

Climate Change



By the Lanark Grammar School S1 Geography Club

Why is Climate Change Happening?

The burning of fossil fuels has been harming the environment for decades, as it releases chemicals like carbon dioxide into the air that get trapped in our atmosphere. This causes the temperature to increase. This is known as the greenhouse effect as the planet is getting warmed up like a greenhouse does on a warm day. Because of this rising temperature, the polar ice caps cannot cope and slowly start to melt. This causes the sea levels to rise. The sea levels are rising so rapidly that scientists believe that by the year 2100 the sea levels will have risen by 23 feet. This will result in countries below or at sea level being totally submerged in water. This melting can have serious consequences for all organisms (plants and animals) on earth too.

Why are the Ice Caps Melting?

Most climate scientists agree the main reason for the ice caps melting is global warming. The dark oceans absorb a lot of this heat. This warms up the water and melts the arctic ice floating on top of the water. This has sped up sea level rise around the world. Melting ice from both poles has been responsible for a fifth of the global rise in sea levels since 1992. The polar ice caps have melted faster in the last 20 years than in the last 10,000.



Picture 1 - A Polar Bear Walking Across Melted Ice Caps (From Ocean Today)

Impact on the Environment

Glaciers are getting smaller everywhere around the world including in the Alps, Himalayas, Andes, Rockies, Alaska and Africa.

Unfortunately coastal cities and islands could be in a lot of danger in the future if the ice caps continue to melt.

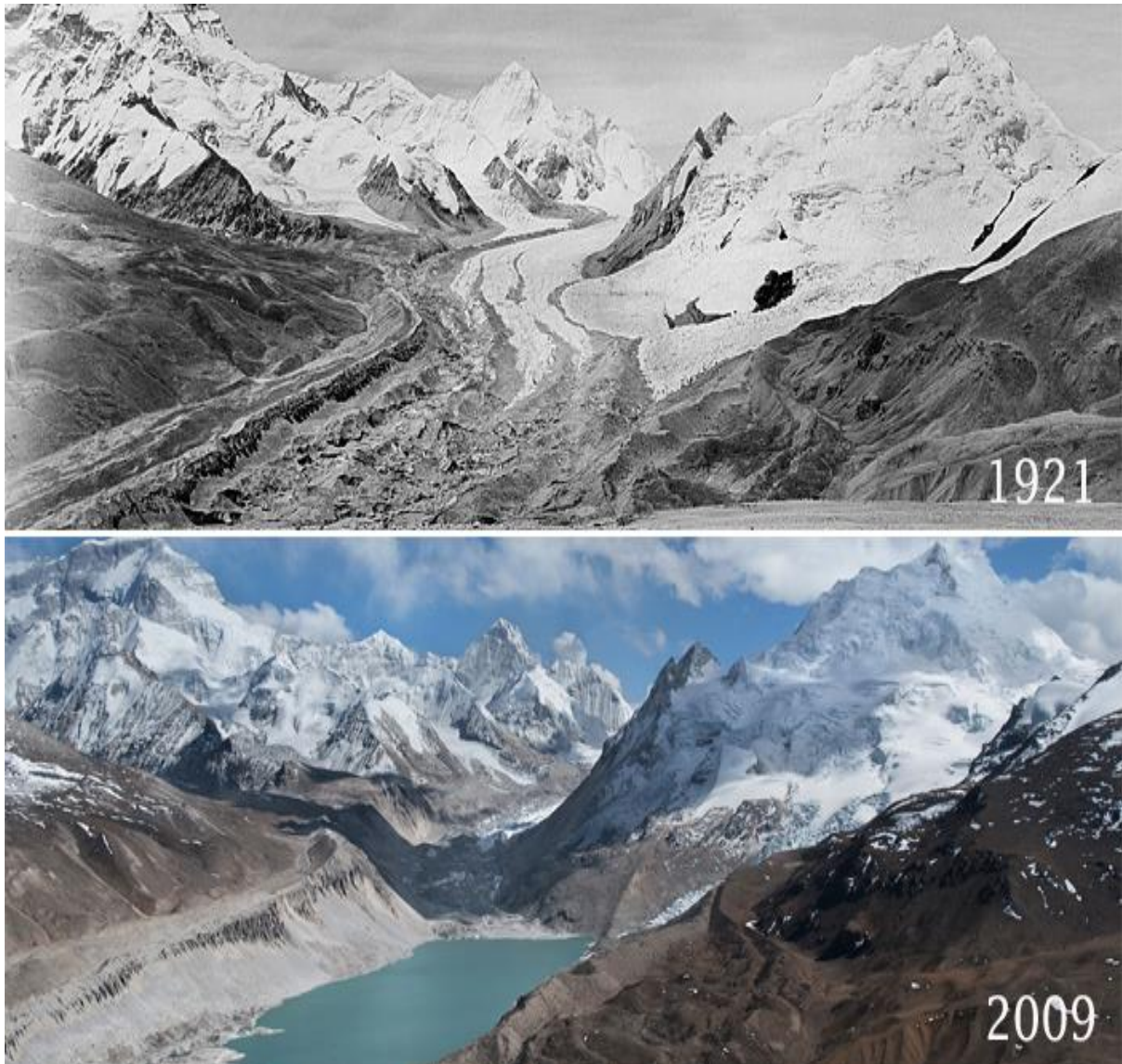
There could also be more hurricanes that are more powerful and intense due to the heat increase.

There could also be more forest fires and droughts due to the heat increase, this could be very dangerous.

Sea levels will rise which could submerge lowland cities. There would be constant heat waves and the ice on the Arctic and Antarctic would melt which would leave poor penguins and polar bears without a home possibly making all wild Arctic species extinct.



Picture 2 - The Earth after Sea Level Rise (From National Geographic).



Picture 3 - How Glaciers Have Melted Because Of Global Warming (From Glacier Hub)

Climate change is mostly being caused by people polluting the air with greenhouse gasses. This is heating up the planet, melting all the ice caps and glaciers. In the future there might be no glaciers at all!

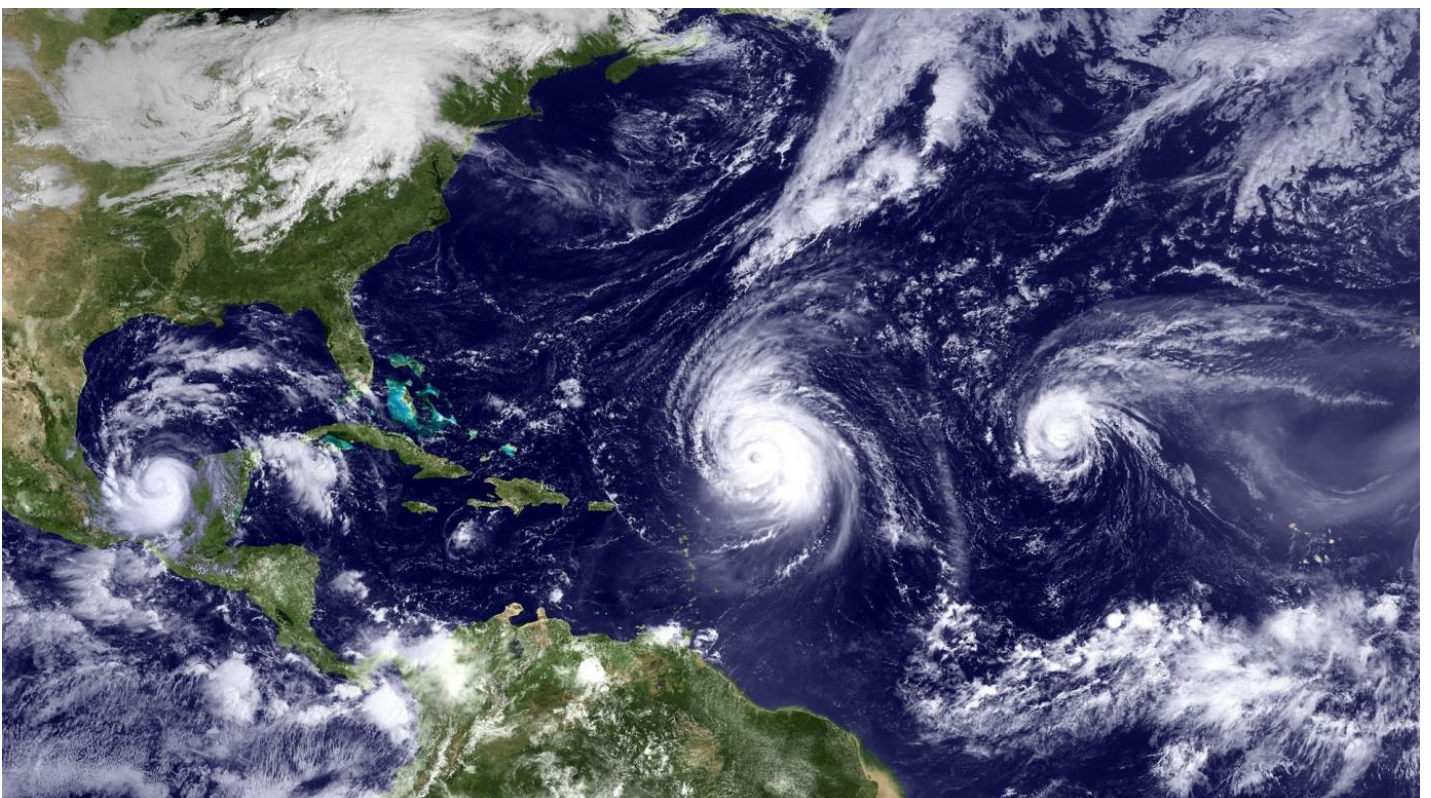
What will Climate Change mean for the Human Race?

These days the media is filled with stories telling us that the world is being destroyed by climate change. Firstly what causes climate change? It is caused by carbon dioxide and other harmful greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere. You may be wondering how these gases were created, well long story short they were created by humans! No particular person or country is to blame; it is all of our faults.

Climate change is a natural occurrence, it has been happening since the beginning of time. Before recently climate change hasn't been a big problem. But the earth's atmosphere has been heating up far quicker than it should be.

So how will humanity fair under the effects of climate change? Pretty much all of humanity is at risk. Every island and costal town/city could be submerged in water, caused by rising sea levels. This could include low lying places such as Florida, New York, Denmark, The Netherlands and London. That is the most of it but what about the humans inland? Well global warming will cause the sea to warm up, and what do you get with warm water... HURRICANES!!!!

Places that don't get any hurricanes and are less prepared such as Brazil and South Africa may get some catastrophic weather.



Picture 4 - Hurricanes Forming (From Wikimedia)

What can we do to Help Stop Climate Change?

How can we stop climate change? Well we can't STOP it but we can slow the effects by emitting less greenhouse gases by perhaps walking instead driving or buying locally grown produce. Whatever we do we should all contribute to helping

the planet!



Think Green.

Picture 5 - Think Green Logo

(From Stratasys)



Picture 6 - Recycling Logo (From Equip My Biz)



Picture 7 - Cycle Don't Drive Logo
(From We Hate to Waste)

Websites Sources

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