

Global one-day temperature spikes above 2C for first time: EU monitor

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The 2023 United Nations COP28 conference will be held from November 30 to December 12, 2023, in the UAE.

The global average temperature on Friday was more than two degrees Celsius hotter than pre-industrial levels for the first time on record,

Europe's Copernicus climate monitor said Monday, adding Saturday likely continued the unprecedented warming streak.

Months of extraordinary heat are expected to make 2023 the hottest year in history, with droughts, massive wildfires and fierce storms ravaging swathes of the planet.

According to new data, global temperatures on November 17 were 2.07C above the pre-industrial average, the EU's Climate Change Service (C3S).

"This was the first day when global temperature was more than 2C above 1850-1900 levels," said Samantha Burgess, C3S Deputy Head on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Preliminary data suggests the record continued into Saturday, with temperatures around 2.06C above the preindustrial average, Copernicus said on X.

The climate monitor will confirm the figure by Tuesday.

The 2015 Paris Agreement enshrined the goal of holding the increase in the global average temperature to "well below" 2C above pre-industrial levels and to aim for a safer 1.5C.

If individual days go above 2C that does not mean that the Paris threshold has been breached—the deal instead refers to an average measured over decades.

Climate experts have urged the world to aim for the lower limit to avoid major climate impacts, such as heat waves, super hurricanes and melting ice caps.

They defined warming as "the increase in the 30-year global average" relative to the average from 1850 to 1900.

The current climate is considered to have warmed by nearly 1.2C compared to that reference period.

Warming limit 'getting closer'

The first day to exceed the 2C target is part of a series of records this year: October was the warmest ever recorded globally, as was every month since June, according to Copernicus, which said that 2023 would with "near certainty" surpass the hottest year on record set in 2016.

Beyond these official records, scientists say proxy data for the climate going back further—like tree rings or ice cores—suggests the temperatures seen this year could be unprecedented in human history, potentially the warmest in more than 100,000 years.

October was some 1.7C warmer than an estimate of that month's average for the pre-industrial era, Copernicus said earlier this month.

And global average temperatures since January have been the highest in records going back to 1940, the monitor added, registering 1.43C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average.

The UN Environment Programme's annual Emissions Gap report on Monday said that in the year to early October there have been 86 days recorded with temperatures exceeding 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

While that does not mean the Paris Agreement threshold has been breached, UNEP warned that the records "signal that we are getting closer".

Leaders meeting November 30 to December 12 in the United Arab Emirates for the COP28 conference will have to respond to a damning progress report on the world's Paris pledges after major scientific studies have made clear the world is far off track.

The conference is expected to draw up the first official assessment of the Paris Agreement and, if possible, corrective measures.

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