

UN report warns Europe warming at twice the global average

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A pharmacy thermometer shows a temperature of 43 degrees Celsius (109.4F), as a heat wave hits France, in Nantes, France, July 13, 2022. REUTERS/Stephane Mahe

United Nations, November 3 (RHC)-- Europe has warmed at more than twice the global average over the past three decades and experienced a greater temperature rise than any other continent, the United

Nations' World Meteorological Organization said.

Average temperatures in the European region have risen by 0.5 degrees Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) each decade since 1991, according to the joint report by World Meteorological Organization and the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service released on Wednesday.

Europe has been experiencing record temperatures and has become a "heatwave hotspot" in the last few years.

Alpine glaciers lost 30 metres (just less than 100 feet) in ice thickness between 1997 and 2021, while the Greenland ice sheet is swiftly melting and contributing to accelerating sea level rise.

"This year, like 2021, large parts of Europe have been affected by extensive heatwaves and drought, fuelling wildfires," Taalas said, also decrying "death and devastation" from last year's "exceptional floods."

Extreme weather that is getting increasingly worse due to climate change has created damages exceeding \$50 billion in Europe last year. The report warned that temperatures would likely continue to rise across Europe at a rate exceeding global mean temperature changes, regardless of future levels of global warming.

A large part of the continent is in the sub-Arctic and Arctic, which is the fastest-warming region on Earth.

Between 1990 and 2020, the EU cut greenhouse gas emissions by 31 percent, aiming to reach 55 percent by 2030, according to the report. It also added that Europe is also one of the most advanced regions when it comes to cross-border cooperation towards climate change adaptation.

"European society is vulnerable to climate variability and change," said Carlo Buontempo, head of Copernicus's European Centre of Medium-range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). "But Europe is also at the forefront of the international effort to mitigate climate change and to develop innovative solutions to adapt to the new climate Europeans will have to live with."

The report was published days in advance of the annual United Nations climate conference COP 27, which will start in Egypt on November 6. World leaders, including French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, are expected to attend and discuss how to address the warming of the earth.

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