What does climate change mean to you?

Africa will be hardest hit by climate change. It is happening now. This is a fight for climate justice. Many poorer communities are already suffering the impacts such as more drought and flooding.

Rising global temperatures = more drought and floods = higher food prices.

People are also suffering from the side-effects of burning coal.

Burning coal = poor air quality, polluted rivers = health risks, less access to water.

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Science + Impacts

Extreme weather – the frequency and severity of droughts and floods is increasing in many parts of Africa. Some examples:

Rising temperatures – in 2013 Ghana experienced it’s highest ever temperature and in the Northern Cape in South Africa temperatures rose to 47.3 degrees Celsius, the hottest March anywhere in Africa.

Droughts are increasing in severity and frequency: 13 million people needing humanitarian assistance in 2011 in the Horn of Africa; 2012 was the third drought in a decade in the Sahel region of West Africa, with over 5 million people affected in Chad, Mali, Niger and Mauritania; and in 2013 Namibia & Angola experienced their worst drought in 30 years.

Floods – as well as increases in the severity of seasonal rains in many countries, there have been at least two major floods: in 2007 over 1.2m people were displaced and 500 people died in 20 countries including Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali and Niger; and in 2000, floods in Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Madagascar and South Africa left 1.25m people homeless, hundreds dead and destroyed crops and livestock.
The evidence is in: global warming has caused severe floods, droughts and storms. More violent and frequent storms, once merely a prediction of climate models, are now a matter of observation. June 30, 2011, John Carroll for Scientific American

Global Extreme Weather Events
- Alaska
  2010 was the warmest year since national records began in 1918.
- Canada
  2010 was the warmest year since national records began in 1948.
- USA
  Persistent, scorching heat across the US during the summer of 2011 contributed to several severe droughts across the country.
- Central America
  In 2011, large amounts of rainfall triggered major floods and landslides during October with over one million people affected.
- Colombia
  Heavy rain in 2010 triggered deadly floods and landslides, affecting nearly 2 million people.
- Chile
  In 2011, the Atacama Desert, one of the driest places on Earth, had its heaviest snowfall in 23 years.
- Hurricane Celia
  Maximum winds of 54 mph in June 2010. Second strongest June storm on record and second known Category Hurricane to develop during June.
- Hurricane Irene
  September 2011. Largest hurricane to strike the US in 30 years. Broke all records including those for New York City.
- Hurricane Sandy
  October 2012. Largest Atlantic storm on record. Broke all records including those for New York City.
- European Alps
  In 2011, a devastating wildfire burned more than 500,000 acres of forest.
- Russia
  In 2010, heatwave exacerbated by severe drought conditions resulting in worst drought since 1972.
- Pakistan
  In 2010, heavy monsoon rainfall caused the worst floods since 1979 with 2.7 million people affected.
- India
  In 2010, the worst heat wave since national records began in 1901.
- Japan
  Worst heat wave since 1970.
- Philippines
  Tropical Storm Washi caused deadly flash floods and slides in 2011.
- Australia
  Unusually heavy rain fell across the country during the summer of 2011–12, resulting in the second wettest summer since national records began in 1901.

Food prices may well go up as a result of floods and droughts caused by climate change.

**Crop yields falling** – Projected crop yields in some countries could drop by as much as 50% by 2020. Some crop yields may fall and other rise, whilst temperature changes, and shorter growing seasons may change the locations where crops can grow, and make farming in marginal areas impossible.

Farmers cannot easily move their land and access to water may also change.

**Rising prices** – wheat and maize yields, for example, are likely to be affected which will push up global food prices.

**Revenue from crops** – profits from crops could fall by as much as 90% by 2100, with small-scale farmers being the most affected.

**Water** – 1 in 3 Africans (up to 345 million) don’t have access to clean water and climate change will increase the impact on water-scarce regions. The impacts of climate change are going to make water more scarce in regions such as the the Sahel, Ethiopia and some parts of Southern Africa, and the impacts could be wider.

**Coal mining and coal-fired power stations both use a lot of water.** Industries that are reliant on coal are going to make this worse.

**Development and economic growth** – by 2040 climate change could cost Africa $460 billion or 4% of continent’s GDP. The cost of adaptation to rising sea levels could amount to at least 5 to 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

**Burning coal and fossil fuels** – has other health impacts, producing poor air quality and polluting our rivers. With one of the world’s highest air pollution levels, most of the Highveld area in Gauteng, South Africa was declared a Priority Area (HPA) by the government in 2007 because of the health implications. Home to 12 of power–utility Eskom’s coal-fired power stations, the area experiences a disproportionate amount of Eskom’s pollution. 51% of deaths due to respiratory illness and 54% deaths due to cardiovascular disease, related to outdoor pollution in the area, can be attributed to Eskom.
How can we fight climate change?

We believe that a global grassroots movement can hold our leaders accountable to the realities of science and the principles of climate justice. We are calling on our leaders and big business to step up to the fight against climate change.

**Possible Paths Back to 350ppm**

**Kick-start the climate debate**

Switch off the TV and chat with your family, talk in the taxi, or discuss with friends and mates:

- How is climate change affecting you? Are you affected by drought, flooding, or by health issues related to the burning of coal?
- How does climate change affect food prices and what can we do about it?
- How can we achieve climate justice? If the rich countries of the Global North started climate change by burning fossil fuels, how can we lead the way and cut CO2?

**Join the #WeLeadYou campaign**

On 23rd September global leaders will meet in New York to talk again about climate change. We want action not words.

Join the #WeLeadYou campaign & make your voice heard. We’re calling on our Presidents to:
1. Hold rich countries of the Global North to account for starting climate change.
2. Choose clean solar and wind over dirty coal and fossil fuels.

**Sign up**

Sign up at [www.350Africa.org](http://www.350Africa.org)
Share your demands at [www.facebook.com/350Africa.org](http://www.facebook.com/350Africa.org) and follow us on Twitter @350Africa