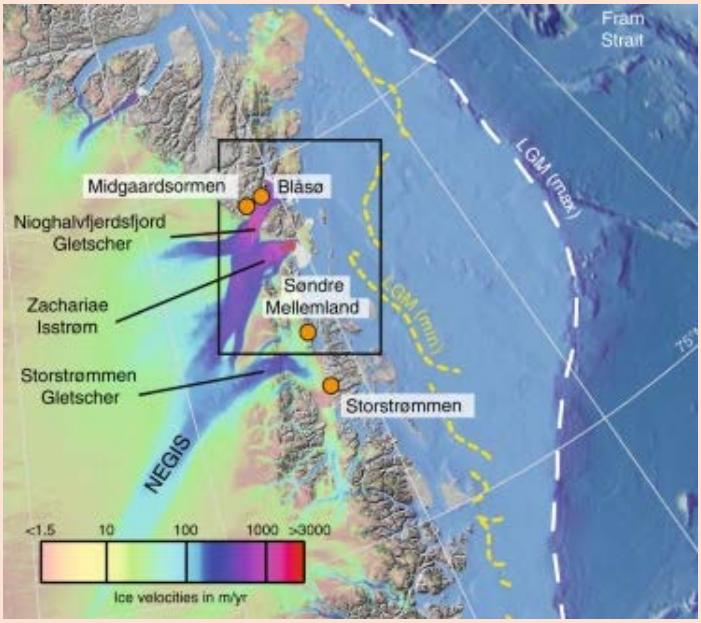


Figure 16.27 Northeast Greenland Ice Stream (NEGIS) dividing into three glaciers which then flow into the ocean.
https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-018-04312-7

Monitoring of the mass of the Greenland ice sheet has been possible using the NASA/German Aerospace Center's twin Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellites, https://gracefo.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/33/greenland-ice-loss-2002-2016/. The video in this web site illustrates how the Greenland ice mass has been affected by global warming. This has been updated to include 2020, https://grace.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/30/greenland-ice-loss-2002-2020/ . Greenland lost approximately 280 gigatons of ice per year, causing global sea level to rise by 0.8mm per year.

16.6 Antarctica

A map of Antarctica is shown in Figure 16.28. The area of Antarctica is 14,200,000 square kilometres of which 98% is covered with ice that averages 1,900 m in thickness.

There is considerable interest in Antarctica from a geopolitical perspective. It is not completely clear why this is the case but several countries have laid claim and manned stations on the continent as shown in Figure 16.29.

Were the Antarctica Ice Sheet to melt the sea level would increase by 60 metres. Melting ice (and icebergs) from Antarctica have contributed 7.2mm to sea level rise since the 1990's when the ice sheets were first monitored by satellite. The average midwinter temperature has increased by approximately 6 degrees Celsius since 1950 or about 1 degree Fahrenheit per decade as reported in an article published in the article, Record warming at the South Pole during the past three decades published in the journal, nature climate change, https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-020-0815-z.epdf?sharing_token=SseQ9Rv_caI5qpG9C3Q3xdRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0NZj9FMZf-OGYzRW4VVW5B-YJpPLoSDHzkgSCgtnA_D7VOLAQT_eO1nfY9N7zyE63wAUmjaOo-pFmfZuxcK4bT0f8eyE3Ih6QIgRJh_gCN-on_wEpfF4LCmY08eMcH6IkXogJEzQ_B0FFFhQG39srbi4Bk2N67Ugctp_0mhlPSSAhii1964yWPJIbOxMmOPX-BoPTtg2GxX5O9mmLePqKXMf2JtQ3hDK0BUk3j7Toir8SHi4TUVT0lIdsTW7uEZymdSvLrGeTX1NiusIAoQxWUu&tracking_referrer=www.scientificamerican.com and referenced in Scientific American, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-is-the-south-pole-warming-so-quickly-its-complicated/.

The mass of the Antarctic ice sheet change is monitored by the GRACE satellite project (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GRACE_and_GRACE-FO and https://grace.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/31/antarctic-ice-loss-2002-2020/). Antarctica has lost approximately 150 gigatons of ice per year resulting in global seal level to rise by 0.4mm per year.

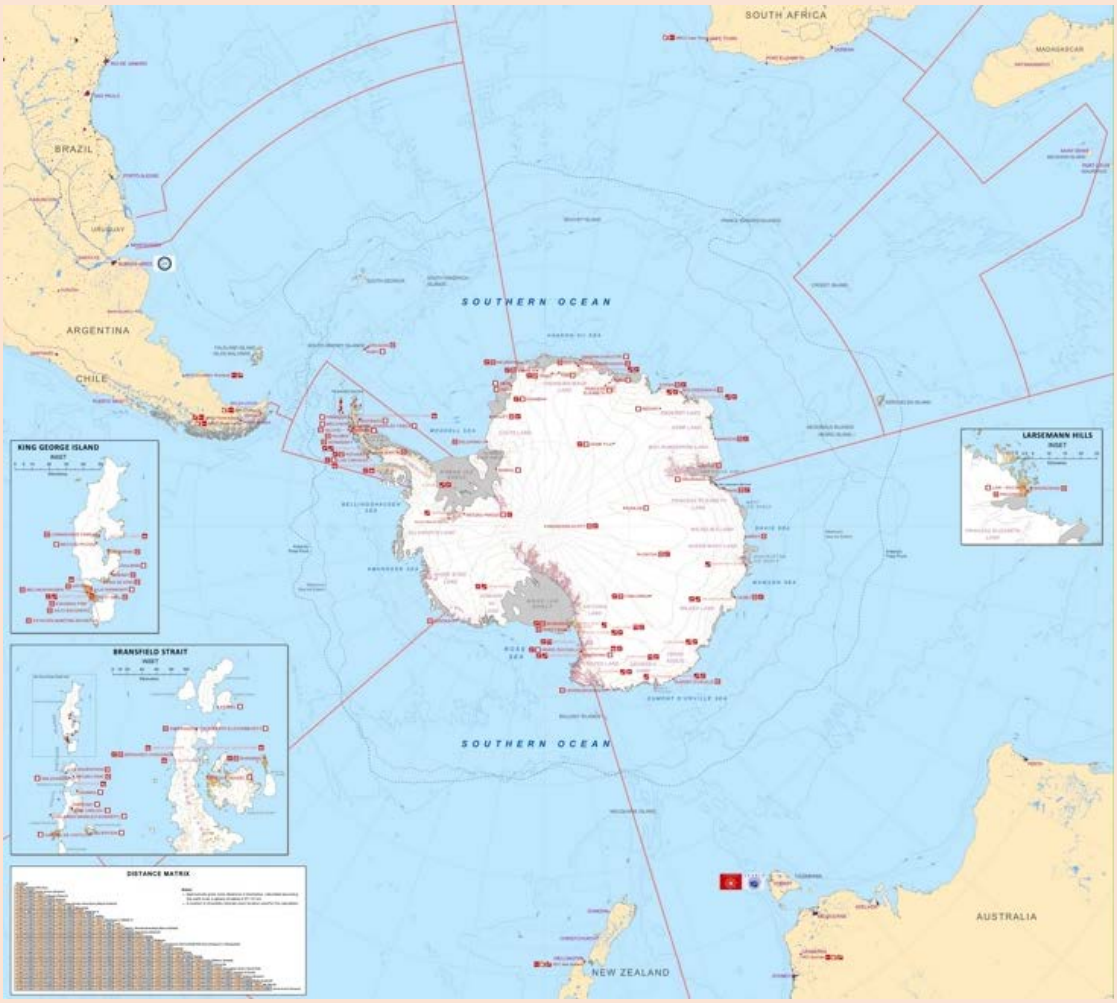


Figure 16.28 Map showing Antarctica relative to South America, Australia and Africa.

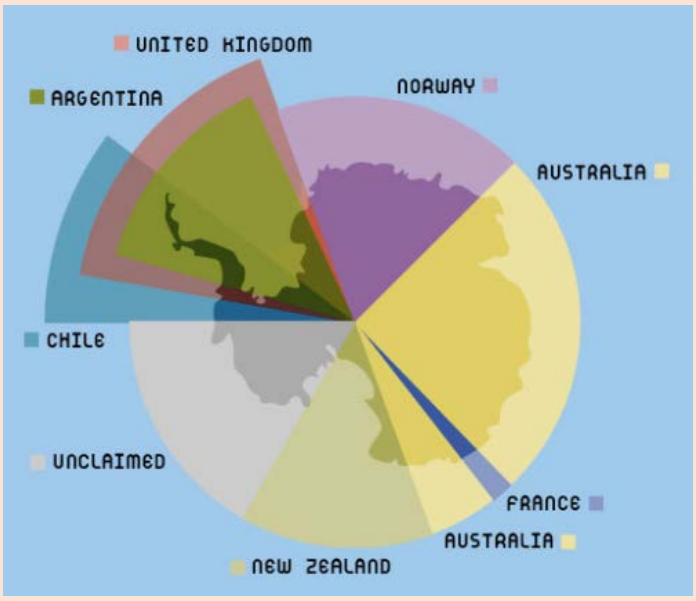


Figure 16.29 Territorial claims in Antarctic.

16.6.1 Loss of ice mass.

Similar to the Greenland Ice Sheet, Antarctica is losing mass due to:

- Outlet glaciers calving icebergs into the ocean.
- Ice streams (not to be confused with water flowing under or over the ice). Ice streams may flow into marine terminating glaciers or directly into the ocean itself. (The locations of the ice shelves and stations are shown in Figure 16.30.)

Ice shelves play a crucial role in holding back (blocking) glaciers and so controlling the loss of ice mass. Their disappearance does not affect sea level directly because they are floating. However, the more rapid movement of glaciers (non-floating ice) into the ocean will cause sea levels to rise.

The impact of global warming on Antarctica's ice shelves at warming of 1.5C, 2C and 4C is discussed in a recent paper by Dr. Ella Gilbert and C. Kittel published in Geophysical Research Letters, https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2020GL091733 and Carbon Brief, https://www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-the-fate-of-antarctic-ice-shelves-at-1-5c-2c-and-4c-of-warming?utm_campaign=Feed%3A%20carbonbrief%20%28The%20Carbon%20Brief%29&utm_content=20210409&utm_medium=feed&utm_source=feedburner .

Examples of ice shelf break up are Larson C and the terminating ice shelf to Thornthwaites Glacier.

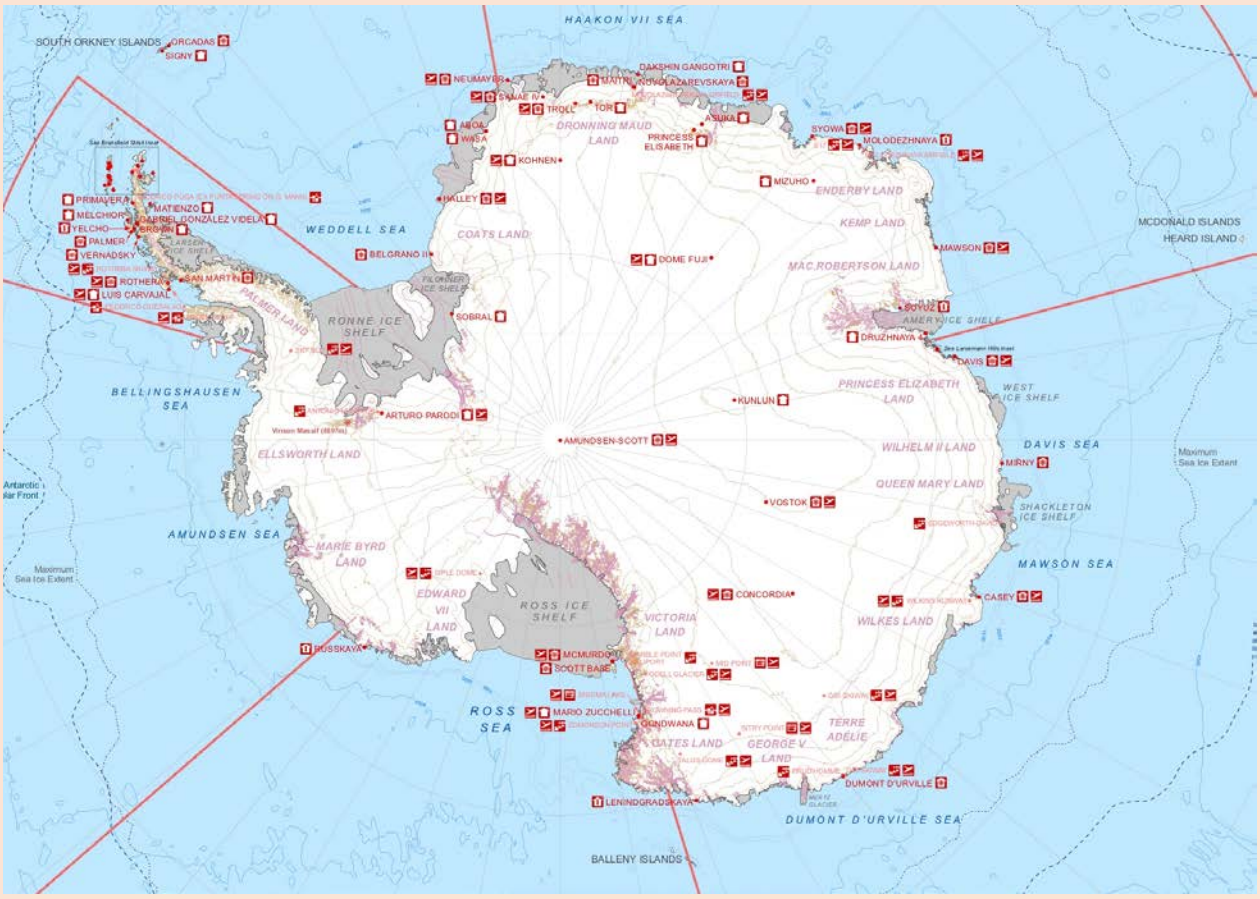
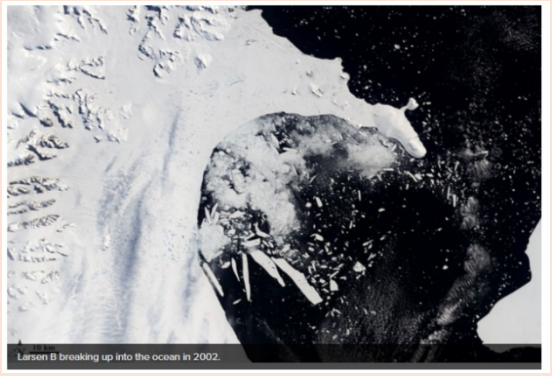


Figure 16.30 Location of the ice shelves and stations on Antarctica.

16.6.2 Break up of Larson C ice shelf

The most recent collapse of an ice shelf is the Larson C on the Antarctic peninsula (north west corner) as shown in Figure 16.31. The Larson A had broken up in 1995 and the Larson B had broken up in 2002. The Larson C began to break up in 2016. Recent studies have reported that the warming oceans are causing the ice shelves to melt from below. This weakens them structurally and ultimate they break up. A Guest Post in the newsletter Carbon Brief titled, Ranking the reasons why the Larsen C ice shelf is melting, identifies and discusses the most important causes for this breakup, https://www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-ranking-the-reasons-why-the-larsen-c-ice-shelf-is-melting?utm_campaign=Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20220419&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20newsletter. A portion of the shelf Larson C, is an iceberg named A68a which in November, 2020 was about to strike a British Overseas Territory, South Georgia which was expected to have catastrophic effects on the islands king penguin and elephant seal populations. See Figure 16.31. In late January 2021 it broke up. See video.

Breakup of Larson C.



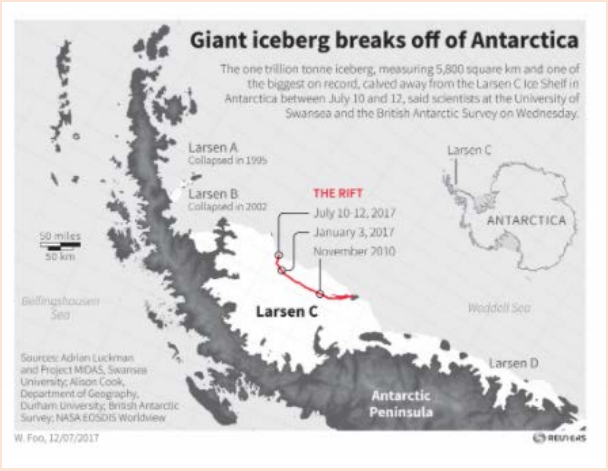


Figure 16.31 Larson C ice shelf on the Antarctic Peninsula.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iceberg_A-68

Figure 16.32 King penguin population on South Georgia Island about to be struck by iceberg A68a which had broken away from Larsen C ice shelf, Antarctica. https://www.ecowatch.com/south-georgia-island-iceberg-collision-2648621635.html?rebelltitem=1#rebelltitem1

16.6.3 Break up of ice shelf at the terminus of Thwaites Glacier in West Antarctica

The ice shelf blocking Thwaites Glacier (See Figure 16.33) is showing signs of immanent collapse https://climate.to/antarcticas-doomsday-glacier-how-its-collapse-could-trigger-global-floods-and-swallow-islands/?utm_term=&utm_campaign=Climate+To+DSA&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=8742646434&hsa_cam=15307078284&hsa_grp=129385859225&hsa_ad=562837904855&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=dsa-19959388920&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhdHhuoOR9QIVQRx9Ch0h9Q7_EAAYASAAEgKMCvD_BwE .

The Thwaites Glacier is also known as the Doomsday Glacier because of the volume of its ice flow, https://thwaitesglacier.org/about/facts. Presently, the flow from the Thwaites Glacier is already responsible for about 4% of global sea level rise https://www.science.org/content/article/ice-shelf-holding-back-keystone-antarctic-glacier-within-years-failure and is steadily increasing.

The stability of the glacier is being threatened by the break up of the ice shelf at its terminus. If this occurred, it is believed that the glacier flow will accelerate – possibly causing the flow of other adjacent glaciers to accelerate as well. A complete breakup of the Thwaites glacier would result in a 0.65 m increase in sea level.

Figure 16.33 Location of Thwaites glacier https://thwaitesglacier.org/about/facts

16.6.4 Effect of climate change on the ecology of Antarctica

According to a recent paper published in the American Scientist, Ecological responses to climate change on the Antarctic peninsula (https://www.americanscientist.org/article/ecological-responses-to-climate-change-on-the-antarctic-peninsula) is resulting in major ecological shifts which are affecting both penguin and seal populations. The book written by Meridith Hooper titled 'The Ferocious Summer: Adelie Penguins and the Warming of Antarctica' provides details of some of the ecological changes that are occurring.

16.7 Oceans

16.7.1 Warming

Research published in the peer-reviewed journal *Science* in February 2020 found that the world's oceans are warming at a much faster rate than was previously estimated https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00376-020-9283-7.
According to the paper, the oceans are warming 40 percent faster than they were estimated to by a United Nations panel just five years ago.

The first analysis of recent ocean heat content, OHC, through 2021 is provided in a paper published in a paper titled, 'Another Record: Ocean Warming Continues through 2021 despite La Nina Conditions' by Cheng, L. J, and Coauthors, 2022: Another record: Ocean warming

continues through 2021 despite La Niña conditions. Adv. Atmos. Sci., https://doi.org/10.1007/s00376-022-1461-3 . (This paper is an important follow-up to the paper published in 2020.) The study uses data from the Institute of Atmospheric Physics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the National Centers for Environmental Information of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. They state that "The world ocean in 2021, was the hottest ever recorded by humans, and the 2021 annual OHC value is even higher than last year's record value – ". In the introduction to their paper the authors explain: "The increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from human activities trap heat within the climate system and result in massive changes in the climate system. As a result, outgoing energy from the Earth system is not balancing the incoming solar radiation, thus creating Earth's Energy Imbalance (EEI) in the climate system – ".

Figure 16.34 shows where heat is stored in the ocean. The zone where most heat is stored will exhibit the greatest temperature changes and thermal expansion. The ocean does not distribute heat energy evenly with depth. It is necessary to measure the temperature changes with depth (temperature profiles). The changes in ocean heat content from 1955 to 2020 compared to the 1955 to 2006 average from NOAA Climate.gov https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-ocean-heat-content is illustrated in Figure 16.35.

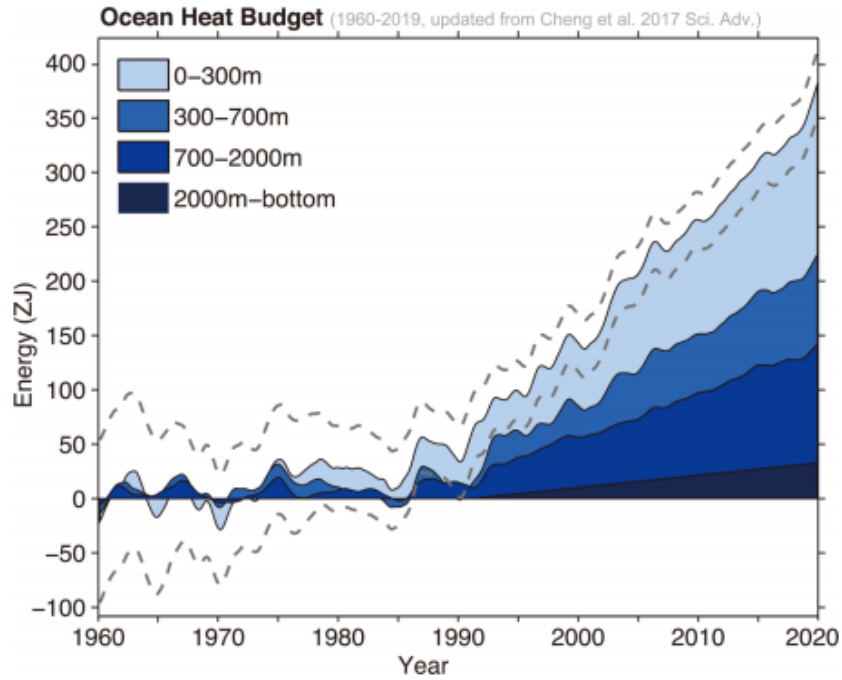


Fig. 2. Ocean heat budget from 1960 to 2019 based on IAP analysis data from 0 to 2000 m, and from Purkey and Johnson (2010) for deep ocean change below 2000 m (units: ZJ). Figure updated from Cheng et al. (2017). The anomalies are related to a 1958–1962 baseline, and the time series are smoothed by LOWESS (locally weighted scatterplot smoothing) with a span width of 24 months. The gray dashed lines are the 95% confidence interval of the total ocean heat budget.

Figure 16.34 Ocean heat content with depth. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00376-020-9283-7.

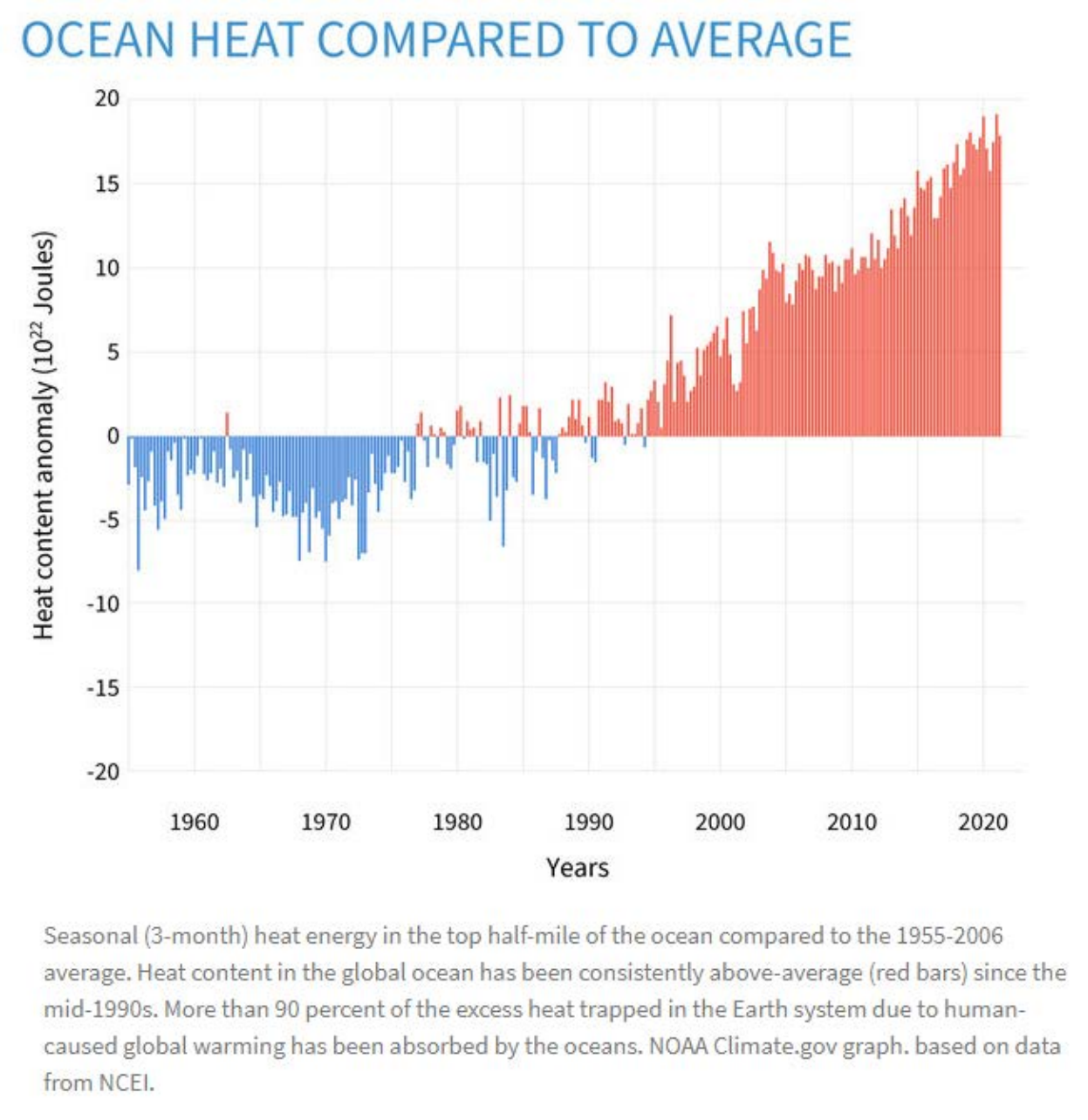
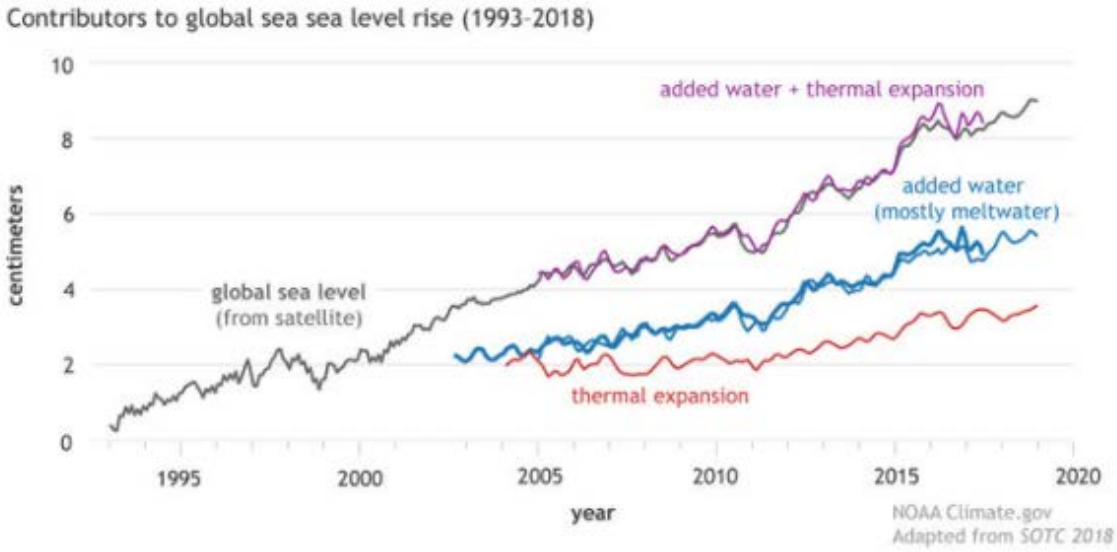


Figure 16.35 Changes in ocean heat content from 1955 to 2020 compared to the 1955 to 2006 average from NOAA Climate.gov https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-ocean-heat-content. A similar presentation is provided by Cheng, L. J, and Coauthors, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1007/s00376-022-1461-3 reporting data analysis from the Institute of Atmospheric Physics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

16.7.2 Sea level

Sea level is increasing as result of ocean thermal expansion or thermosteric change and increased melting of land-based ice such as glaciers and ice sheets as reported by NOAA and illustrated in Figure 16.36. Changes in sea surface height may also result from changes in salt content or salinity known as halosteric change. Steric height is discussed by NASA in https://sealevel.nasa.gov/understanding-sea-level/key-indicators/steric-height.



Observed sea level since the start of the satellite altimeter record in 1993 (black line), plus independent estimates of the different contributions to sea level rise: thermal expansion (red) and added water, mostly due to glacier melt (blue). Added together (purple line), these separate estimates match the observed sea level very well. NOAA Climate.gov graphic, adapted from Figure 3.15a in *State of the Climate in 2018*.

Figure 16.36 Sea level changes as a result of thermal expansion and increased melting of land-based ice such as glaciers and ice sheets https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-ocean-heat-content.

Changes in global sea level since 1880 to present are shown in Figure 16.37, NOAA, https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-global-sea-level. The rate of sea level rise in May 2021 is estimated to be greater than 3.4 mm per year, https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/sea-level/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly+newsletter. They report that global sea levels are rising as a result of human-caused global warming, with

recent rates greater than has been experienced for 2000 years. Local gravitational effects and postglacial rebound (land rising or sinking) will result in significant variations above and below the average. Subsidence (land sinking) can also be a result of groundwater extraction.

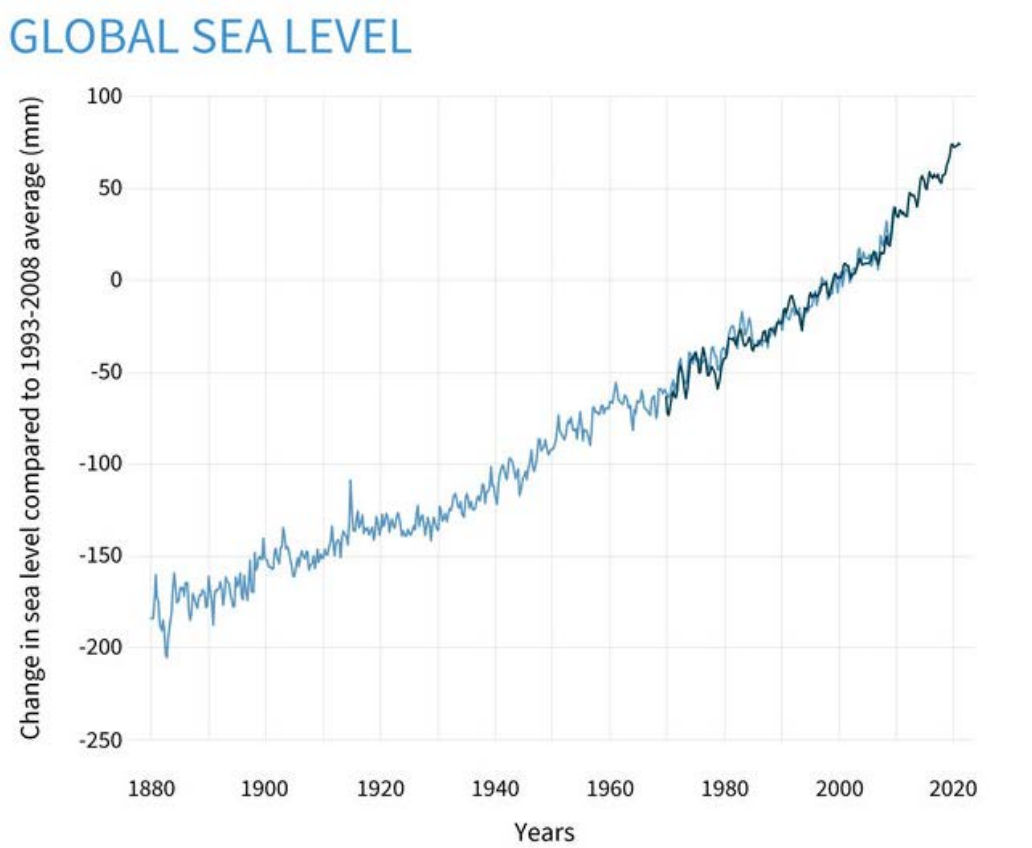


Figure 16.37 Changes in global sea level 1880 to present compared to average of 1993-2008 NOAA, https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-global-sea-level

NASA has constructed an animation of global sea level change from 1992 to 2017, https://climate.nasa.gov/climate_resources/294/animation-global-sea-level-change-1992-2017/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly+newsletter.

16.8 Coral reefs

The International Union for Conservation of Nature states:

- Coral reefs harbour the highest biodiversity of any ecosystem globally and directly support over 500 million people worldwide, mostly in poor countries.
- They are among the most threatened ecosystems on Earth, largely due to unprecedented global warming and climate changes, combined with growing local pressures on the fisheries they support.
- Over the last three years, reefs around the world have suffered from mass coral bleaching events as a result of the increase in global surface temperature caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.
- According to UNESCO, the coral reefs in all 29 reef-containing World Heritage sites would cease to exist by the end of this century if we continue to emit greenhouse gases under a business-as-usual scenario.
- Limiting global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels in line with the Paris Agreement provides the only chance for the survival of coral reefs globally

Coral reefs are alive. They are vulnerable to human activities as illustrated in Figure 16.38.

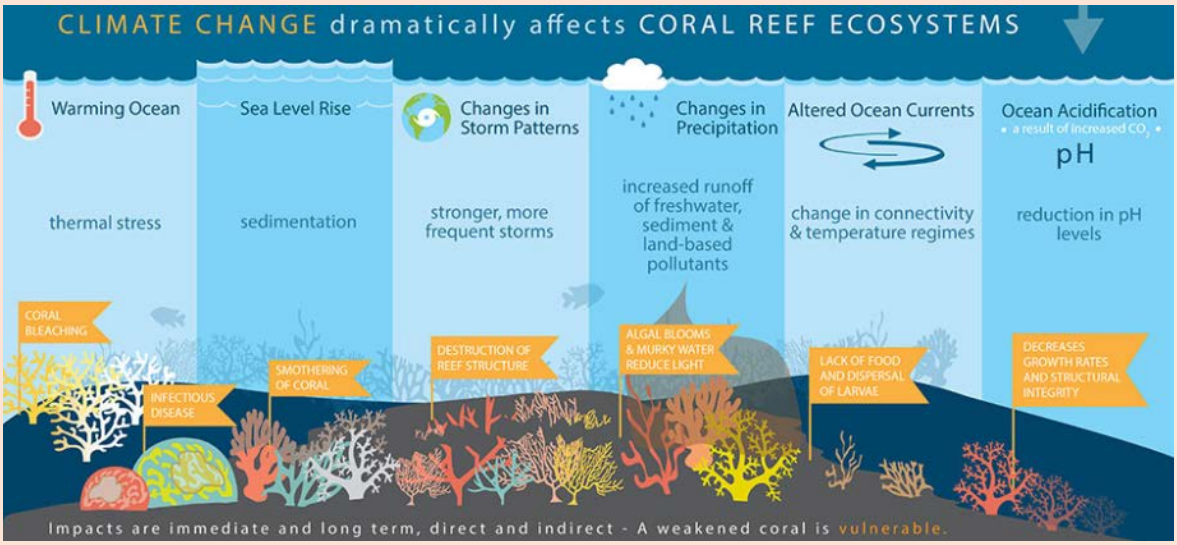


Figure 16.38 Impact of climate change on coral reef ecosystems.
https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/coralreef-climate.html

When water is too warm, corals will expel the algae (zooxanthellae) living in their tissues causing the coral to turn completely white. This is called coral bleaching. When coral bleaches, it is not dead. Corals can survive a bleaching event, but they are under more stress and are subject to mortality. The web site: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_bleaching is particularly

good at describing the process of coral bleaching and provides a very good survey of the state of coral health around the world.

March 25, 2022 it is reported that the Great Barrier Reef is experiencing what is being called 'unprecedented sixth mass coral bleaching event' https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/mar/25/we-need-action-immediately-great-barrier-reef-authority-confirms-sixth-mass-coral-bleaching-event?utm_source=Nature+Briefing&utm_campaign=1cf0c44cbc-briefing-dy-20220325&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c9dfd39373-1cf0c44cbc-46124954

16.9 Thermal habitat of oceans and lakes

Extreme heat waves are considered the new normal since 2014, https://journals.plos.org/climate/article?id=10.1371/journal.pclm.0000007. The ocean is a habitat for all marine species and the terrestrial life that depends on them. The impact of extreme heat waves on tidal creatures, as it relates to the heat wave experienced in British Columbia, Canada in 2021 is discussed in https://www.nationalobserver.com/2021/07/08/news/billion-tidal-creatures-baked-to-death-bc-heat-wave. To quote the article; 'The ecological devastation of B.C.'s recent heat wave is just starting to be understood ……', 'More than one billion marine intertidal animals may have perished ….'.

Warming oceans is changing the habitat for fish species. Warm water species are being found in northern waters that have gradually warmed. The consequences are significant from the perspective of changing commercial fisheries to miss-match of food for seabird breeding cycles and penguins (https://e360.yale.edu/features/feeling-the-heat-warming-oceans-drive-fish-into-cooler-waters, http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5707e.pdf, https://www.audubon.org/magazine/september-october-2014/how-climate-change-sinking-seabirds). Predatory species such as jelly fish are devastating fish populations https://www.fastcompany.com/90362601/jellyfish-are-booming-because-of-climate-change-and-human-activity.

Lakes are experiencing thermal habitat changes as reported in the journal, 'Nature Climate Change', https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-021-01060-3?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210604&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily. Lake surfaces are warming and lake organisms are responding resulting in changes in biodiversity.

A further effect is that lakes are not forming as much ice cover and losing their ice cover earlier resulting in changes in their water balance and ecology, https://theconversation.com/our-lakes-are-losing-their-ice-cover-faster-than-ever-heres-what-that-means-for-us-173471?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%2021%202021&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for

%20December%2021%202021+CID_d207b906c6e2109dd8019e05af93db9a&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=shed%20light%20on%20this%20disappearing%20lake%20ice%20and%20its%20impact.

16.10 Droughts

Drought is a prolonged dry period in the natural climate. It can occur anywhere in the world with serious negative impacts on health, agriculture, economies, energy and the environment. Attributing extreme drought to climate change is difficult because of the uncertainty in determining if the weather pattern fell beyond that which would be in the range of the naturally expected (statistically probable as determined using historic data) https://climate.nasa.gov/news/2175/nasa-study-finds-1934-had-worst-drought-of-last-thousand-years/.

Drought is expected to be more severe on the Canadian Prairies with expected very large increase in +30°C weather, http://prairieclimatecentre.ca/2016/05/climate-atlas-points-to-very-large-increase-in-30-c-weather-for-the-prairies/

The well documented extreme drought in California between 2012 and 2014 (Williams et al. 2015) is believed to been intensified by 5 to 18 per cent by GHG emissions. This drought continued until 2017. The drought experienced in 2020 is believed to have been intensified as a result of increased temperatures attributed to climate change caused by GHG emissions. See Figure 16.39. A D0 weather pattern is an abnormally dry period. A D4 is an exceptional drought. Most of California experiences drought at the same time.

At the time writing no period of low rainfall in another region of the world has been attributed to global warming.
The drought in the western U.S. is persisting and expanding as shown in Figure 16.40. This drought is now considered the worst in 1200 years.

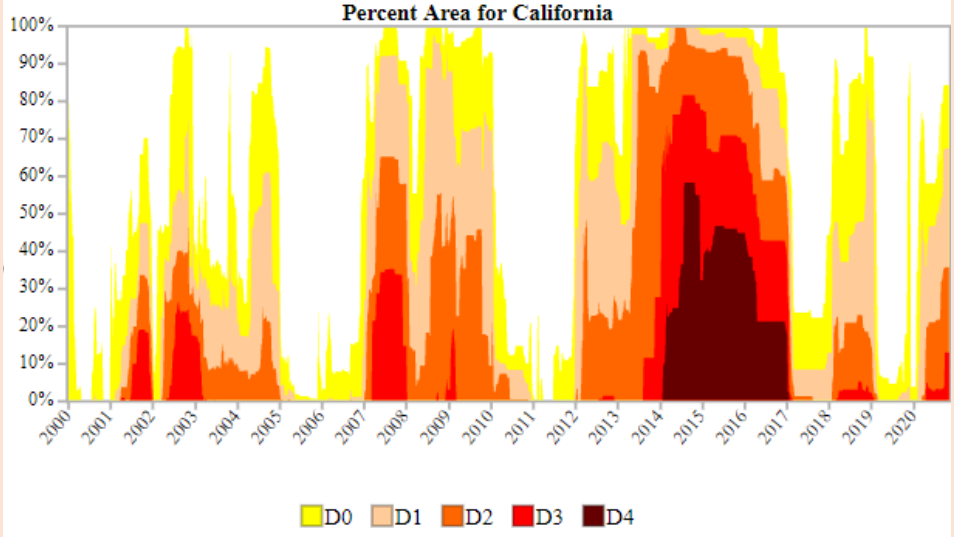


Figure 16.39 Droughts in California since 2000.
https://www.drought.gov/drought/states/california

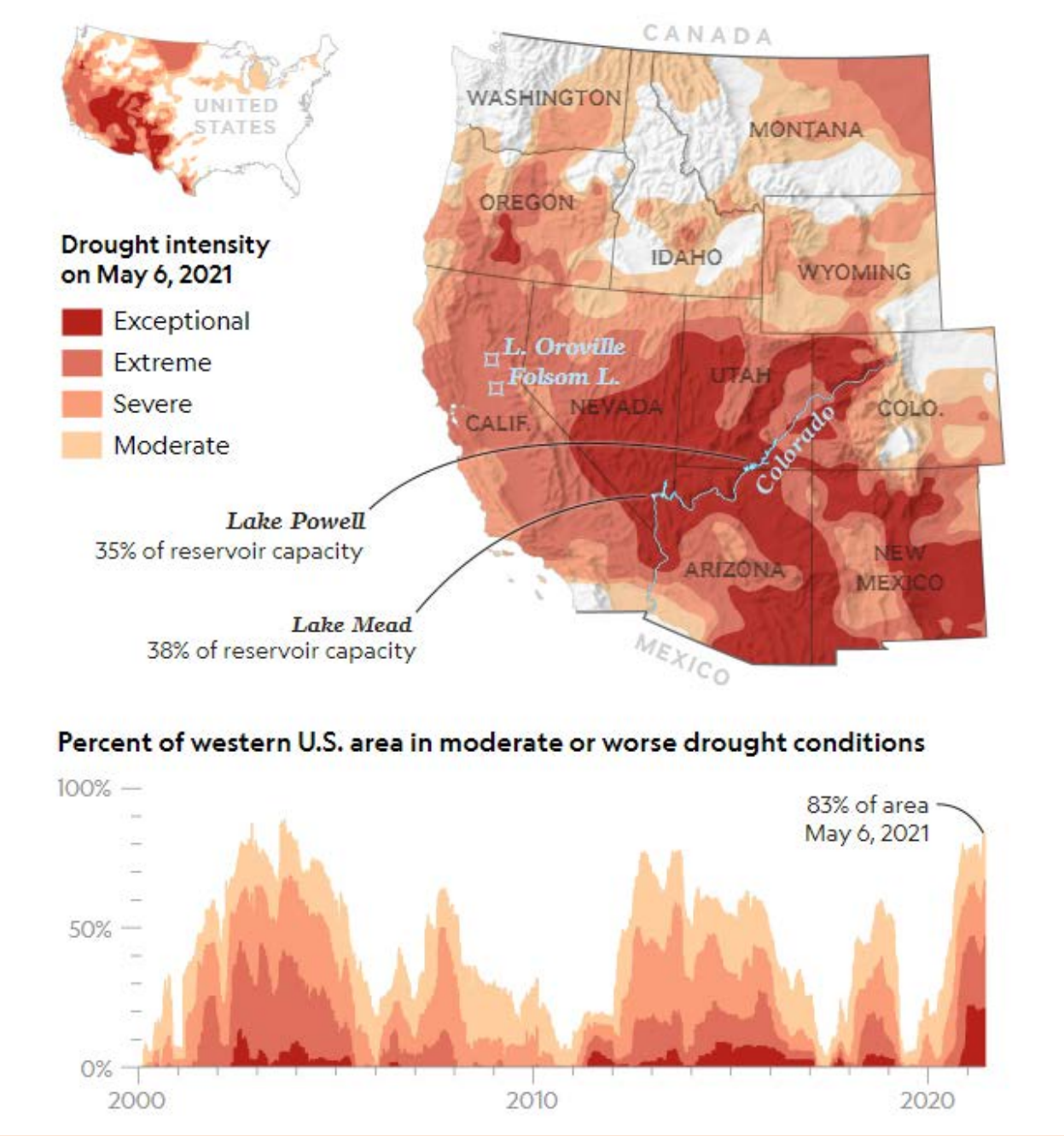


Figure 16.40 Drought affected areas in western U.S. 2021
https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/megadrought-persists-in-western-us-as-another-extremely-dry-year-develops?loggedin=true.

16.11 Desertification

Desertification is the process by which fertile land, dryland ecosystems, becomes desert as a result of drought, deforestation or inappropriate agriculture (tillage, poor irrigation practices and over grazing).

In recognition of the seriousness of problem (worldwide but the Sahel region of Africa in particular) the United Nations established the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 1994. In September 2017 they produced 'The future strategic framework for the Convention' to provide 'a more focused, targeted, effective and efficient implementation of the UNCCD'. https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/ICCD_COP%2813%29_L.18-1716078E_0.pdf They say;
'Desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) are challenges of a global dimension. They contribute to and aggravate economic, social and environmental problems such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, reduced resilience to climate change and forced migration.'

A very good discussion on desertification, its causes, scope and relationship to climate change, may be found in an article titled, 'Explainer: 'Desertification' and the role of climate change' published in CarbonBrief, https://www.carbonbrief.org/explainer-desertification-and-the-role-of-climate-change .

The regions of the world vulnerable to desertification (drylands) are shown in Figure 16.41. The United Nations Environment Program estimates that desertification has affected 36 million square kilometres of land affecting the lives of 250 million people of which 135 million people may be displaced by 2045. https://www.britannica.com/science/desertification

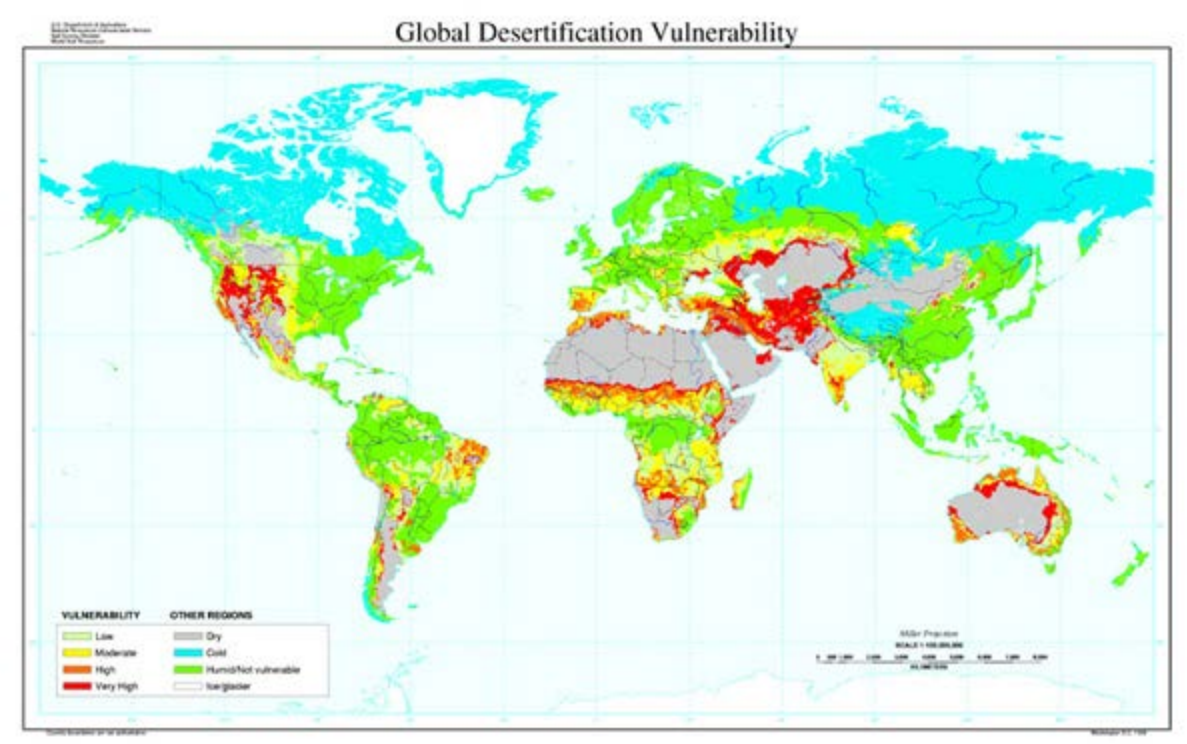


Figure 16.41 Regions of the world vulnerable to desertification.
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soils/use/worldsoils/?cid=nrcs142p2_054003

16.12 Wildfires

A wildfire is an unplanned, unwanted, uncontrolled fire that burns in an area of combustible wildland vegetation. Recent wildfires of note are:

- Alberta, Canada wildfire 2016
  https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_Fort_McMurray_wildfire
- British Columbia, Canada wildfires 2017
  https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1029/2018EF001050
- Saskatchewan, Canada wildfires 2015.
  https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/climate-change-to-blame-for-so-many-sask-wildfires-says-expert-1.3136209 and
- Australian wildfire 2019-20
  https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019%E2%80%9320_Australian_bushfire_season
- Australia wildfire, Fraser Island 2020
  https://modis.gsfc.nasa.gov/gallery/individual.php?db_date=2020-11-27

- California wildfire fall 2020 Wildfires Southern California Fall 2020. https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/147625/new-fires-scorch-the-hills-of-southern-california
- California wildfire 2020 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_California_wildfires
- Western United States 2021 – snapshot August 2020, National Interagency Fire Center, https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/nfn.
- Siberian wildfire 2020 https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02568-y
- Amazon wildfires 2019-20 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Amazon_rainforest_wildfires
- Bolivia wildfires 2019 and 2020 https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/147408/fierce-fires-in-bolivia
- Pantanal, Brazil 2020 https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/147269/fires-char-the-pantanal
- British Colombia, Canada June and July, 2021 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_British_Columbia_wildfires
- Argentina 2022. Currently experiencing serious wildfires in the Corrientes province after an extended drought. NASA captures the extent of the wildfires from the Earth Observatory satellite, https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/149478/wildfires-ravage-corrientes-argentina

Very severe wildfires (2021) were also experienced in Turkey, Greece, Spain and Russian Siberia (2021).

Wildfires are a natural phenomenon. The wildfires listed are unusual because of their scale and the destruction they caused. Many thousands of wildfires occur throughout the world every year. Scientists are beginning to believe that increased temperatures and drought caused by climate change has resulted in increased frequency of the fires and their scale. NASA monitors wildfires using several satellite-based systems https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/fires/main/missions/index.html and has recently published an article describing climate connections to the record fire year in the U.S. west, https://climate.nasa.gov/blog/3066/the-climate-connections-of-a-record-fire-year-in-the-us-west/ .

The wildfires listed are believed to be caused by global warming and attendant drought. The positive feedback to increased global warming is the carbon dioxide and other GHG's that are released to the atmosphere.

16.13 Tropical cyclones

Tropical cyclones are described in Chapter 10. The hurricane season of 2020 is the most active on record. (See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_Atlantic_hurricane_season)

It is not possible to say that climate change was definitely responsible for this record-breaking season, which has been very destructive throughout the Gulf Coast, the Caribbean Region, Mexico and Central America. The 2020 season was also a significant La Niña event (see Chapter 11) which sets the stage for exactly this type of hurricane season.

What is known about hurricanes, tropical cyclones in general, is that warming sea water will definitely provide ideal conditions for tropical storms to become hurricanes. The warmer sea water will strengthen and sustain them. This does appear to be the case. The last hurricane, Iota, struck Central America and turned back into the Caribbean where it crossed Jamaica and Cuba as a subtropical storm, strengthening to hurricane force striking Florida. Though one of the most active hurricane seasons in history it is not possible to definitely attribute the severity of the 2020 hurricane season to the effects of climate change.

16.14 Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, IPBES

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), https://ipbes.net/, is an independent intergovernmental body established by countries to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development. It was established in Panama City, on 21 April 2012 by 94 Governments. It is not a United Nations body. The United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP, provides secretariat services to IPBES.

At a meeting on biodiversity and ecosystem services in June 2010, membership of the United Nations adopted the Busan outcome document which stated that "an intergovernmental science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services should be established". By resolution 65/162 of 20 December 2010, the General Assembly "[took] note of the Busan outcome" and requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), "to convene a plenary meeting…to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for [IPBES]". According to the UN Office of Legal Affairs, the General Assembly by taking note of the Busan outcome did not establish IPBES as a United Nations body.

The 2019 global assessment report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services was produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) https://ipbes.net/global-assessment . It concludes nature and its vital contributions to people, which together embody biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are deteriorating worldwide and human actions threaten more species with global extinction now than ever

before. Figure 16.42 is taken from their report. They report that around one million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction with climate change as one the major causes.

A paper published January 12, 2021 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, titled Insect decline in the Anthropocene: Death by a thousand cuts, provides an update on the decline of insect populations worldwide due to all causes including climate change
https://www.pnas.org/content/118/2/e2023989118.full?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210113&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily.

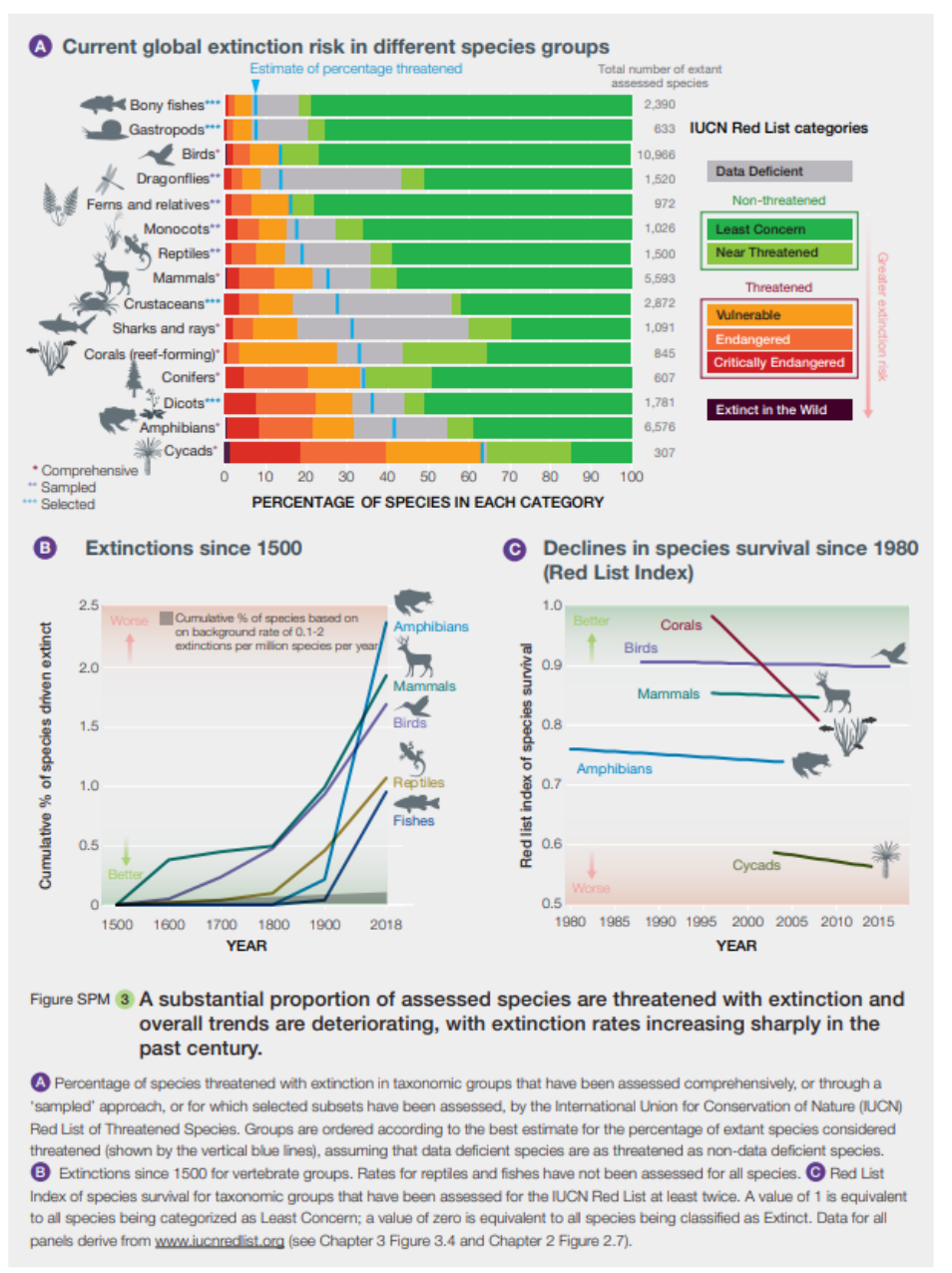


Figure SPM 3 **A substantial proportion of assessed species are threatened with extinction and overall trends are deteriorating, with extinction rates increasing sharply in the past century.**

A Percentage of species threatened with extinction in taxonomic groups that have been assessed comprehensively, or through a 'sampled' approach, or for which selected subsets have been assessed, by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. Groups are ordered according to the best estimate for the percentage of extant species considered threatened (shown by the vertical blue lines), assuming that data deficient species are as threatened as non-data deficient species. B Extinctions since 1500 for vertebrate groups. Rates for reptiles and fishes have not been assessed for all species. C Red List Index of species survival for taxonomic groups that have been assessed for the IUCN Red List at least twice. A value of 1 is equivalent to all species being categorized as Least Concern; a value of zero is equivalent to all species being classified as Extinct. Data for all panels derive from www.iucnredlist.org (see Chapter 3 Figure 3.4 and Chapter 2 Figure 2.7).

Figure 16.42 Current global extinction risk in different species groups. https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf

16.15 Biological diversity (biodiversity)

The reports prepared by the IUCN Section 16.15.2 and the WWF Section 16.15.3 are very important to understanding the challenges, including climate change, facing the preservation of

biodiversity on Earth. Section 16.16 on habitat change elaborates on the specific effects of habitat change on various species.

16.15.1 Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD

The Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD, https://www.cbd.int/convention/, is part of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). Signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and micro-organisms and their ecosystems. It is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. The mission of the CBD is:
"Take effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, thereby securing the planet's variety of life, and contributing to human well-being, and poverty eradication. To ensure this, pressures on biodiversity are reduced, ecosystems are restored, biological resources are sustainably used and benefits arising out of utilization of genetic resources are shared in a fair and equitable manner; adequate financial resources are provided, capacities are enhanced, biodiversity issues and values mainstreamed, appropriate policies are effectively implemented, and decision-making is based on sound science and the precautionary approach."

The first United Nations Summit on Biodiversity held at the level of Heads of State and Government was held on 30 September 2020. A summary report was produced, https://www.cbd.int/events/unbiodiversitysummit/summary.pdf. The following two excerpts were taken from this report.
'As mandated in General Assembly resolution A/RES/74/269, the summary reflects the discussions of the summit held to highlight the urgency of action at the highest levels in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, "Living in harmony with nature". '

'A majority of Member States recognized the intrinsic link between biodiversity and climate change. Climate change contributes to the loss of biodiversity, and the increasing and continuous challenges from climate change and natural disasters are connected to the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Nature-based solutions anchored in biodiversity can help address climate change and achieve sustainable development, protect and generate livelihoods and ensure food security, combat desertification and recover biodiversity, and achieve land degradation neutrality. The majority of countries emphasized the need for urgent action toward ambitious goals and targets at COP-15, comparable to the goals of the Paris Agreement. The

host country of the next COP of UNFCCC committed to deal with biodiversity loss and climate change as intrinsically linked crises.'

A recent study published in the journal Nature and mentioned in the newsletter Carbon Brief highlights the impacts of climate change on endemic and other species world wide (https://www.carbonbrief.org/climate-change-will-hit-endemic-plants-and-animals-the-hardest-study-warns) and https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320721001221.

Many countries introduced clean energy and carbon-neutral initiatives and stressed the importance of nature-based solutions to tackle global warming and fulfill the Paris Agreement. One group of countries remarked that climate change and biodiversity loss reinforce each other, and emphasized that this vicious cycle must be broken.

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties number 15 (COP15) or CBD COP15 Phase 1 was held between the 12 and 13 of October 2021 in Kunming, PRC http://sdg.iisd.org/events/2020-un-biodiversity-conference/, where the achievement and delivery of the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was reviewed and future activities decided. The second part of CBD COP15 will be held from 25 April to 8 May 2022. The world sees human caused climate change as a very serious threat to life on Earth and the nations of the world are again meeting to develop urgently needed strategies to mitigate and adapt to the threat.

16.15.2 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) https://www.iucnredlist.org/

The IUCN has recently updated its Red List of Threatened Species. One in four species are at risk of extinction. Species assessed are:

1. Amphibians 40% of the species are a risk.
2. Conifers 34%.
3. Reef corals 33%.
4. Sharks and rays 31%.
5. Selected crustaceans (lobsters and freshwater crabs, crayfishes and shrimps).
6. Mammals 25%.
7. Birds 14%.

16.15.3 World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – Living Planet Report 2020

The WWF publishes the Living Planet Report https://f.hubspotusercontent20.net/hubfs/4783129/LPR/PDFs/ENGLISH-FULL.pdf which includes the 'Living Planet Index' which "measures trends in thousands of populations of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish across the globe". A graph for the period 1970 to 2016 is shown in Figure 16.43 taken from the full 2020 report that may be found in https://livingplanetindex.org/home/index.

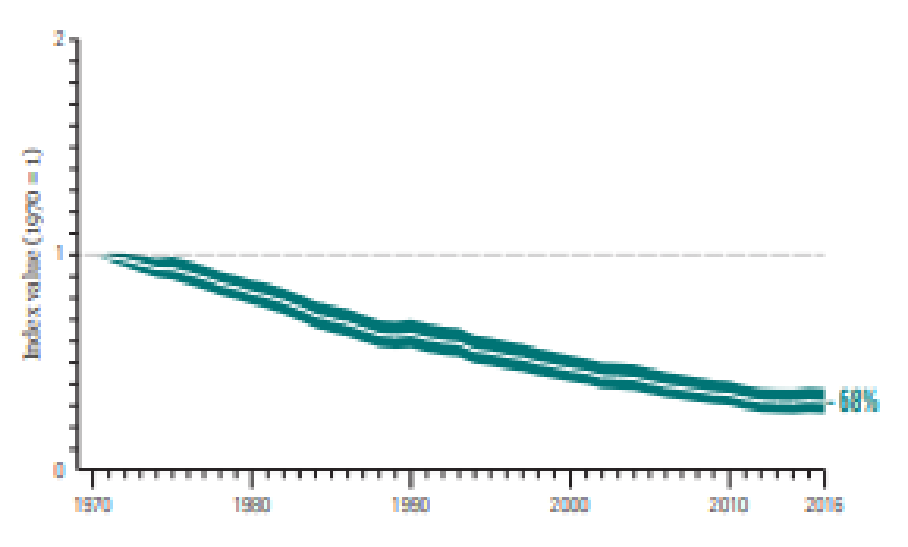


Figure 16.43 World Wildlife Fund, Living Planet Index for period 1970 to 2016
https://livingplanetindex.org/home/index.

The report details threats to biodiversity including; changes in land and sea use, including habitat loss and degradation, species overexploitation, invasive species and disease, pollution and climate change. Regions considered are North America, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, Africa and the Asia Pacific.

The report states that 'Biodiversity as we know it today is fundamental to human life on Earth, and the evidence is unequivocal – it is being destroyed by us at a rate unprecedented in history.' The headline reads: 'Biodiversity on the brink: We know it is crashing.'

16.16 Habitat change – natural environment – general comments

Habitat is the natural environment that plants and animals live in. This is the environment in which they have evolved, over millions of years typically, to live and reproduce. Environment includes climate, geology, geography, water and all of the plants and animals around them, including predators. Environment defines the ecology within which the plants and animals live. If the habitat becomes unsatisfactory plants and animals will attempt to move to more suitable habitats. The pathways for this movement must be available. Human activities such as transportation corridors and urban development may block or remove these pathways in what is called habitat fragmentation and the affected plants and animals may go extinct.

Climate change is affecting each and every plant and animal species. The exact effects are not known since there are many millions of plant and animal species which interact in complex ways. So, despite the best efforts of scientists to try and identify and understand the numerous

ecologies on planet Earth, it is an impossible task to discern what the impact of climate change might be. For example, how does climate change affect the food chain for various species? As just one example, reduced phytoplankton has a direct impact on killer whales. Disappearing sea ice is having a major impact on polar bear populations. There are countless other examples that remain to be clearly defined. What is known is that the effects almost universally negative.
It seems possible that some assessments can be made on the impacts of climate change such as on:

- advancing tree lines, (Mt. Fuji http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14035103, https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/ES14-00111.1 , https://academic.oup.com/aob/article/90/4/537/185822),
- polar bears (https://www.wwf.org.uk/learn/wildlife/polar-bears#:~:text=The%20Arctic%20is%20warming%20about,ice%20to%20raise%20their%20young, http://assets.worldwildlife.org/publications/398/files/original/Effects_of_Climate_Change_on_Polar_Bears_fact_sheet.pdf?1345754206), and https://arcticwwf.org/work/climate/),
- penguins (https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/media-archive/Penguins_ActionBioscience_9-09.pdf, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/penguin-colony-antarctic-islands-climate-change-environment) ,
- seals (https://climate.org/archive/topics/ecosystems/seals-battle-climatechange, https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/seals-sea-ice.pdf, and https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/fact_sheet_red_list_ringed_seal_v2.pdf),
- infestation of pine bark beetles (https://e360.yale.edu/features/small-pests-big-problems-the-global-spread-of-bark-beetles and https://www.unbc.ca/releases/2007/climate-change-and-mountain-pine-beetle),
- coral reefs (Section 16.8),
- seabirds (https://www.audubon.org/magazine/september-october-2014/how-climate-change-sinking-seabirds),
- jelly fish (https://www.fastcompany.com/90362601/jellyfish-are-booming-because-of-climate-change-and-human-activity),
- warm water fish species moving north (Section 16.9), and
- starfish die off, (https://www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/warming-oceans-may-be-choking-oxygen-starfish-causing-them-drown-n1253355 , https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2021/01/organic-matter-bacteria-doom-sea-stars-oxygen-depletion , https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmicb.2020.610009/full);
- marsh migration, (https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2021GL092420?utm_campaign=Carbon+Brief+Daily+Briefing&utm_content=20210702&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue+Daily)

- 30% of world's trees are at risk of extinction, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, https://www.bgci.org/news-events/bgci-launches-the-state-of-the-worlds-trees-report/
- Plants in the UK flower a month earlier under recent warming, https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rspb.2021.2456

but it is apparent that resources available to make exhaustive assessments, if possible, remain insufficient.

Recently, the global loss of peatlands (https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-briefs/peatlands-and-climate-change) and the disturbance of the ocean floor as a result of the practice of trawling for fish, (https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03371-z, https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/03/210317141645.htm, https://www.bluemarinefoundation.com/2021/03/18/trawling-discovered-to-have-massive-climate-change-impact/, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/mar/17/trawling-for-fish-releases-as-much-carbon-as-air-travel-report-finds-climate-crisis) have been recognized as major contributors to the loss of biodiversity.

16.17 Glaciers

The United States Geological Survey, USGS, describes a glacier as a large, perennial accumulation of crystalline ice, snow, rock, sediment, and often liquid water that originates on land and moves down slope under the influence of its own weight and gravity. Figure 16.44 shows the locations of glaciers around the world.

The observable effect of global warming and climate change on glaciers is that they are disappearing from most of the world. The annual accumulation of snow is not replacing the annual melt. Consequently, glaciers are said to retreat – their leading edge is retreating. Some glaciers, like the one on Mount Kilimanjaro, Kenya will disappear by 2040, Figure 16.45.

Recent studies using the NASA Terra satellite have been able to assess 97% of the world's glacierized regions that established that melting glaciers drove 21% of sea level rise over the past two decades https://www.carbonbrief.org/melting-glaciers-drove-21-of-sea-level-rise-over-past-two-decades?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210429&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily and https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/28/speed-at-which-worlds-glaciers-are-melting-has-doubled-in-20-years?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210429&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily.

Many communities around the world depend on melt water from glaciers for their water supply twelve months of the year. If the glaciers disappear so does their water supply.
Rivers and streams that have their headwaters at the base of glacier receive most their water from the groundwater adjacent to the river or stream further downstream of the glacier. That water comes from snow melt or rain that enters the groundwater. As the river progresses more water drains into it from the groundwater and also from tributaries until the river may become quite large and the contribution from the glacier that originally fed it quite small or even insignificant by comparison.
Frequently the melt water from a glacier will form a glacial lake which will overflow as it fills https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/icelights/2013/05/ebb-and-flow-glacial-lakes . The outflow capacity from a glacial lake must match the inflow rate. If it doesn't there is a danger of a glacial lake outburst which has the potential of damaging human activities downstream. The damage could include structures such as hydro-electric dams and their catastrophic failure. See videos, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZN8a-pP60wk, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7GKW-u-Gg4, and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0xq-fpo2c0.

The disappearance of glaciers is a clear, observable phenomenon providing indisputable evidence that global warming is occurring. It is a warning of the present danger and consequences of global warming – like the canary in the coal mine.

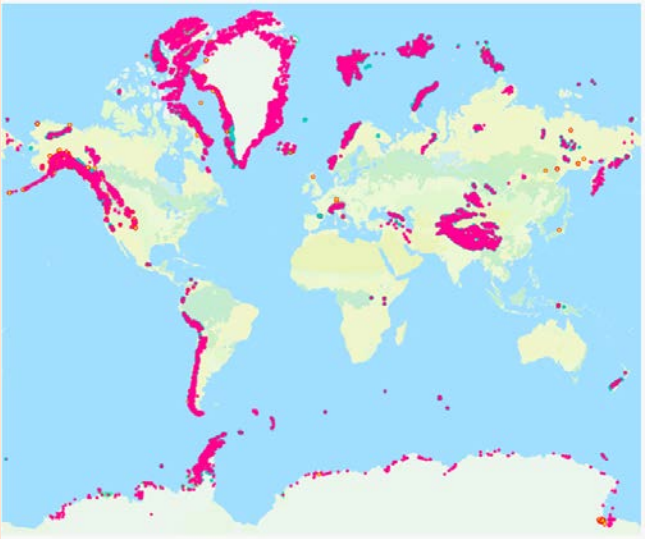


Figure 16.44 Location of glaciers (shown in red) around the world.
https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/glaciers/questions/located.html

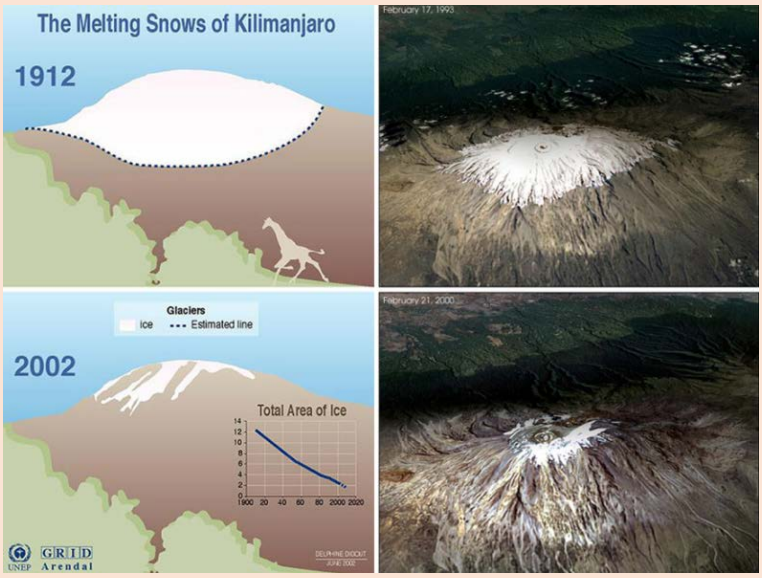


Figure 16.45 Melting glacier on Mount Kilimanjaro, Kenya.

The Himalayan glaciers are losing their glaciers at a rapid rate. A paper titled 'Accelerated mass loss of Himalayan glaciers since the Little Ice Age' by Lee, et al, in scientific reports published by nature briefing reports "The ten-fold acceleration in ice loss we have observed across the Himalaya far exceeds any centennial-scale rates of change that have been recorded elsewhere in the world." https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-03805-8?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20211221&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily.

The Thwaites glacier in West Antarctica is showing signs of immanent collapse https://climate.to/antarcticas-doomsday-glacier-how-its-collapse-could-trigger-global-floods-and-swallow-islands/?utm_term=&utm_campaign=Climate+To+DSA&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=8742646434&hsa_cam=15307078284&hsa_grp=129385859225&hsa_ad=562837904855&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=dsa-19959388920&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhdHhuoOR9QIVQRx9Ch0h9Q7_EAAYASAAEgKMCvD_BwE. The stability of the glacier is being threatened by the break up of the ice shelf at its terminus. The ice shelf slows the glacier flow by blocking its movement and it is believed that if the ice shelf is lost the glacier flow will accelerate – possibly causing the flow of other adjacent glaciers to accelerate as well. A complete breakup of the Thwaites glacier would result in a 0.65 m increase in sea level.

16.18 Regional impacts of climate change, IPCC Climate Change 2014, Synthesis Report, Fifth Assessment Report

In 2014 the IPCC stated; 'Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia. The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, and sea level has risen.' Their conclusions are summarized in Figure 16.46.

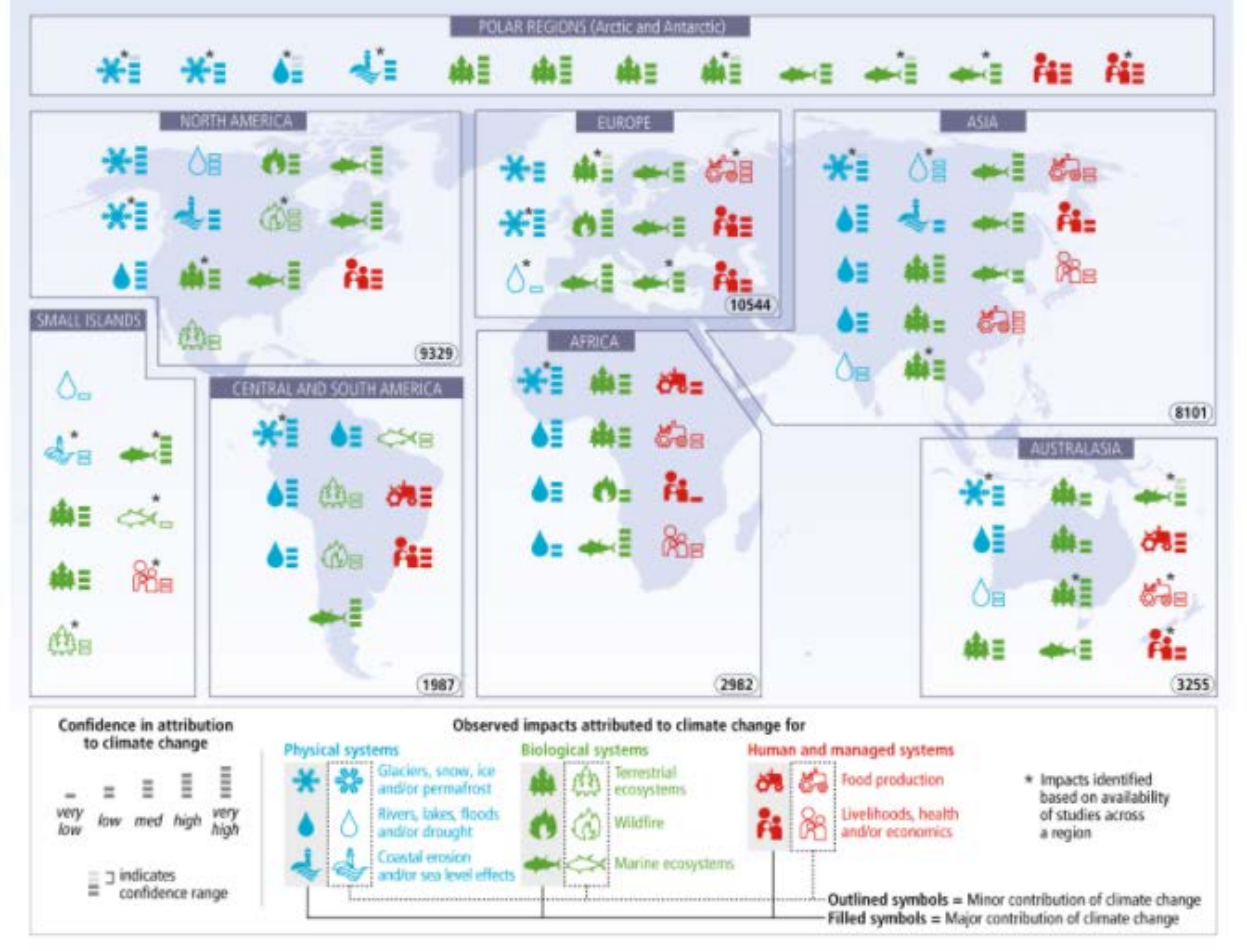


Figure 16.46 Widespread impacts attributed to climate change based on the available scientific literature since the AR4. https://ar5-syr.ipcc.ch/topic_observedchanges.php and https://ar5-syr.ipcc.ch/index.php

16.19 Extreme Weather

The frequency and severity of extreme weather is attributed to global warming and climate change. Carbon Brief has published a map of the world showing locations where human influence has impacted, has not impacted or it is inconclusive if human impact had any effect. This may be found on https://www.carbonbrief.org/mapped-how-climate-change-affects-

extreme-weather-around-the-world?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210127&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily or simply searching Carbon Brief extreme weather attribution. Each conclusion is referenced. The impacts reported are classified as follows; atmosphere, cold, snow and ice, coral bleaching, drought, ecosystem function, heat, oceans, rain and flooding, river flow, storm sunshine and wildfire. The American Meteorological Society has published a series of reports titled Explaining Extreme Events of 2019 (2018 and 2017 are also available) from a Climate Perspective, https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/index.cfm/publications/bulletin-of-the-american-meteorological-society-bams/explaining-extreme-events-from-a-climate-perspective/ . Recently, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine published a paper supporting the claim that extreme weather can be linked to global warming. See https://www.nationalacademies.org/based-on-science/climate-change-global-warming-is-contributing-to-extreme-weather-events?utm_source=Division+on+Earth+and+Life+Studies&utm_campaign=e3c0b0b55a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_06_24_01_47&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3c0b1ad5c8-e3c0b0b55a-278885679&mc_cid=e3c0b0b55a&mc_eid=b6391f6645 .

16.19.1 Heat dome - heatwave Pacific Northwest 2021

See Section 7.7 for discussion on heat domes.

Canada and NW United States experienced a significant heat wave (June and July 2021) that has resulted in several hundred heat related deaths. The heat wave extended from Southern California to the Arctic Circle and the Pacific Coast to Eastern Manitoba. It has lasted over one week. The unusual and extreme nature of the heat wave is believed to be a natural phenomenon, aggravated by global warming, known as a 'heat dome' a natural atmospheric circulation that traps very warm air. A description of the phenomenon is provided by the Royal Meteorological Society, https://www.rmets.org/metmatters/what-heat-dome.

Explanations of the heatwave experienced are just starting to be published. See https://www.carbonbrief.org/media-reaction-pacific-north-west-heat-dome-and-the-role-of-climate-change?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210701&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_Western_North_America_heat_wave. In a paper titled 'Rapid attribution analysis of the extraordinary heatwave on the Pacific Coast of the US and Canada June 2021', Philip, S. Y. et al (https://www.worldweatherattribution.org/wp-content/uploads/NW-US-extreme-heat-2021-scientific-report-WWA.pdf?utm_source=north%20shore%20news&utm_campaign=north%20shore%20news&ut

m_medium=referral) published by World Weather Attribution (https://www.worldweatherattribution.org/) conclude that the extreme heat experienced was attributable to or at the very least aggravated by human caused global warming.

16.19.2 Atmospheric river - extreme rainfall caused by multiple atmospheric rivers British Columbia, Canada 2021

See Section 7.5 for discussion on atmospheric rivers.

The southwest corner of the Province of British Columbia, Canada has experienced extreme rainfall resulting from four atmospheric rivers, November 2021. The amount of rainfall has exceeded all previous records and the damage from flowing water, flooding and mudslides to infrastructure (roads, bridges, drainage, water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants and more) has been extensive. The flooding resulting from nearby rivers which overtopped their banks and dike systems resulted in tens of thousands of hectares for flooded farmland, hundreds of thousands of dead livestock, flooded homes and agriculture infrastructure and destroyed crops. Fifteen thousand people required evacuation. All highways were damaged to the point where they were impassable. Several highways will require several months and perhaps years to restore. Many communities were impacted, flooded and isolated. Mudslides resulted in the loss of several lives. It is estimated that there was several billion dollars in damage. A timely overview of the rainfall events and resulting impacts may be found in Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/November_2021_Pacific_Northwest_floods.

16.19.3 Increasing major snowstorms

Climate change scientists are finding a correlation between episodes of Arctic warming and colder East Asia (resulting from climate change) and severe winter weather events in the northern hemisphere and the eastern United States in particular, https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-018-02992-9 . The exact mechanism is not understood. The basic idea may be found in a simpler discussion provided by https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2022/02/01/northeast-snow-storm-climate/ where it is hypothesized that warmer Arctic destabilizes the polar vortex resulting in the jet stream dropping south and drawing warm moist air from the south into the Arctic.

16.20 US EPA Report May 2021 https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has issued a very important report on climate change indicators on a global perspective and specifically on the United States. It is acknowledged that nations do not exist is isolation from the rest of the world. Climate change is a global phenomenon. This report considers the best historical data available and is regularly updated. Historical and recent trends are identified.

The report considers:

- Greenhouse gases
- Weather and climate
- Oceans
- Snow and ice
- Health and society
- Ecosystems

References are provided to important information sources on global warming and climate change in the United States many of which have been extensively reported in this Guide.

16.21 Health

16.21.1 Heat and hot weather

The World Health Organization has recognized that "heat waves, or heat and hot weather than can last for several days" can result in significant health impacts including deaths https://www.who.int/health-topics/heatwaves#tab=tab_1 . This has been observed in the US EPA Report discussed in Section 16.20 and in a study recently published in the journal Nature of Climate Change titled 'The burden of heat-related mortality attributable to recent human-induced climate change' https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-021-01058-x.epdf?sharing_token=WUEzuKQw9CqhUDFoBdIcjtRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0N74knunZjp4k1Ncyycvvs4s-boSk4oaOLQNv21uGPfVoY9_A5EcLOzWQqs1rG12YxR_sIsdMQ0QeguVqZaPOLtBLd9-mF4Ko5eQywxAWRteYSRPA01GIAZj3Zf6Eks5kL8yuR4hOTLhwLGMNXtNuMk4WXwcRA4e1Zd1L9_rLBW8_n_MS19PBwPRTXsBUTjwsMYwhWnKBfKnVi8IN5mZVhpKBo3rRgi3Anx2SP7X8c6p8AXAtfDfX_PIytawT0SnDoijffVmXcGMJN66D1madSEL27-3jl1g5wxVnP_hnf-Dg%3D%3D&tracking_referrer=www.theguardian.com .

In 2018 Europe recorded one hundred thousand heat related deaths, https://www.preventionweb.net/news/view/75857#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20the%20EU%20recorded,than%20the%201981%2D2010%20average.

Canada and NW United States experienced a significant heat wave (June and July 2021) that has resulted in several hundred heat related deaths. The heat wave extends from Southern California to the Arctic Circle and the Pacific Coast to Eastern Manitoba. It has lasted over one week. The unusual and extreme nature of the heat wave is believed to be a natural phenomenon known as a heat dome that has been

aggravated by global warming. Explanations of the heat wave are just starting to be published. See https://www.carbonbrief.org/media-reaction-pacific-north-west-heat-dome-and-the-role-of-climate-change?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210701&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily .

NASA published an article March 9, 2022 titled 'Too Hot to Handle: How Climate Change May Make Some Places Too Hot to Live" https://climate.nasa.gov/ask-nasa-climate/3151/too-hot-to-handle-how-climate-change-may-make-some-places-too-hot-to-live/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly+newsletter.

16.21.2 Present and potential health impacts of climate change

Two reports are particularly significant in light of COP26. These are:

1. World Health Organization COP26 Special Report on Climate Change and Health, https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/cop26-special-report.

2. The Lancet 2021 report, Countdown on health and climate change: code red for a healthy future published October 20, 2021, https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2821%2901787-6.

These reports make it very clear that virtually all of the current and future impacts of climate change effect all aspects of human health and quality of life in general including:

- Immediate impacts of extreme weather such as excessive heat, drought, storms, flooding and destruction of human environment (dwellings and infrastructure).
- Disease (aggravated, spread and new).
- Health.
- Agriculture.
- Food.
- Wealth.
- Mobility.
- Education.
- Traditional community structure and values.
- Security (crime, war and urgency to migrate).

Essentially, climate change means change in all aspects of the human environment.

16.21.3 Stress and anxiety among our children and youth and everyone else

The expanding awareness of climate change and its present and potential impacts is causing significant stress and anxiety in our youth. This is documented in the journal Nature https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02582-8?utm_source=Nature+Briefing&utm_campaign=5c3ff9eef1-briefing-dy-

20210923&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c9dfd39373-5c3ff9eef1-46124954 and reported in the newsletter, The Conversation, https://theconversation.com/climate-change-is-harming-childrens-mental-health-and-this-is-just-the-start-168070?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2023%202021&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2023%202021+CID_28dab82048765185a8b3dce2cbc9bae9&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=how%20climate%20change%20is%20affecting%20kids%20psychological%20development%20around%20the%20world.

Youth recognize the need to addresses the challenges climate change represents. They understand the need to mitigate and adapt. Most important youth need to see that the responsible elements of society are actually taking action to ensure they will have a hospitable future.

A recent poll (November 2021) conducted by the Global Future thinktank in conjunction with the University of York found that overall, 78% of people reported some level of eco-anxiety. This includes all age groups, social classes and income level https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/oct/31/eco-anxiety-over-climate-crisis-suffered-by-all-ages-and-classes?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20211101&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily.

16.22 Comments

The ability to document the effects of climate change requires substantial resources to observe and study the natural environment and communicate the results of these studies to policy makers, politicians and the global community in general.

Three books worth reading are 'The Ends of World' which describes the evolution, extinction and redevelopment of life on Earth and current human impacts, 'The Ferocious Summer' which describes the plight of penguins in the Antarctic which are coping with a mismatch of food availability and feeding their young as a result of climate change and 'The Sixth Extinction' whose title is self-explanatory. The references for these books may be found in section 16.21.

Recent investigations into the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, AMOC, has determined how this circulation has changed over the past 1500 years. (The Gulf Stream is the warm surface element of this circulation discussed in Section 8.3.) This is discussed in a paper by Caesar, L., McCarthy, G. D., Thornalley, D. J. R., Cahill, N. and Rahmstorf, S. published in Nature Geoscience, https://www.nature.com/articles/s41561-021-00699-z?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210226&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily and described in the Independent https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/atlantic-ocean-current-weakening-amoc-

b1807337.html?utm_campaign=Carbon%20Brief%20Daily%20Briefing&utm_content=20210226&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20Daily . The most significant weakening has occurred in the twentieth century and the authors surmise that climate change be the cause. This has yet to be established.

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