Unit 11: Climate Change

Objectives:

E5.4C - Analyze the empirical relationship between the emission of carbon dioxide, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and the average global temperature over the past 150 years.

E5.4D - Based on evidence of observable changes in recent history and climate change models, explain the consequences of warmer oceans (including the results of increased evaporation, shoreline and estuarine impacts, oceanic algae growth, and coral bleaching) and changing climatic zones (including the adaptive capacity of the biosphere).

Global CO2 Emissions



Ice Core Data

Measurements of the Greenhouse Gas Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Have Been Taken from Several Ice Cores. Data from the Vostok and Siple Cores Show That CO₂ Concentrations Are Currently at Their Highest Level in the 160,000 Year Record.



The Past 150 Years



Industry



Land Use



Major Producers



Source: Global Carbon Project OurWorldInData.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions • CC BY Note: This measures CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels and cement production only – land use change is not included. 'Statistical differences' (included in the GCP dataset) are not included here.



Global Temp Increase

Source : Temperatures 1856 - 1999: Climatic Research Unit, University at East Anglia, Norwich UK. Projections: IPOC report 95.

Scenarios of sea level rise



Source: Climate change 1995, Impacts, adaptations and mitigation of climate change: scientific-technical analyses, contribution of working group 2 to the second assessment report of the intergovernmental panel on climate change, UNEP and WMO, Cambridge press university, 1996; IPCC, Climate change 1994: radiative forcing of climate change and an evaluation of the IPCC IS92 emission scenarios, 1995.

Sea Level Rise

Sea Level Rise



Severe Weather



Source: Munich Re Group, 1999.

Thinning of the Arctic sea-ice



Thinning of the Arctic sea ice cover





Thickness of the ice for the period 1958-1976

Thickness of the ice for the period 1993-1997

Sea Ice

GRIID Arendal UNEP

Vote: comparison of sea-ice draft data acquired on submarine cruises betwen 1993 and 1997 with data from 1958-1976 indicates that mean ice draft at the end of the melt season has decreased by 1,3 m from 3,1 m to 1,6 m). Value is down by 40%

Sources: D.A. Rothrock, Y.Yu and G.A. Maykut, Thinning of the Arctic sea-ice cover, University of Washington, Seattle, 1999.

Potential impact of sea level rise: Nile Delta

Population: 3 800 000 Cropland (Km²): 1 800



Population: 6 100 000 Cropland (Km²): 4 500



Sources: Otto Simonett, UNEP/GRID Geneva; Prof. G. Sestini, Florence; Remote Sensing Center, Cairo; DIERCKE Weltwirtschaftsatlas

Rising sea level would destroy weak parts of the sand belt, which is essential for the protection of lagoons and the low-lying reclaimed lands. The impacts would be very serious: One third of Egypt's fish catches are made in the lagoons.

Potential climate changes impact



Impacts on...



Health

Agriculture



Weather-related mortality Infectious diseases Air-quality respiratory illnesses



Crop yields Irrigation demands Forest

Forest composition

Geographic range of forest

Forest health

and productivity



Water supply

Water quality

Competition for water





Erosion of beaches Inundation of coastal lands additional costs to protect coastal communities Species and natural areas



Loss of habitat and species Cryosphere: diminishing glaciers



Source: United States environmental protection agency (EPA).

Changing Zones

Impact on mountain vegetation zones



Sources: Martin Benitson, Mountain environments in changing climates, Roulledge, London, 1994; Climate change 1995, Impacts, adaptations and migration of climate change, contribution of working group 2 to the second assessment report of the intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPOC), UNEP and WMO, Cambridge press university, 1996.