

World's oceans set new temperature record as global warming intensifies



Photo shows dolphins off the coasts of Port-Leucate as the Pyrenees mountains appear in the background on March 3, 2022. - Dolphins, penguins, cranes flying over the blue water by the hundreds... The Thera i Luna boat of the NGO "Peuples de la Mer" leaves every week from Port-Leucate, in Aude, to meet with animals likely to have to coexist in the Mediterranean with dozens

of giant wind turbines. (Photo by RAYMOND ROIG / AFP)

Brussels, August 5 (RHC)-- The world's oceans have set a new temperature record with the potential to threaten Earth's climate, marine life and coastal communities. The temperature of the oceans' surface hit 20.96 degrees Celsius (69.71 Fahrenheit) on Friday, according to European Union climate observatory data.

The last record was 20.95C (69.71F) in March 2016, said the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service. The average ocean temperature has beat seasonal records since April of this year. Warming oceans will affect marine plant and animal life, including the migration of certain species and the spread of invasive species, according to experts, which could in turn undermine food security in parts of the world.

"The ocean heatwave is an immediate threat to some marine life," said Piers Forster of the International Centre for Climate at the University of Leeds. "We are already seeing coral bleaching in Florida as a direct result and I expect more impacts will surface."

Scientists have observed that oceans have absorbed 90 percent of the excess heat produced by humans since the industrial age began. This excess heat has accumulated simultaneously with greenhouse gasses.

"While there are certainly short-term factors, the main long-term cause is without a doubt the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere caused by human activity, primarily by the burning of fossil fuels," said Rowan Sutton, director of climate research at the University of Reading.

Warmer oceans additionally are less able to absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂), which reinforces the cycle of global warming. Scientists predict the worst effects of the El Nino phenomenon, which warms waters, will be felt at the end of this year and continue in the future.

The use of fossil fuels will likely spearhead debates in the upcoming United Nations climate talks, or COP28, which will take place in Dubai in November.

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