

January was hottest month ever recorded in New Zealand

February 2 2018, by Nick Perry



In this Feb. 23, 2017, file photo, a stand-up paddle boarder surfs across a wave at Sumner Beach in Christchurch, New Zealand. January, 2018 was the hottest month ever recorded in New Zealand, and experts say climate change is one factor. (AP Photo/Mark Baker,File)

January was the hottest month ever recorded in New Zealand according to figures released Friday, and experts say climate change is one factor.

The heat has led to a shortage of fans that Prime Minister Jacinda

Ardern jokingly referred to as "fan-ageddon." Ardern said that while many people are probably enjoying a great summer, they also need to consider the long-term consequences of climate change, including [sea-level rise](#).

Figures released by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research indicate the average temperature during January was 20.3 degrees Celsius (68.5 Fahrenheit). That was more than 3 degrees Celsius above normal and beat the previous record of 19.6 Celsius set in February 1998.

Record-keeping began in 1909.

Gregor Macara, a [climate scientist](#) with the weather agency, said that warmer seas, generally settled weather and more winds from the tropical north had led to the higher temperatures. He said [climate change](#) was an underlying and contributing factor.

February began on a different note as New Zealand was hit by a tropical storm which brought [heavy rainfall](#), flooding and cooler temperatures. But Macara said the agency still anticipates temperatures for the month will be higher than normal.



In this Feb. 27, 2017, file photo, visitors watch the sunset on the horizon at Hokitika on the West Coast of the South Island of New Zealand. January, 2018 was the hottest month ever recorded in New Zealand, and experts say climate change is one factor. (AP Photo/Mark Baker,File)

New Zealand has a relatively mild climate that is moderated by the surrounding ocean.

In an interview this week with The Associated Press, Ardern said she and her partner Clarke Gayford found themselves enduring the heatwave in Auckland without a fan until Gayford remembered he had a broken-down one stored in their attic.

Ardern posted a picture of the dubious-looking contraption on Facebook, with the message "I'm not complaining."

"He had a piece of plywood as a stand, and it didn't have a front cover," Ardern told the AP. "I'm pleased to tell people that he's since relocated

the front cover so it's slightly less dangerous now."

The [warm temperatures](#) and lack of rainfall in parts of the South Island have prompted the government to declare a drought in those areas.

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