



Our Climate, Our Future

COP26

COP26 (26th Conference of the Parties) will be a meeting of people from across the world to talk about actions that humans must take to slow down climate change.

What Is Climate Change?

Climate change happens when weather patterns across the world change over many years. Sometimes, events that happen naturally, such as volcanic eruptions and ocean currents, can cause climate change to happen slowly or for a short time.

For over 60 years now, scientists have been noticing that climate change is happening much too quickly. This is having an effect on lots of living things all over the world, in forests, oceans, grasslands and lots of other natural habitats (places where animals live).

Who Is Responsible For Climate Change?

Human actions are causing the planet to become too warm too fast. This is known as global warming. Humans have been doing things for many years that have released greenhouse gases (gases that trap heat) into the Earth's atmosphere. This heat is warming the planet and having an impact on living things across the globe.

Human actions are causing climate change in different areas:

Food and Farming

Energy

Forests

Oceans

Who Is Most Affected by Climate Change?

Climate change can affect the health and happiness of everyone but some people are being affected more than others, such as:

- farmers and people living in villages and towns far from big cities in some of the poorest countries;
- people who have done very little to cause climate change but who are facing the biggest problems.





Problems

- Lots of land being cleared for farming
- Growing crops with chemicals (fertilisers and pesticides) that create greenhouse gases and can harm insects
- Food being moved between countries by transport that emits greenhouse gases
- Poor crops because of changes to the weather



Solutions

- Reducing greenhouse gases going into the air
- Protecting land and habitats
- Using less chemicals on farmland
- Helping farmers to grow crops in different weather conditions



Did You Know...?

- Many greenhouse gases going into the air come from farming or food production.
- In some poorer countries, like Malawi in Africa, most people work on small farms and have done little to cause climate change but are suffering the most.



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Energy

Problems

- Burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) to make energy and electricity that put greenhouse gases into the air
- Transport using fuels that put greenhouse gases into the air (pollution)
- Energy being wasted in homes



Solutions

- Using cleaner energy, such as wind power
- Using transport that does not cause pollution
- Preparing people for the changes they will need to make

Did You Know...?

- More than half of all greenhouse gases that the world creates are put into the air by burning fossil fuels.



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Forests

Problems

- Cutting down trees for farming, wood, roads and railways (deforestation)
- Animals losing their habitats



Solutions

- Stopping deforestation to let trees grow and keep animal habitats
- Teaching farmers to grow crops on land without cutting down trees
- Taking trees for wood in ways that keep forests healthy

Did You Know...?

- 300 million people still live in forests around the world.
- An area of forest the size of a football pitch is cut down every second.





Oceans

Problems

- Overfishing (so many fish being caught that there are not enough left in the sea and the survival of some species is at risk)
- Noise from ships and mining (for oil and natural gas) shocking sea creatures
- Increasing sea temperatures causing coral bleaching, leading to the loss of coral reefs
- Plastic pollution (waste) harming sea creatures



Solutions

- Countries agreeing to protect oceans and coastlines from overfishing and mining
- Slowing global warming in as many ways as we can
- Reducing and recycling plastic waste so none ends up in the oceans



Did You Know...?

- The oceans capture and hold on to some greenhouse gases but too much can cause harm to animals such as coral (removing or bleaching their colour).
- Over 200 million people across the world fish to make money so there must always be enough left in the sea).





Health and Happiness

Problems

- Extreme weather and natural disasters happening more often
- Air pollution (harmful gases) from burning fossil fuels and driving petrol or diesel cars
- Water pollution from greenhouse gases
- Poorest people living in extreme poverty due to climate change
- Natural, green areas being taken away or changed



Solutions



- Preparing every global citizen with ways to adapt to or cope with climate change
- Reducing greenhouse gases and other pollution in air and water
- Planting more trees and plants across the world, especially near to people's homes, to help them stay healthy and happy
- Helping farmers to grow crops that can be eaten locally

Do You Think...?

- Will the planet be better in ten years' time thanks to COP26?





Our Climate, Our Future

COP26

The 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), which will take place in November 2021, will involve people from across the world identifying actions that humans must take to slow down climate change.

What Is Climate Change?

Climate change is the long-term change to weather patterns across the world. Natural events, such as volcanic eruptions and ocean currents, cause climate change to happen slowly or for a short time. However, since the 1950s, scientists have noticed that climate change has been happening much too quickly. When this happens, living things struggle to adapt fast enough to these changes and they cannot survive in the same place or in the same way that they usually do. Many species can become extinct (no longer exist).

Who Is Responsible For Climate Change?

Human actions are causing the planet to become too warm too fast. This is known as global warming and is mostly caused by too many greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and other gases) being released into the Earth's atmosphere. These gases trap heat, which is warming the planet and having an impact on living things across the globe.

Human actions causing climate change involve the following areas:

Food and Farming

Energy

Forests

Oceans

Who Is Most Affected by the Climate Emergency?

Climate change can affect the health and happiness of everyone. However, some people are being affected more than others, such as:

- farmers and rural communities (people living in small, often remote places);
- people in the poorest countries, who are least ready to cope with the effects of climate change;
- people who have done the least to cause climate change but who are facing the greatest problems.





Problems

- Lots of land, especially forests, being cleared to make farmland
- Fewer habitats for wildlife
- Fewer trees taking carbon dioxide from the air
- Growing the same crops, which damages soil
- Fertilisers and pesticides (chemicals used by farmers) releasing a greenhouse gas into the air and harming insects
- Food being transported to other countries (emitting greenhouse gases)
- Farmers in poorer countries suffering with fewer crops, poverty and hunger



Solutions

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Protecting forests and other land
- Using fewer chemicals on farmland
- Helping farmers to farm in different ways



Did You Know...?

- Up to one third of all greenhouse gas emissions come from farming or food production.
- In some poorer countries, like Malawi in Africa, most people work on small family farms and have done little to cause climate change but are suffering the most because of it.



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Energy

Problems

- Burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) to create energy and electricity, which releases carbon dioxide into the air
- Transport using fuels that emit greenhouse gases
- Energy being wasted in homes



Solutions

- Using cleaner energy and electricity sources, such as solar and wind power
- Making vehicles that emit no greenhouse gases
- Preparing people for the changes they will need to make



Did You Know...?

- There is more carbon dioxide in the Earth's air now than for the last 800 000 years.
- Producing electricity, heat and fuel for transport causes more than half of all greenhouse gases the world creates.





Forests

Problems

- Cutting down trees for farming and timber (deforestation)
- New roads, railways and other groundwork clearing land
- Whole habitats being destroyed that threaten an entire group of animals (species)



Solutions

- Stopping deforestation to let forests recover
- Planting more forests to protect living things
- Teaching farmers to grow crops in forests without chemicals
- Taking timber in ways that keep forests healthy



Did You Know...?

- 300 million people still live in forests around the world.
- A forest area the size of a football pitch is cut down every second.



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Oceans

Problems

- Overfishing (so many fish being taken that there are not enough left in the sea and the survival of some species is at risk)
- Noise pollution from ships and mining (for oil and natural gas) shocking living things
- Increasing sea temperatures causing coral bleaching, leading to the loss of coral reefs
- Melting glaciers leading to rising sea levels, causing greater coastal erosion
- Plastic pollution (waste) causing harm to living things



Solutions

- Countries agreeing to protect oceans and coastlines from overfishing and mining
- Slowing global warming in as many ways as we can
- Reducing and recycling plastic waste so none ends up in the oceans



Did You Know...?

- The oceans capture and hold on to carbon dioxide but too much can cause harm to animals, such as coral (removing or bleaching their colour).
- Over 200 million people worldwide rely on fishing to earn money so fish must be caught sustainably (so there are always enough left in the sea).





Health and Happiness

Problems

- Extreme weather and natural disasters happening more often
- Air pollution from burning fossil fuels and driving petrol or diesel cars
- Water pollution from carbon dioxide
- Poorest people living in extreme poverty due to climate change
- Natural, green areas being taken away or changed



Solutions



- Preparing every global citizen with ways to adapt to or cope with climate change
- Reducing greenhouse gases and other pollution in air and water
- Planting more trees and plants across the world, especially near to people's homes, to help them stay healthy and happy
- Helping farmers to grow crops that can be eaten locally

Do You Think...?

- Will the planet be better in ten years' time thanks to COP26?





Our Climate, Our Future

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The 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), taking place in November 2021, will involve a range of different people from the 197 parties. They will identify actions to reduce the human impact on the planet's climate in light of climate change.

What Is Climate Change?

Climate change refers to long-term changes to weather patterns across the world. Natural events, such as volcanic eruptions, changes to the Earth's orbit and ocean currents, cause climate change to happen gradually or for a short time. However, since the middle of the 20th century, scientists have noticed that climate change has been happening much too quickly. When this happens, living things struggle to adapt fast enough to the changes to their environment (e.g. extreme weather, wildfires and loss of habitats) and they cannot survive in the same place or with the same behaviour they are used to. This can mean many species become endangered or even extinct.



Who Is Responsible For Climate Change?

Human activities are causing the planet to become too warm too fast. This is known as global warming and is mostly caused by excessive greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases) being released into the Earth's atmosphere. These gases trap heat, which can then cause an increase in water vapour, another greenhouse gas, increasing the likelihood of clouds and rain forming.

Human activity causing climate change involves the following areas:

Food and Farming

Energy

Forests

Oceans





Our Climate, Our Future

Who Is Most Affected by the Climate Emergency?

Climate change is an issue affecting the health and happiness of every global citizen. However, some are being affected more than others, such as:

- farmers and rural communities;
- people in the poorest countries, who are least prepared to cope with the challenges of climate change;
- people who have done the least to cause climate change but who are facing the greatest problems.





Food and Farming

Problems

- Forests, meadows and hedgerows being cleared to create farmland
- Fewer habitats, causing problems for wildlife
- Fewer trees to capture carbon, leaving more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
- Growing crops over and over on the same land, damaging soil and releasing carbon into the air
- Fertilisers (chemicals to nourish soil) releasing nitrous oxide into the atmosphere
- Pesticides (chemicals to get rid of pests) harming pollinating insects
- Food being imported (brought into a country) using transport that emits greenhouse gases
- Poorer countries and their people relying on farming but suffering most from climate change (fewer crops, more poverty and greater hunger due to changing weather patterns)

Solutions



- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Protecting forests and other natural habitats
- Using fewer chemicals on farmland
- Helping farmers to change the way they farm and earn a fair living

Did You Know...?

- Up to one third of all greenhouse gas emissions come from farming or food production.
- In some of the world's poorest countries, like Malawi in Africa, most people work on small family farms and have done little to cause climate change but are facing poverty and hunger because of it.



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Energy



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Problems

- Burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) to create energy and electricity, which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere
- Energy being wasted in homes in many countries
- Transport using fuels that emit greenhouse gases



Solutions

- Seeking out cleaner, renewable sources of energy, such as solar and wind power
- Ensuring all vehicles produce zero emissions
- Preparing people for the changes they will need to make



Did You Know...?

- There is more carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere now than for the last 800,000 years.
- Producing electricity, heat and fuel for transport causes more than half of all greenhouse gas emissions.





Forests

Problems

- Cutting down of trees (deforestation) due to farming and timber production
- New infrastructure (roads, railways, pipework, cables) destroying habitats and endangering wildlife
- Whole species becoming lost or endangered
- Delicate ecosystems (living things that rely on each other in their environment) becoming at risk



Solutions

- Stopping deforestation to let forests recover
- Planting more forests to protect living things
- Teaching farmers to grow pesticide-free crops in forests, beneath the canopy
- Taking timber in ways that keep forests healthy



Did You Know...?

- 300 million people still live in forests around the world.
- A forest area the size of a football pitch is cut down every second.





Oceans

Problems

- Overfishing (so many fish being taken that species cannot replenish themselves)
- Noise pollution from ships and mining (for oil and natural gas)
- Increasing sea temperatures causing coral bleaching, leading to the loss of coral reefs
- Increasing carbon dioxide, causing acidification (too much acid) that damages sea dwellers, such as coral and shellfish
- Melting glaciers leading to rising sea levels, causing greater coastal erosion
- Plastic pollution endangering wildlife and being carried through food chains (the chains created between plants and animals that rely on each other for food)



Solutions



- International agreements protecting oceans and coastlines from overfishing, mining and shipping
- Slowing global warming in as many ways as we can
- Reducing plastic waste and recycling it responsibly so zero waste makes its way to the oceans

Did You Know...?

- The oceans capture and hold on to carbon dioxide; in fact, they have absorbed almost one third of all carbon dioxide ever produced by humans!
- Over 200 million people worldwide rely on fishing to earn money so species must be caught sustainably (so there are always enough left in the sea).



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Health and Happiness

Problems

- Extreme weather and disasters becoming more frequent or severe
- Air pollution from burning fossil fuels and driving petrol or diesel cars
- Water pollution from carbon dioxide
- Poorest people living in poverty because of climate change
- Natural, green surroundings being removed or changed



Solutions



- Preparing every global citizen with ways to adapt to or cope with the effects of climate change
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution as well as planting more trees and plants to provide cleaner air and water
- Providing natural areas full of trees, birdsong and wildlife near to people's homes to help them stay healthy and happy
- Helping farmers to earn a fair living by growing crops in ways that suit the land and which can be eaten locally

Do You Think...?

- Will the planet be better in ten years' time thanks to COP26?

