

UN chief urges fossil fuel ad ban as heat records pile up

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UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a ban on advertising oil, gas and coal -- the main drivers of global warming.

Humans are as dangerous to Earth as the meteorite that drove dinosaurs

to extinction, the UN chief said Wednesday, urging an end to fossil fuel ads after 12 months that were the hottest on record.

Dramatic climate shifts have already begun taking a heavy toll worldwide, fueling [extreme weather events](#), flooding and drought, while glaciers are melting away and sea levels are rising.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a ban on advertising oil, gas and coal—the main drivers of [global warming](#)—as global climate monitors delivered a swathe of new findings signaling that the planet is in trouble.

"In the case of climate, we are not the dinosaurs. We are the meteor. We are not only in danger. We are the danger," Guterres said.

Last month was the hottest May on record and the 12th consecutive month to break such a record, the EU climate monitor Copernicus announced.

The [global average temperature](#) between June 2023 and May 2024 was "1.63 degrees Celsius above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average", Copernicus said, referring to the period before human-caused greenhouse gas emissions began warming the planet.

2023 was already the hottest year at 1.48C above pre-industrial levels, Copernicus has said, pointing to the natural weather phenomenon El Niño for further pushing up temperatures.

Although El Niño is dissipating, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced humanity faces an 80 percent chance Earth's temperatures will at least temporarily exceed 1.5C during the next five years.

Humanity is playing chicken with the climate targets set by the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit warming to 1.5C, the WMO warned.

The chance of temporarily exceeding the limit has been rising steadily since 2015, when such a chance was estimated to be close to zero, the WMO pointed out.

"Global emissions need to fall nine percent every year to 2030 to keep the 1.5 degree limit alive," Guterres said.

But the peak has not been officially beached, being measured over a period of decades rather than individual years.

While the world agreed during the last COP28 talks in Dubai to phase out [fossil fuels](#), a decline in emissions is not imminent.

Ban on oil ads

"The Godfathers of climate chaos—the fossil fuel industry—rake in record profits and feast off trillions in taxpayer-funded subsidies," Guterres said.

"I urge every country to ban advertising from fossil fuel companies," he said, likening it to bans on other products harmful to human health like tobacco.

"We need an exit ramp off the highway to climate hell," he said as signatories of the Paris Agreement are expected to deliver new emissions targets by early 2025.

Guterres also repeated calls for taxing the fossil fuel industry profits to finance the fight against global warming, specifically pointing to "solidarity levies on sectors such as shipping, aviation and fossil fuel

extraction".

"Even if emissions hit zero tomorrow, a recent study found that climate chaos will still cost at least \$38 trillion a year by 2050," he said.

That is more than the \$2.4 trillion needed by 2030 for developing countries, excluding China, to get out of fossil fuels and adapt to a warmer planet, as estimated by UN experts.

Guterres said he made his speech now with concerns that the climate crisis become "a victim of a diversion of attention" by numerous wars and conflicts.

Without undermining the need for the conflicts to be resolved, he said, "We cannot let them distract us from what is the existential threat of all times for humankind, and that is climate change."

It also comes as crucial climate talks get underway in Bonn, Germany to set the stage for the UN COP29 summit in Azerbaijan in November.

The talks must reach a new agreement on [financial aid](#) from [rich countries](#) to the rest of the world to achieve their climate goals.

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