



## **The questions of minimising the effect of extreme weather**

### **Introduction**

Hi, my name is Sophia and I will be your head chair for the Environment committee. I'm really looking forward to meeting you all and I hope to have a great debate over the weekend. In the meantime here is a briefing paper on the issue of global access to water, which will help you to begin your research to construct the clauses. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

### **Definition**

As the world has warmed, that warming has triggered many other changes to the Earth's climate. Changes in extreme weather and climate events are the primary way that most people experience climate change. Human-induced climate change has already increased the number and strength of some of these extreme events. During the period 1998–2017, direct economic losses from disasters were estimated at almost \$3 trillion and they claimed an estimated 1.3 million lives. 2020 started off with some of the worst bush fires ever recorded in Australia. 28 people were killed, including four firefighters, and an estimated 10 million hectares has burned. Australia's average temperature has increased, breaking its all-time temperature record twice in December. This is just one example of how extreme weather, in this case drought, can be devastating.

### **Challenges of Extreme Weather**

Extreme weather can come in many forms, such as drought, heat waves, heavy downpours, floods and hurricanes. Many coastal countries are particularly susceptible to floods and hurricanes, such as Bangladesh and the US. There were four hurricanes recorded in the US last year, with one, Hurricane Dorian causing \$4.6 billion in damage alone. This demonstrates how urgently change needs to happen, but we aren't gods and can't change the weather. We must look to a greener future to combat this growing problem. Combining scenarios of demographic change with predicted climate change demonstrates that people and their assets will be increasingly exposed to extreme weather over coming decades. We need to think up new ways of limiting global warming.

### **Action already taken to improve global access to water**

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 is to "take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts".



As of April 2019, 185 countries had ratified the Paris Agreement to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions. Under the Agreement, all parties are required to submit new nationally determined contributions, containing revised and much more ambitious targets, by 2020.

As of 20 May 2019, 28 countries had accessed Green Climate Fund grant financing for the formulation of national adaptation plans and other adaptation planning processes, with a value of \$75 million. Of these, 67 per cent were for least developed countries, small island developing States and African States.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is constantly preparing comprehensive Assessment Reports about knowledge on climate change, its causes, potential impacts and response options.

### **Questions to think about**

What action should be taken to further combat extreme weather?

Is a defensive approach to dealing with extreme weather appropriate in the long term?

What is the most effective way limiting the impact of extreme weather?

Should we prioritise short-term action or long-term solutions?

### **Further Reading**

Definition of extreme weather:

<https://nca2014.globalchange.gov/highlights/report-findings/extreme-weather>

Challenges:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-50951043>

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6734141-Mace-Defensive%20approaches%20to%20extreme%20weather.pdf>

Action already taken:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg13>