

CLIMATE FACT CHECK: SEPTEMBER 2025 EDITION

Debunking the latest unscientific fearmongering on the hottest year, wildfires, 'bigger hail', corals & alleged climate-caused insurance rate increases!

September 2nd: No, the global mean temperature record has not been broken ten years in a row.



Claim: The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)—a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for coordinating international cooperation on atmospheric science—[claimed](#) that “2024 was the tenth year in a row [that] the global mean temperature record was broken.”

Fact-Check: The WMO’s own graphic doesn’t support their claim. The global mean surface temperature did not set a new record for ten consecutive years in any of the six surface-based temperature datasets they plotted. Even Berkley Earth’s [Dr. Robert Rohde pointed out](#) that 2021 and 2022 were both “cooler” than 2020.

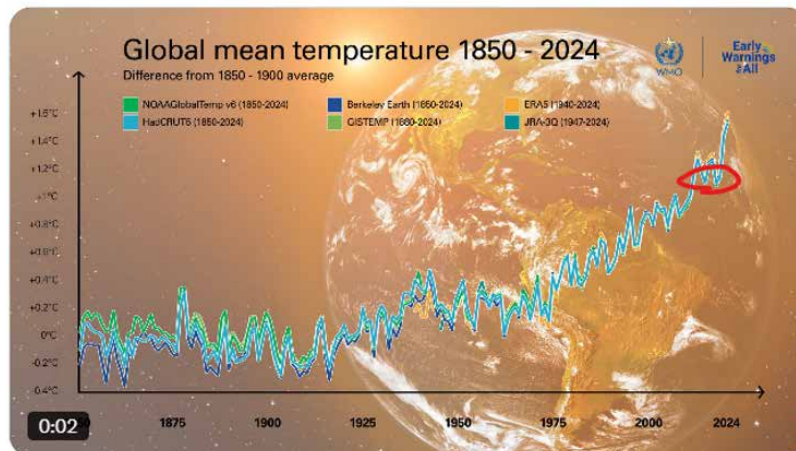


World Meteorological Organization
@WMO



2024 was the tenth year in a row the global mean temperature record was broken.

Find out more about the global [#StateOfClimate](#) here bit.ly/3RhqxsD

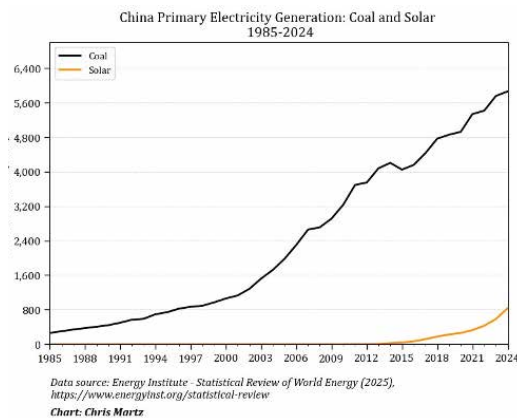


September 4th: No, China isn't doing more than any other country to curb climate change.



Claim: Dr. Jonathan Overpeck, a climate scientist at the University of Michigan, [stated on his X \(Twitter\) page](#) that “China is doing more than any country to curb climate change.” This was in response to [another post](#) by political economist Jostein Hauge discussing the fact that China’s installed solar capacity now makes up nearly two thirds of the global total.

Fact-Check: While Dr. Overpeck states that China “still has a long way to go,” its increasing solar power capacity means nothing in terms of climate. China’s use of coal continues to increase nearly every year. Electricity generation by coal reached a [record high](#) in 2024. In fact, China [began construction](#) on 94.5 gigawatts (GW) of new coal-fired power plant capacity last year, and resumed construction on an additional 3.3 GW. Until their coal consumption goes down, it doesn’t matter how much solar is added to China’s grid, it will have no measurable effect on the global carbon dioxide levels.



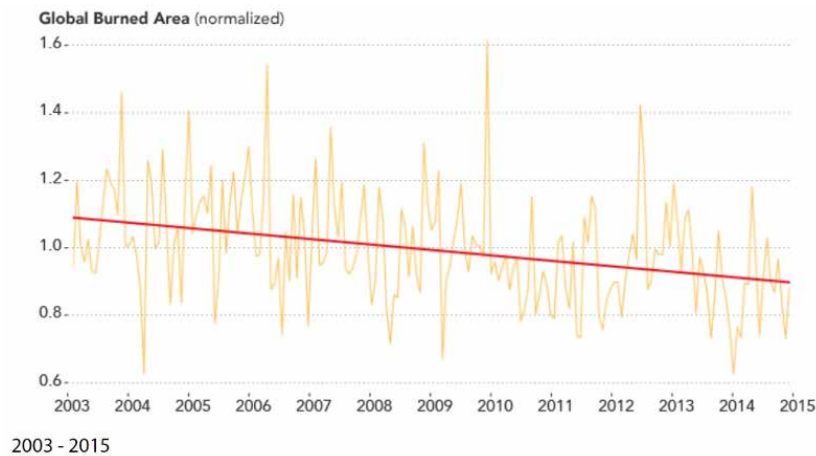
September 5th: No, Al Jazeera, climate change is not resulting in more air pollution from wildfires



ALJAZEERA

Claim: Al Jazeera [posted an article](#) claiming that wildfires are becoming more frequent due to climate change, and so air pollution from their smoke is as well. They state, “In a report released on Friday, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said wildfires, likely to have been made more frequent by climate change, are releasing a “witches’ brew” of pollutants that can end up wrecking air quality a continent away.”

Fact-Check: While wildfires do contribute to pollution, there is no evidence that they are becoming more frequent due to climate change. [Satellite data from NASA](#) show that global burned acreage has significantly declined over the period of record since 1998. This is confirmed by other [satellite observations](#) and [reconstructions](#). Despite modest warming over the last three decades, the wildfire burn area has decreased by 24% over that period. Since fires are decreasing, there cannot be increased air pollution from them.



September 11th: Realtor.com is wrong: Insurance is not rising due to climate change



Claim: An article from *Realtor.com* titled, "[Would You Drop Insurance to Stay Put in Your Neighborhood? Most Owners Say Yes](#)," claims that increasing "climate risk" is causing insurers to pull out of high risk areas and force people to go without homeowners insurance policies.

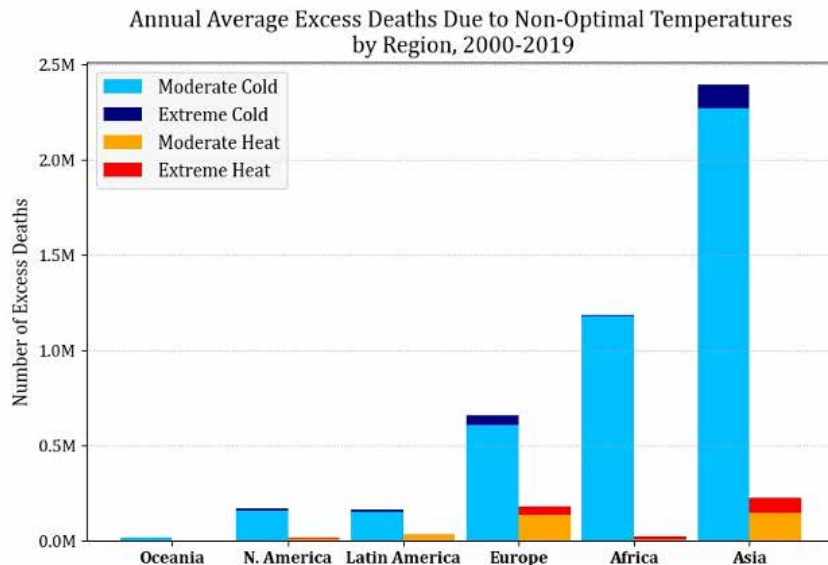
Fact-Check: This is only partially true. Insurers are pulling out or increasing rates in some areas, and some people are foregoing insurance. But what isn't true is that increased "climate risk" is the reason. The risks highlighted in the report are flooding, hurricane wind damage, and [wildfires](#). The problem is that none of those weather conditions has become more extreme over time. Flood damage has actually [decreased](#) (as a percentage of GDP) over the last century, hurricanes are [not stronger](#), and wildfire severity has [decreased](#) significantly. The real reasons for increases in insurance costs are rising property value and new construction in previously unsettled high-risk areas.

September 17th: No, New York Times, climate change isn't causing more heat-related deaths in Europe



Claim: *The New York Times* (NYT) [published an article](#) claiming that "Severe heat this summer killed three times as many people in European cities as would have died had humans not warmed the planet by burning fossil fuels..." The Times asserts that in a world absent of greenhouse gas emissions, 8,000 people would have died from summer heat compared to 24,400 this year.

Fact-Check: These are not real mortality figures. The NYT admits that these figures from Dr. Malcolm Mistry, a professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, are derived from the modeling of mortality trends in 854 European cities, not observational data, which the *Times* says "[a]re not yet widely available." Thus, they are attempting to pass a claim off as established fact without supporting evidence. In any case, extreme heat is humans' [smallest temperature risk](#) on every continent, including Europe, except for Africa and Oceania.



Data source: Zhao Q. et al. Global, regional, and national burden of mortality associated with non-optimal ambient temperatures from 2000 to 2019: a three-stage modelling study. *Lancet Planet Health*. 2021 Jul;5(7):e415-e425. doi: 10.1016/S2542-5196(21)00081-4. PMID: 34245712.

Gao Y. et al.; MCC Collaborative Research Network. Global, regional, and national burden of mortality associated with cold spells during 2000-19: a three-stage modelling study. *Lancet Planet Health*. 2024 Feb;8(2):e108-e116. doi: 10.1016/S2542-5196(23)00277-2. PMID: 38331527

Zhao Q, Li S, Ye T, Wu Y, Gasparrini A, Tong S, et al. (2024) Global, regional, and national burden of heatwave-related mortality from 1990 to 2019: A three-stage modelling study. *PLoS Med* 21(5): e1004364. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1004364>

Chart: Chris Martz

September 17th: Corals won't disappear, contrary to what the New York Times claims



Claim: In a recent *New York Times* article, "[Corals Won't Survive a Warmer Planet, a New Study Finds](#),"

Sachi Kitajima Mulkey reports that nearly all Atlantic corals will cease growing by the end of this century due to projected rising temperatures. The article claims that over 70% of reefs will begin dying by 2040, and that 99% could vanish if global warming exceeds 2°C.

Fact-Check: This is false. The piece frames corals as doomed victims of climate change, unable to adapt to increased temperature, but paleoclimate data and peer-reviewed research refute the NYT's assertions. Coral thrives in warm water, not cold water, and has existed continuously for the past [60 million years](#), surviving temperatures and carbon dioxide levels significantly higher than what is occurring today. The primary reasons for coral bleaching events include [sediment and fertilizer runoff](#) from nearby coastal lands, [chemicals found in sunscreen](#) (e.g., oxybenzone), and temporary increased [exposure to UV](#) caused by [local drops in sea level](#) in shallow reefs.

September 26th: Is climate change leading to bigger hail in Europe?



Claim: A [new paper](#) published in *Nature Communications* and

written by scientists from Newcastle University, the Met Office, and University of Bristol claims that although small hail (≤ 2 cm) is likely to become less common as the planet warms, large hail (≥ 5 cm in diameter) may increase in some regions, such as Europe.

Fact-Check: As the atmosphere warms, the freezing level becomes higher, which makes it increasingly difficult for hailstones to reach the ground before melting. Even if one argues that thunderstorm updrafts could become stronger due to more latent heating, larger hailstones would melt more than they otherwise would because of a thicker warm layer. This means the net change would be minimal. What's more, the authors of this study do not rely on observations to support their hypothesis. Instead, it is another modeling study relying on the IPCC's high-emissions pathway, RCP8.5 / SSP5-8.5, which has been deemed [flawed and impossible](#), despite media advertisements as it being "business as usual."

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- [Get the Facts Straight, The Independent, Island Nations Are Growing, Not "Sinking Into the Sea"](#)

[ClimateDepot.com](#)

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- [NYT: 'It Isn't Just the U.S. — The Whole World Has Soured on Climate Politics' – 'The retreat from climate politics has been widespread'](#)
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[Wattsupwiththat.com](#)

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