

December 12, 2014

8 ways climate change is already affecting Africa



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According to the [Climate Change Vulnerability Index for 2015](#), seven of the ten countries most at risk from climate change are in Africa.

Africa has seen a decrease in rainfall over large parts of the Sahel and Southern Africa, and an increase in parts of Central Africa. Over the past 25 years, the number of weather-related disasters, such as floods and droughts, has doubled, resulting in Africa having a higher mortality rate from droughts than any other region.

1. Impacts on weather patterns

Flooding

Flooding is the most prevalent disaster in North Africa, the second most common in East, South and Central Africa, and the third most common in West Africa (AWDR, 2006).

In North Africa, the 2001 disastrous flood in northern Algeria resulted in about 800 deaths and economic loss of about \$400 million. In Mozambique, the 2000 flood (worsened by two cyclones) caused 800 deaths, affected almost 2 million people of which about 1 million needed food, 329,000 people were displaced and agricultural production land was destroyed (AWDR, 2006).

Drought

Between July 2011 and mid-2012, a severe drought affected the entire East Africa region and was said to be “the worst drought in 60 years.”

2. Impacts on Water Supply and Quality

Observable effects of climate change on water resources in Africa include: flooding, drought, change in distribution of rainfall, drying-up of rivers, melting of glaciers and the receding of bodies of water.

West Africa

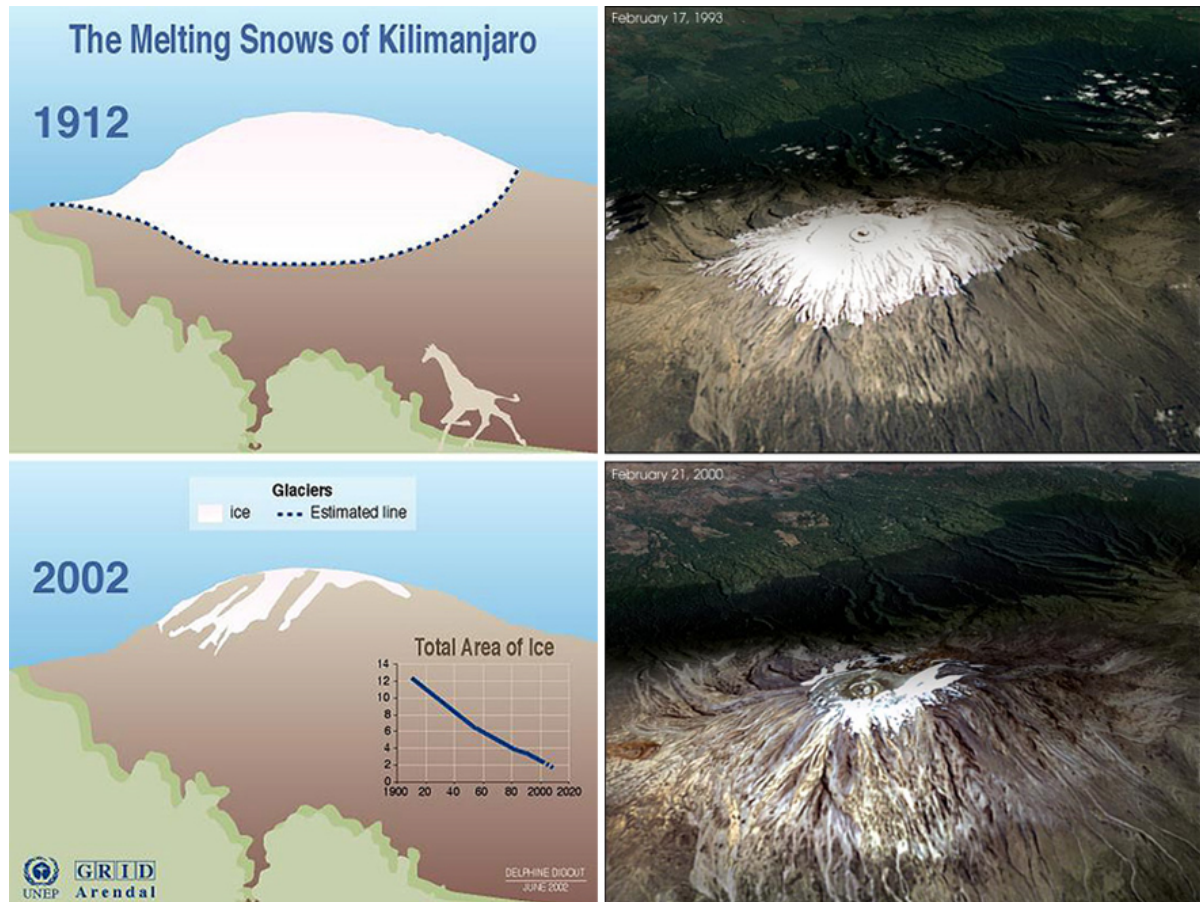
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now facing environmental devastation as a result of pollution. In Nigeria, [half the population](#) has no access to clean water.

Mount Kilimanjaro Glaciers

The gradual yet dramatic disappearance of the glaciers on Mount Kilimanjaro is a result of climate change (IPCC, 2001). The glaciers act as a water tower and several rivers are now drying up. It is estimated that 82% of the ice that capped the mountain, when it was first recorded in 1912, is now gone. (IPCC, 2001)



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3. Impacts on Agriculture and Food

Across Africa the landscape is changing. Droughts, heat stress and flooding have led to a reduction in crop yields and livestock productivity.

East Africa is facing the worst food crisis in the 21st century. According to

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4. Impacts on Human Health

Climate-sensitive diseases and health impacts can be high in poor countries that have minimal resources to treat and prevent illness. Examples of climate related health impacts include:

- Frequent and severe heat stress linked to sustained increases in temperature
- The reduction in air quality that often accompanies a heat wave can lead to breathing problems and worsen respiratory diseases.
- Impacts of climate change on agriculture and other food systems increases rates of malnutrition and contributes to poverty — It' e **one in four people** YÄk ÄÖK Gṽr ÄṽY DGK e Ö YÄu q̃Dl Dl ʋ Ö! B̃uìl ṽuèNl ÄG ùDl Öb̃G e N ṽl ù ÄY Nl Í G e ÄGY GÖ N r̃ ṽG K̃ B̃u Äk AB ʋ b̃r Y G ṼÖ N GÖ ÄY l ù ʋ Y Y ÄDG ʋ G b̃r Ö Ä e N ṽ ʋ Y G B̃ r̃ K̃ Y G u Äṽ Ä l Ö K̃ D G l y ʋ G K̃ Ä u G Ä G Ö Y e Ö Y ùl
- The spread of Malaria may increase in areas projected to receive more precipitation and flooding. Increases in rainfall and temperature can cause spreading of dengue fever

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exacerbate these impacts and, in turn, contribute to the ongoing migration within and between countries in Africa.

Extreme events displace large amounts of people, especially those who are unable to respond and rebuild after disasters, due to lack of resources.

“I am **are living** in a flood-prone area. The water is very dirty and it is very hot. I have to walk for hours to get water.”



“I have to walk for hours to get water.”

6. Impacts on Vulnerable Population

Women, children and the elderly are more vulnerable to climate change impacts across Africa. Women labourers often experience additional duties as caregivers and as well as from societal responses to climate change after extreme weather events (eg, male migration).

The water scarcity places an additional burden on African women, who walk hours and sometimes even days, to fetch it. (IPCC, 2014)

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The changes in precipitation and temperature are already affecting crop yields in Sub-Saharan Africa. This has resulted in food shortages, that have triggered cross border migration and [intraregional conflicts](#), which has sparked political instability in Nigeria for example.

8. Impacts on ecosystems



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ecosystems in eastern and southern Africa, and terrestrial ecosystems in southern and western Africa. The extreme weather events have demonstrated the vulnerability of some of South Africa’s ecosystems. The migration patterns, geographic range and seasonal activity of many terrestrial and marine species have shifted in response to climate change. The abundance and interaction among species has also changed (IPCC, 2014).

Despite the fact that the African continent has contributed the least to anthropogenic factors causing climate change, Africa is the worst hit.

But you can help Africa fight — join the climate movement today. [Get involved here.](#)



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