

More interesting facts on climate change

- The rate and duration of warming observed during the 20th Century are unprecedented in the past thousand years.
- At 380 parts per million (ppm), today's atmospheric carbon dioxide level is higher than at any time in at least the past 420,000 years.
- Only increased greenhouse gas emissions can explain the upward trend in temperatures over the past 150 years.
- In less than 200 years, human activity has increased the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases by some 50 per cent relative to pre-industrial levels.
- Although aviation currently accounts for only 3.5 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions, it is one of the fastest growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions; because aviation also has the highest growth rate as a mode of transport, emissions from air travel are projected to increase five-fold by 2050.
- After soil erosion and agro-chemical pollution associated with production, transport-associated greenhouse gas emissions comprise the highest environmental cost of the international cotton value chain.
- It is already too late to stop any further atmospheric warming, due to the inertia of the climate system; even if greenhouse gas emissions were reduced to pre-industrial levels within the next 100 years, average temperatures would not stabilise for several centuries, sea levels would continue to rise due to thermal expansion and melting ice for several millennia.
- The average proportion of the global population harmed by climate-related disasters every year has nearly doubled since 1975, reaching nearly 4 per cent or 255 million people in 2001. The WHO estimate based on current trends that between 6 per cent and 8 per cent of global population will be directly affected by 2030.
- Current models suggest that stabilizing CO₂ levels at 550 ppm or less by 2100 could reduce flooding frequency by 80-90 per cent along the most vulnerable parts of the India and Bangladesh coastlines, as compared with a scenario of on-going growth in fossil fuel consumption.
- The average global air surface temperature change resulting from a doubling of pre-industrial atmospheric CO₂ concentrations. The IPCC estimates climate sensitivity at 1.5-4.5°C (2.7-8.1°F).
- The observed global temperature records, including ocean and land readings, reveal a warming trend during this century of a magnitude within the range predicted by models. Furthermore, the latter half of last century registered the warmest temperatures on record.