

## Health, development and biodiversity: impacts of climate change

- 33,000 people died as a result of the heat wave that hit Europe in 2003.
- Rising temperatures will trigger a global animal and plant species extinction of unprecedented proportions. About a quarter of the world's animal and plant species may die out as a consequence of climate change over the next 50 years<sup>5</sup>.
- The World Health Organisation reports that already now, 150,000 people die every year from climate change.
- The land area that is prone to drought has increased significantly in the past five decades<sup>6</sup> and one third of the planet could be desert by 2100.<sup>7</sup>
- If the average global temperature increases from preindustrial levels by two degrees Celsius, as many as 80 % of crops could fail in southern Africa.<sup>8</sup>
- A two degree increase in average global temperature could cause rising sea levels and ice melting forcing 150 million people living in Asia's coastal regions to move inland.<sup>9</sup>
- A two degree increase in average global temperature could cause 200 million more people living in areas prone to malaria.<sup>10</sup>
- A two degree increase in average global temperature could cause 500 million people who rely on Himalayan glaciers for their water supply experiencing severe shortages.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Extinction risk from climate change; Thomas et al.; Nature 2004, vol. 427.

<sup>6</sup> The surface area affected by extreme droughts has doubled over the past 30 years: 30% of world land area in the early 2000s, compared to 15% in 1970s. See US National Center for Atmospheric Research, [http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2005/drought\\_research.shtml](http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2005/drought_research.shtml)

<sup>7</sup> Eleanor J Burke, Simon J. Brown and Nikolaos Christidis, *Modeling the Recent Evolution of Global Drought and Projections for the Twenty-First Century with the Hadley Centre Climate Model*, Journal of Hydrometeorology, Volume 7, Issue 5, October 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Rachel Warren, Impacts of Global Climate Change at Different Annual Mean Global Temperature Increases, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, ECF 2004. This research was also cited in *Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change*, a Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) report.

<sup>9</sup> Christian Aid:

<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/indepth/0611climatechange/Kenya%20COP%20briefing%20Nov06.pdf>

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