



2005 – Climate change or naturally fluctuating cycle?

As 189 nations meet in Montreal to discuss how to combat global warming the world's first climate change refugees are preparing to evacuate their South Pacific home in the face of rising sea levels

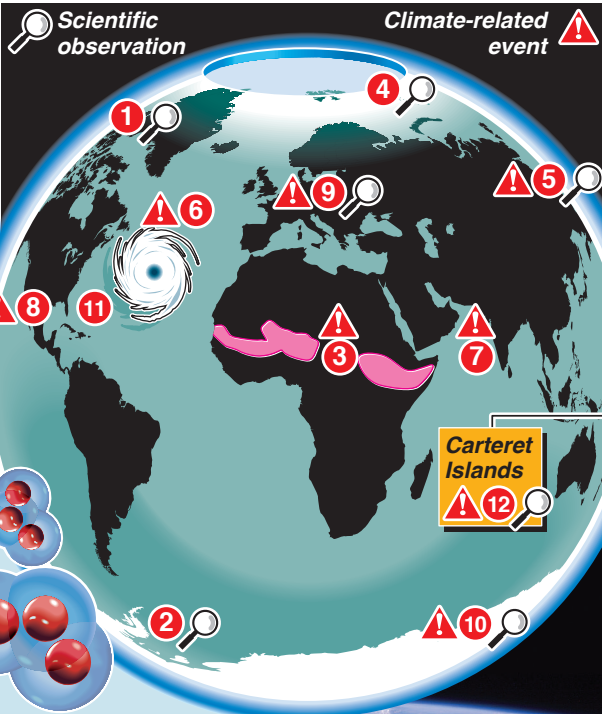


1 January: WWF warns that total area of Arctic ice cap covered by summer sea ice is **decreasing by 9.2%** each decade, threatening world's population of 22,000 polar bears with extinction

2 February: *British Antarctic Survey* reports that **Larsen B** Antarctic ice sheet, previously assumed to be stable, is starting to collapse. At least **300** of **400** mountain glaciers on peninsula are in retreat

3 March: Satellite images confirm that **six successive years of poor rain** have left sub-Saharan Africa in severe drought

4 April: Scientists from *Cambridge University* find large scale ozone losses above Arctic over past year. They report that about **30%** of ozone layer has been destroyed



6 July: Scientists at *MIT* warn that tropical cyclones have grown more powerful and destructive over past three decades due in part to global warming. **Highest wind speeds have increased by about 50%**

5 June: Satellite images of Siberian Arctic lakes show that **permafrost is thawing** and lakes are disappearing. Scientists at *UCLA* discover that since 1973 total number of large Arctic lakes has decreased from 10,882 to 9,712. **One hundred and twenty five lakes have vanished completely** while rest have decreased in surface area by six percent



7 July 26: Western India suffers worst floods in a century. Large parts of Maharashtra inundated. **State capital Mumbai is deluged with 940mm of rain in 24 hours.** Monsoon rains kill 1,039 people

8 August: U.S. hurricane centres warn residents and government officials in risk areas to have hurricane-preparedness plans in place



August 29: Katrina devastates New Orleans

9 September: Study of effects of 2003 heatwave in Europe shows biggest fall in agricultural output for 100 years. Researchers at *Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement* say extreme temperatures – which claimed **35,000** lives – cut plant growth by nearly a third

10 November: Analysis of air bubbles trapped in an ice core from Antarctica shows that atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration is **27%** higher than its highest recorded level during past 650,000 years



11 Atlantic hurricane season is most violent on record with **25 named storms** and **13 hurricanes**. Previous record was 21 storms (1933) and 12 hurricanes (1969)

12 November 25: Scientists at *Rutgers University* find ocean levels worldwide are rising twice as fast today as they were before the Industrial Revolution. Drill core samples and satellite images show 2mm-a-year rise in sea level. **980 people are to leave South Pacific Carterets before atolls are swallowed by sea**