

# OVER 11,000 SCIENTISTS WORLDWIDE DECLARE GLOBAL CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Degradation - GHGs, Ozone Depletion and Climate Change

Climate activists participate in a student-led climate change march in Los Angeles, United States on Friday, November 1, 2019. | Photo Credit: [AP](#)

More than 11,000 scientists from 153 countries have declared a global climate emergency, warning that “untold suffering” is inevitable without deep and lasting shifts in human activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and other factors related to climate change.

In a paper published on Tuesday in the peer-reviewed journal *BioScience*, 11,258 signatories, including 69 from India, presented climate change trends and provided a set of methods to mitigate the threat.

China, France reaffirm support of Paris climate agreement, call it ‘irreversible’

The climate emergency declaration is based on the scientific analysis of more than 40 years of publicly available data, covering a broad range of factors including energy use, surface temperature, population growth, land clearing, deforestation, polar ice mass, fertility rates, gross domestic product and carbon emissions.

“Despite 40 years of major global negotiations, we have continued to conduct business as usual and have failed to address this crisis,” said William J. Ripple, a professor of ecology at the Oregon State University (OSU) College of Forestry in the U.S.

“Climate change has arrived and is accelerating faster than many scientists expected,” Mr. Ripple said in a statement.

The global coalition of scientists, led by Mr. Ripple and Christopher Wolf from OSU, point to six areas where humanity should take immediate steps to slow down the effects of a warming planet. These include energy, short-lived pollutants, nature, food, economy and population.

U.S. begins formal pullout from Paris deal

“Our basic needs include food and energy supplies, and the ability to sustain it. To meet this necessity, we have been exploiting nature, which has caused tremendous damage”, Gyan Prakash Sharma, an assistant professor at Delhi University and one of the signatories, told *PTI*.

Referring to India, he said environmental patterns including the monsoon, have changed.

“There is a tremendous change in the monsoon pattern across the country, which has triggered changes in agricultural practices”, Mr. Sharma said.

According to the paper, mitigating and adapting to climate change entails major transformation in the way global society functions and interacts with natural ecosystems.

The signatories said they are encouraged by the recent surge of concern. “Governmental bodies are making climate emergency declarations. School children are striking... Ecocide lawsuits are proceeding in courts. Grassroots citizen movements are demanding change, and many

countries, States and provinces, cities, and businesses are responding,” they said.

“As an ‘Alliance of World Scientists’, we stand ready to assist decision-makers in a just transition to a sustainable and equitable future,” the scientists added.

### Deciphering Greta’s climate message

According to Thomas Newsome of the University of Sydney, scientists have a moral obligation to warn humanity of any great threat.

“From the data we have, it is clear we are facing a climate emergency,” Mr. Newsome said in a statement.

Graphics in the paper illustrate several key climate change indicators over the 40 years since scientists from 50 nations met at the First World Climate Conference in Geneva in 1979.

The scientists noted that multiple global assemblies in recent decades have agreed that urgent action is essential, but greenhouse gas emissions are still rising rapidly.

Other ominous signs include a sustained rise in the per capita meat production, the global tree cover loss and the number of airline passengers, they said.

There are certain encouraging signs — the decrease in global birth rates, decelerated forest loss in the Brazilian Amazon and an increase in wind and solar power — but even these changes are tinged with worry, the scientists noted.

For example, the decline in birth rates has slowed over the last 20 years and the pace of the forest loss in the Amazon appears to be increasing again, they wrote.

“Global surface temperature, ocean heat content, extreme weather and its costs, sea level, ocean acidity, and area burnt in the United States are all rising,” Mr. Ripple said.

“Globally, ice is rapidly disappearing as demonstrated by the decrease in the minimum summer Arctic sea ice, Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, and glacier thickness. All these rapid changes highlight the urgent need for action,” he said.

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