

BBC World News America - Greenhouse Gases Another Record High

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Well, levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have reached another record high. Since 1990 there's been an increase of 43% in the warming effect these gases have on the planet and there's no sign at all of a slow down. Our chief environment correspondent Justin Rowlatt reports now:

Floods in England. Record spring temperatures and wildfires in Australia. The worst floods Venice has seen in a generation. Scientists say extreme weather events like these will become more common as climate change intensifies. And today we learnt that the gases that trap heat in the atmosphere causing global warming have hit record levels yet again. Let's see how concentrations of the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, have risen.

Back in 1800 in the early days of the industrial revolution there were 280 molecules of carbon dioxide per million. There is a gradual rise until around 1960, then look at this, it takes off, think cars, industrialization in the developing world, mass aviation. Today we learned that concentration accelerated again this year taking the total to 407.8 parts per million.

"We have again broken records in, in carbon dioxide concentrations and, and we have already exceeded 400 ppm level which is regarded as a critical level that happened already two years ago and this growth of carbon dioxide, erh, concentration continues."

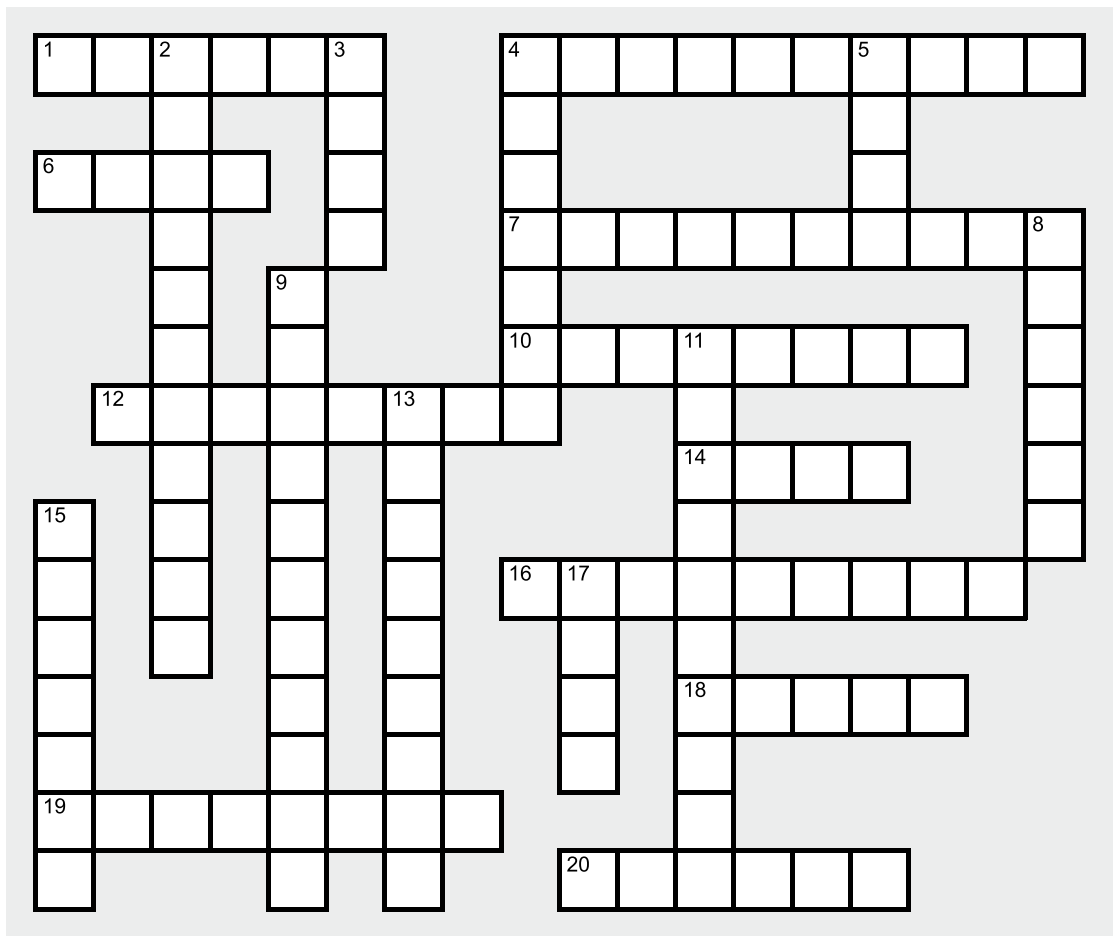
We know what the problem is, almost everything we do has a carbon consequence. The way we travel, the food we eat, the energy we use to power our homes, how we build our homes. And we know what to do. Scientists say we've got to almost halve emissions in the next ten years if we are gonna keep warming below one and a half degrees centigrade. Let the temperatures rise above that, they warn, and we will all face more intense heatwaves, droughts and floods.

"I think the thing that we need to remember about climate change is that the critical period is now and that the climate change we'll see and the decisions that we make will last not just for decades, not even centuries, but potentially longer than that with melting of the ice sheets. So it's really got to be the top of our agenda, I think erm, for many decades to come."

The frozen regions of the world have already started to melt and the sad fact is that today's figures show our efforts to cut emissions are not working. In truth, it is worse than that. The concentration of greenhouse gases has actually accelerated.

Justin Rowlatt reporting there and there could be more extreme weather on the way because of that change in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Answers to the crossword are in the text overleaf



Across

- 1 Move from one place to another (6)
- 4 A time period of roughly 30 years also a group of similar aged people (10)
- 6 deal with something unpleasant (4)
- 7 societies still in the process of industrializing (10)
- 10 air travel (8)
- 12 important, serious, dangerous (8)
- 14 large-scale (4)
- 16 release (of gas) (9)
- 18 divide by two (5)
- 19 gone beyond (8)
- 20 plans (6)

Down

- 2 Speeded up (11)
- 3 Immediately past (4)
- 4 slow, steady, step by step (7)
- 5 Hold or keep (4)
- 8 increase (6)
- 9 increase (gets worse) (11)
- 11 The mass of air surrounding the earth (10)
- 13 keeps going (9)
- 15 Tens of years (7)
- 17 the opposite of freeze (4)