



The Climate Periscope
Save the climate, save the world

THE WORLD IS WARMING AT AN ALARMING RATE: WHAT CAN WE DO?¹

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research shows that global temperatures have risen rapidly due to the increased harmful industrial and environmental practices causing uncontrolled emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. From Africa to Europe to Asia and the American continents. No part of the world is spared the scalding evidence of rising global temperatures. In Europe record breaking heat waves caused deaths and widespread disruption across the European continent while in South Korea, unprecedented heat boiled potatoes in the ground. Given the blazing evidence of global warming, climate change can no longer be denied. It is for this reason that this article recommends the adoption of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies like the transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions, reforestation, building climate resilient infrastructure development, utilisation of heatwave early warning systems etc. to contain the increase in the rate of climate change around the globe.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Record-breaking atmospheric heat has been a topic of global concern in recent years. Influenced largely by human activities, such as fossil fuel combustion, deforestation and industrial processes, which release heat-trapping greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere,² increasing atmospheric temperature has led to numerous deleterious effects, including the death of humans, livestock and plants as well as threats to food security, water resources, economic activities etc across the globe. From Africa to Europe to Asia and the American continents, we have undeniable evidence of unprecedented extreme rise in atmospheric temperature. This brings to fore the brutal consequences of climate change and the need to take immediate action to mitigate or adapt to its effects. This

¹ Authors: Emmanuel Abasiubong Bassey and Margaret Harford.

² National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), 'What is the Greenhouse Effect?' (NASA Science, 23 October 2024) <https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/faq/what-is-the-greenhouse-effect/> accessed 18 August 2026.

article examines the recent spate of global warming and its damaging effects and recommends urgent mitigation and adaptation measures to curb the effects.

3.0 UNPRECEDENTED HEAT AND RECORD-BREAKING TEMPERATURES ACROSS THE WORLD

The world has experienced extreme and quite concerning rise in atmospheric temperature over the past decade. This warming trend which has become more rampant in recent years has caused significant extreme weather events worldwide. For instance, in June 2026, Western Europe recorded its hottest June atmospheric temperature in history, with an average temperature of 20.74°C, 3.05°C above the 1991–2020 average.³ This was also recorded as the warmest ever recorded June temperature globally.⁴ This record also coincided with the period when the European continent was hit with a record-breaking heat wave across the Mediterranean and along the Atlantic coasts.⁵ This severe heat wave affected many European countries including Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, amongst others. It increased the risk of wildfires and extremely low river flows, leading to higher global temperature.⁶

In Asia, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) reports that Asia is warming at nearly twice the average rate.⁷ According to the WMO, this is causing devastating consequences for lives and livelihood across the region. In South Korea, it was discovered that extreme heat boiled potatoes in the ground. It destroyed a full potato field to the extent that nothing was worth saving.⁸ Beyond this, it was also discovered that the heat is to be

³ Copernicus Climate Change Service, 'Copernicus: Record Heatwave Brings Hottest June for Western Europe During Second-Warmest June Globally' (9 July 2026) <https://climate.copernicus.eu/copernicus-record-heatwave-brings-hottest-june-western-europe-during-second-warmest-june-globally> accessed 18 August 2026.

⁴ United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, 'Western Europe Records Hottest June on Record' (10 August 2026) <https://unric.org/en/western-europe-records-hottest-june-on-record/> accessed 18 August 2026.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Joint Research Centre, 'Worsening drought and record heat grip Europe, fuelling extraordinary wildfires and extremely low river flows' (12 August 2026) https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/worsening-drought-and-record-heat-grip-europe-fuelling-extraordinary-wildfires-and-extremely-low-2026-08-12_en accessed 18 August 2026.

⁷ United Nations News, 'Asia is warming twice as fast as the rest of the world' <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1164781> accessed 18 August 2026.

⁸ Raphael Rashid, 'Potatoes 'boil' in the ground as record heatwave sweeps across swathes of Asia' The Guardian (13 August 2026) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/aug/13/asia-heatwave-south-korea-potatoes-boil-ground-record-heat-hong-kong-japan> accessed 18 August 2026.

blamed for at least 31 deaths in the country. It further led to the death of over 900,000 livestock and 1.4 million farmed fishes.⁹

North and South America are not exempted from this impact. The WMO reports that these continents experienced extreme temperatures in the month of July 2026, leading to severe draughts and escalating wildfire risks.¹⁰ In Africa, data from the WMO shows that recent years rank Africa as one of the warmest continents in the world,¹¹ while the BBC reported that the sudden rise in global temperature has increased the mortality rate of camels in Africa to over 15%.¹²

The recent records highlighted in this subsection demonstrate the urgent need for immediate and sustained measures targeted at climate change mitigation and adaptation. This becomes more significant because more than 90% of the heat trapped by carbon dioxide from the atmosphere enters the oceans and heats it up. The Copernicus Climate Change Service reported that on 22 August 2026 average global sea surface temperatures reached a record 21.1°C, surpassing the previous record of 21.09°C recorded in March 2024. The rising ocean temperatures contribute to sea-level rise through thermal expansion, increase the frequency and intensity of extreme storms that pose serious risks to billions of people, and fuel marine heatwaves that can devastate marine ecosystems and disrupt coastal livelihoods.¹³ This escalating pattern of continued warming of the air, land and oceans creates a web of extreme global weather events that put humanity and the world at risk of catastrophic and unimaginable destruction of lives and livelihoods.

4.0 RESPONDING TO A HOTTER WORLD

4.1 Climate Change Mitigation Strategies

It is important that the world pays greater attention to climate change mitigation strategies. This is necessary because taking proactive steps will significantly reduce the risk of economic damage and other adverse consequences, rather than relying on remedial measures

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ United Nations News, 'World Marks Second Warmest July on Record' (11 August 2026) <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/08/1168115> accessed 20 August 2026.

¹¹ WMO, 'State of Climate in Africa 2025' (18 June 2026) <https://wmo.int/resources/publication-series/state-of-climate-africa/state-of-climate-africa-2025> accessed 18 August 2026.

¹² Navin Khadka, 'Even camels can't cope: Africa's ships of the desert hit by rising temperatures' (BBC, 22 July 2026) <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqlxvww06pgo> accessed 20 August 2026.

¹³ The Guardian, 'World's Oceans Hit Hottest Temperature on Record in August' <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/aug/24/worlds-oceans-hit-hottest-temperature-on-record-in-august> accessed 25 August 2026.

after irreversible harm has occurred. Thus, the first line of action should be targeted towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This can be actualised where countries encourage the transition from fossil fuel and carbon emissions to renewable energy like solar, wind and hydropower. Additionally, afforestation and restoration of forests is very instrumental in reducing the release of greenhouse gases into atmosphere.¹⁴ Lastly, humans produce an immeasurable amount of waste, and how this is handled is of utmost importance in curbing the release of methane into the atmosphere. Thus, reducing, reusing and recycling of waste products should also be encouraged and implemented for a sustainable environment.

4.2 Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

Adaptation strategies are necessary for the protection of lives and property where the harmful impacts of climate change manifest. A highly efficacious strategy involves the utilisation of heatwave early warning systems. This enables people to proactively plan for disasters resulting from the excess heat. In addition to this, building adequate heat resilient infrastructure should be prioritised. Other adaptive strategies include improved irrigation and water conservation practices and crop diversification aimed at preventing food scarcity.¹⁵

Countries are also encouraged to commit to international climate pacts like the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This gives some form of accountability and further helps in the actualisation of the common goal of reducing global warming.

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¹⁴ Adi Purnomo, 'Afforestation: A Pathway to Environmental Restoration and Sustainability' (2024) 13(4) *International Research Journals*.

¹⁵ Seydou Zakari and Others, 'Adaptation Strategies to Climate Change and Impacts on Household Income and Food Security: Evidence from Sahelian Region of Niger' (2022) 14(5) *MDPI*.