

FAST FACTS



On climate and nature

1. Healthy ecosystems can provide 37 per cent of the mitigation needed to limit global temperature rise. The ocean, land and forests, for instance, provide so-called nature-based solutions that help sequester carbon dioxide, which is a major greenhouse gas contributing to climate change. Damaged ecosystems release carbon instead of storing it. Portions of the Amazon rainforest, for example, are now releasing more carbon dioxide than they are storing, due to deforestation.
2. Approximately 25 per cent of the globe's greenhouse gas emissions come from land clearing, crop production and fertilization, with animal-based food contributing 75 per cent of that.
3. With global warming of 1.5°C to 2°C, the majority of terrestrial species ranges are projected to shrink dramatically. Changes in ranges can adversely affect species conservation, greatly accelerate local species turnover and substantially increase the risk of global extinctions.
4. Climate change has been linked to greater risks from zoonotic diseases. For some contagions, increases in temperatures or rainfall can dramatically affect the life cycles of either the pathogen or its vector – the intermediate species that spreads the disease from the original host to humans.
5. Coral reefs are particularly vulnerable to climate change and are projected to decline to 10-30 per cent of former cover at 1.5°C warming and to less than 1 per cent of former cover at 2°C warming.
6. More than 80 per cent of the human diet is provided by plants. Only three cereal crops – rice, maize and wheat – provide 60 per cent of energy intake.
7. Fish provide 20 per cent of animal protein to about 3 billion people.
8. Roughly 500 million people live in areas that experience desertification. Drylands and areas undergoing desertification are more vulnerable to climate change and extreme events including droughts, heatwaves and dust storms.
9. Up to 80 per cent of people living in rural areas in developing countries rely on traditional plant-based medicines for basic health care.
10. Less than 1 per cent of total land is used for mining, but the industry has significantly negative impacts on biodiversity, emissions, water quality and human health.
11. \$345 billion in fossil fuel subsidies result in \$5 trillion in overall costs, including in terms of the deterioration of nature.

Sources: [IPBES](#) (1, 2, 3, 10, 11), [UN](#) (6, 7, 9), [WHO](#) (4), [UNEP](#) (5), [UN](#) (6, 7, 9), [UNEP](#) (6), [IPCC](#) (8)

