



The Impacts of Climate Change in Australia Fact Sheet

Australia is one of the hottest and driest continents on Earth and is in danger of being severely affected by climate change if we do not act now. Globally, 13 of the 14 warmest years on record have occurred between 1995 and 2009 and Australia has had warmer-than-average annual temperatures for 17 of the past 19 years. These are signs that we have to make changes in how we live straight away.

Natural disasters

Changes in our climate mean that extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, storms, droughts and cyclones are likely to become more intense and happen more often. These devastating disasters can cause death, injury and destruction. As well as their terrible impact on people, animals and ecosystems, they cause billions of dollars worth of damage to homes and other buildings.

Water resources

An increase in the intensity and frequency of droughts will reduce the amount of usable water we have. Experts predict that the number of droughts may increase by 20 percent over most of Australia by 2030 and by up to 80 percent in some parts of Australia by 2070. Changes in rainfall and increased evaporation also affect our water resources.

Farming

Climate change also threatens current farming practices. Crops may have to be grown in different areas, and some might not be able to be grown at all. The risk of pests and diseases could increase.

Infrastructure

Climate change is also expected to have an effect on our infrastructure (buildings, roads, ports etc.). For example, when added to other factors, changes in temperature and rainfall could increase road maintenance costs by almost one third by 2100.

Coastal areas

Rising sea levels are another problem created by climate change because they erode our coast. This affects Australia more than most countries because we are an island continent and most of our population lives close to the coast. Severe erosion would affect hundreds of thousands of homes along our coasts, and cause many billions of dollars worth of damage to property.

Fauna and flora

Australia's unique native animals and plants would also suffer as their habitats are damaged or destroyed, and their health and reproduction are threatened. If temperatures increase by only 5°C, we could lose 90 to 100 percent of the habitat of most of our native vertebrates. Even with the temperature





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think climate.
think change.

increase of 0.9 of a degree that Australia has experienced over the last century our world-famous Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu Wetlands, Murray-Darling Basin, rainforests and old-growth forests are already being damaged.

However, everybody can take action to help combat climate change. Why not get started by checking out '[Ten Tips to Combat Climate Change](#)'.

