

OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE

(((FACTS BEHIND THE CLIMATE CHANGE)))



The Climate Change FACTS are:

1. Scientific evidence shows that climate change is already happening and that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is caused by human activity.
2. Global temperatures are expected to rise by 1.4 - 5.8° Celsius by 2100. Global temperatures have already risen by 0.6° C above pre-industrial temperatures.
3. Global sea- levels are expected to rise by 0.09 - 0.88 m by the year 2100.
4. The island nations of the Pacific are amongst the lowest emitters of climate changing gases (and account for less than 1% of global change changing gases) but are amongst the most vulnerable to the potential adverse impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Many Pacific Islands are already experiencing climate change related impacts.
5. Pacific Island countries lack resources needed to address the impacts of climate change. Their capacity to adapt to climate change is also hindered by low levels of awareness of climate change issues.

How does climate change IMPACT our lives in the Pacific?

Climate Change already threatens all key development sectors in the Pacific.

- There will be less land for our use due to sea level rise, caused by climate change flooding coastal plains. Low lying atolls are especially at risk.
- There will be less freshwater available for our use. Climate change increases the incidence of extreme events such as floods, droughts and cyclone which threaten freshwater supply.
- Agriculture will be affected. Coastal plains, where most of our agriculture is based, can be salinised due to sea-level rise and become less productive.

Increased natural disasters will damage crops and warmer, wetter climate will favour the breeding of pests.

- Reefs and Marine Resources will be affected. Increased ocean temperatures degrade coral reefs through coral bleaching. Some migratory species, such as Tuna, will move to areas where ocean conditions are more suited to their survival.
- Disease prevalence will increase as warmer, wetter conditions favour the breeding of disease carrying insects such as mosquitoes (spreading dengue and malaria) and aquatic pathogens such as giardia.
- Tourism will be affected by the increase in natural disasters, biodiversity loss and increased prevalence of disease.
- A less productive resource-base, increases in the severity of natural disasters and poor human health will affect our economies.

What is CAUSING Climate Change?

Climate Change, or global warming, is caused by an over supply of climate changing gases - which act like a blanket around the earth and trap heat from the sun into the earth's atmosphere.

Humans have significantly increased the amount of climate changing gases in the atmosphere since the 1850's, thickening this blanket around the earth, which has resulted in a rise in global temperatures.

The most significant climate changing gas is Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) which comes from the burning of fossil fuels (oil and coal) for the production of energy or transport. The energy sector is the largest producer of climate changing gases, and is responsible for 60 % of global emissions of climate changing gases. The transportation sector is the second largest emitter (22%), followed by the agricultural sector at 8%.

WHO is causing climate change?

The United States of America is the largest emitter of climate changing gases, and as a single nation is responsible for 25% of global climate changing gas emissions.

Industrialised countries have much higher emissions of climate changing gases. As a result, they should be responsible for taking the lead in addressing this global threat. In addition to reducing their own emissions, they must also assist less polluting countries such as the Pacific Islands address climate change.

How can we STOP climate change?

To stop climate change, we must reduce our emissions of climate changing gases that are causing the earth to over heat. This means reducing our use of dirty fossil fuels and making the switch to clean renewable energy sources like solar and wind.

At the political level, this should be done through the Kyoto Protocol, which sets out the first steps for countries to reduce their national climate changing gas emissions.

At the individual level, this means changing the way that each of us uses fossil fuels. We can each make changes to our individual life styles by using energy in a more efficient manner, and making use of public transport schemes, or even walking!

What's good for our health and our wallets is good for the environment, and can help save lives.

(Information from Climate Change Fact Sheet prepared by WWF South Pacific Programme)



For more information contact our Meteorology Division at Mulinuu

- Climate Change Section -
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CHILDREN'S CORNER

Children aged 9-15 are invited to answer the following corner. The name of 3 students with top scores at the end of every month will be posted under the "Children's Corner" for special prizes. "Children's Environment Awareness 2007 Awards will be given to 10 students with top total scores at the end of the year.

Fill in the gaps

The island nations of the Pacific are amongst the 1 emitters of climate changing gases but are amongst the 2 vulnerable to the potential adverse impacts of 3 and 4.

5 have significantly 6 the amount of climate changing gases in the atmosphere since the 1850's.

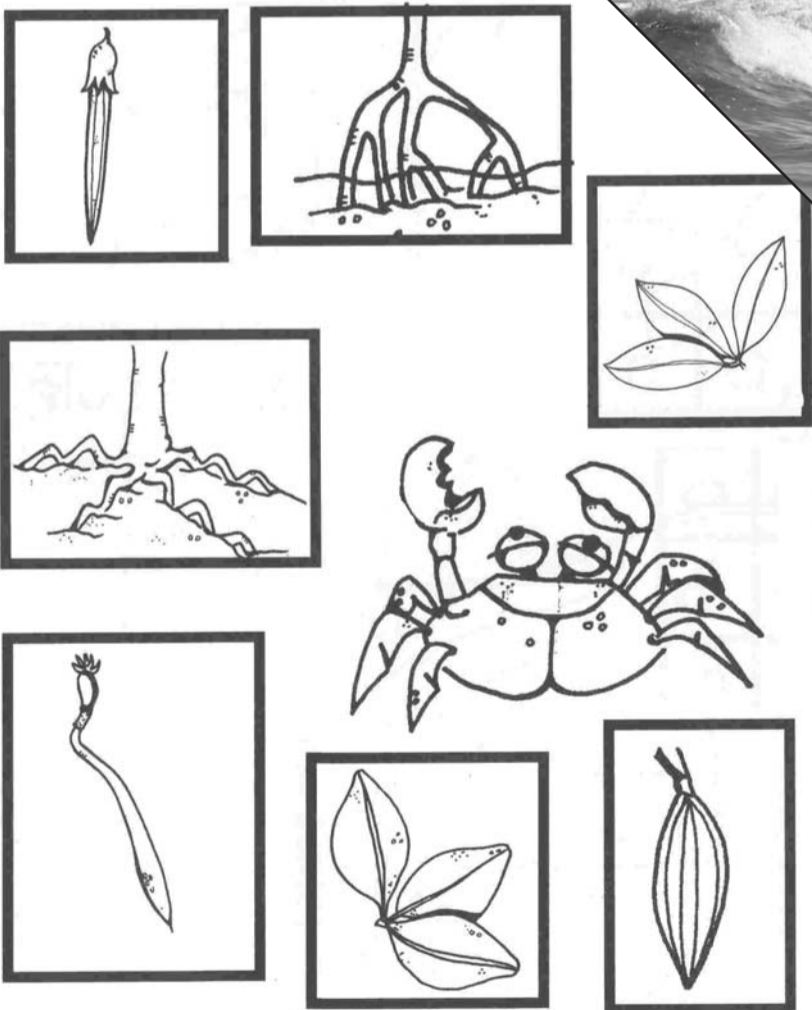
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Some facts behind Earthquakes

- If you are indoors during an earthquake, keep calm and take cover under a heavy table or desk. Stay away from glass, windows or anything that could fall, like a bookcase.
- If you are outdoors, move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.
- If you are in a crowded public place, do NOT rush for the doors. Everyone will be doing that. Instead, take cover under something heavy and stay away from things that could fall on you. Stay calm. Do not get in an elevator during an earthquake!
- After an earthquake, be prepared for after shocks. After shocks are follow-up earthquakes that are usually smaller than the first one. They are dangerous because they can cause things that are weakened in the first earthquake to fall down.
- If you are home and you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open a window and get out of the building right away. It may mean that a gas line in your house has been broken. Tell your parent or another adult.
- Make sure you are wearing shoes after an earthquake. There may be broken glass on the ground and inside your home.
- If you are scared, share your fears with an adult. Earthquakes can be scary, but remember – they only last a few seconds.

Colour the picture



Unscramble the words

1. apemurteter
2. sesimion
3. minrea
4. sorecure
5. vennmitroen
6. wrsfahteer
7. airutelucgr
8. locar
9. mistour
10. aisseed

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following companies for sponsoring our children's corner

- ▶ Samoa Biscuits
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