

**Significant Global Weather and Climate Events for 2000****January 2000**

Numerous snowstorms hit parts of northern and central China during the month across the provinces of Qinghai, Inner Mongolia and Xingiang. News reports indicate that several hundred thousand people were affected and over one million livestock perished. Direct economic loss was reported at 24 million U.S. dollars. Flooding and landslides associated with heavy rainfall during the first week of January hit southwestern Brazil, causing 28 fatalities and displacing some 39,000 people. Severe cold affected parts of India during the month--nearly 300 people died from the cold, mainly in east-central India near the Nepal border. A snowstorm also affected the east coast of the U.S. during the month and shut down airports, closed the federal government, and left hundreds of thousands temporarily without power. Record snowfalls were reported in several areas, including the 20.3 inches of snow at the Raleigh-Durham Airport in North Carolina.

**February 2000**

Tornadoes ripped through southwest Georgia shortly after midnight on the 14th, killing 19 people and injuring more than 100. The town of Camilla, GA in Mitchell County was the hardest hit area. Insured losses were estimated to be \$25 million. Tropical systems caused deadly flooding rains in Mozambique, Botswana, South Africa, and Swaziland during the months of February and March 2000. Media reports indicate that this was the worst flooding across southern Africa in nearly 50 years, with estimates of several thousand deaths. In Mongolia, where temperatures were 4 degrees below the long term average for the December 1999-February 2000 period, heavy snow and severe cold killed more than three million livestock.

**March 2000**

During spring 2000, China experienced frequent dust storms. Twelve sand and dust storms affected northern China in the spring period, with eight of these storms affecting Beijing, China. Flooding continued in Mozambique, with one location reporting over 55 inches of rainfall during February through March. In Botswana, 60,000 people were left homeless by floods caused by four weeks of heavy rain. Tornadoes and severe storms moved across Fort Worth, Texas on March 28<sup>th</sup>, resulting in five deaths and over \$450 million in damages. One of the fatalities was the result of large hail.

**April 2000**

Hot and dry conditions spread from parts of the Middle East across the Indian subcontinent with drought conditions across parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and India. Media reports indicate that a heat wave adversely affected the many people made homeless by last year's October cyclone in India. The lack of shelter and poor quality of temporary housing made it difficult for people to escape the heat. Drought conditions, or prolonged periods of dryness leading to crop failure, occurred in 11 of India's 25 states affecting 80 million people, mostly in the northern half of India. The national government warned that food grain production would drop by up to 30 percent, and oil seed crops would be cut in half in some of the hardest hit areas. Also, flooding due to heavy rains over the late winter and early spring hit Hungary for the second year in a row. The Hungarian government declared parts of eastern Hungary a disaster area with flooding occurring along the Tisza river.

**May 2000**

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GFDRE) estimated that 8 million people were affected by the drought, primarily in the southern and southeastern portions of the country. The failure of the secondary harvest, or belg season, affected as many as 10 million people. Also, firefighters struggled to hold the line against fires whipped by furious winds that raced through 400 homes in New Mexico in the United States.

**June 2000**

Flooding and mudslides caused much damage and loss of life in Central and South America in early June. Thirteen people died in Guatemala due to torrential rains which triggered mudslides across the northern part of the country. Floods also hit central Mexico in the Mexico City area, where five people died east of Mexico City in the Chalco Valley area. A drought spreading across north China left at least 3.2 million people short of water, brought out swarms of locusts, and threatened hundreds of thousands of farmers with economic ruin. Also, in west central China in Qinghai province on the northern Tibetan plateau, government reports indicated that 1.2 million people were affected by drought.

**July 2000**

A ridge of high pressure from Saharan Africa brought a scorching heat wave to southeast Europe breaking century-old records in early July. The heat wave claimed at least twelve lives across the region. Temperatures reached as high as 111 degrees F (43.9 C) in locations across Turkey, Greece, Romania, and Italy. The hottest station was in south central Bulgaria with a temperature of 113 F (45.0 C). Greece suffered hundreds of fires as a result of the heat and the dry weather, with Samos Island reporting one-fifth of the island burned. It was also quite hot and dry in parts of the south central U.S. and into the western states. A heat wave blanketed the southern United States, with many states suffering from 1-2 weeks of 100+ temperatures. A strong tornado, unusually strong for Canada, struck a campsite in Alberta on July 14, killing 11 people.

### **August 2000**

Super Typhoon Billis crossed Taiwan and China during the month. The storm caused loss of life and widespread flooding in both regions. In Nepal, landslides and flash floods triggered by heavy rains killed 122 people since the seasonal monsoon began in June. In India, heavy rain caused the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries to overflow. The torrential rains left 2.5 million people homeless and killed over 300 in eastern India. In contrast, Iraq has suffered from a severe water shortage for the last two years. This year's drought is worse than the 1999 drought and is believed to be the most severe drought recorded in the past 100 years.

### **September 2000**

The western fire season across the U.S. during the April-September period burned nearly 7 million acres with over \$2 billion in damages and fire control costs. The drought and heat wave in the south-central and southeastern U.S. during the same period caused over \$4 billion in losses to agriculture and related industries. Flooding continued in southeast Asia. Early monsoon rains that began in July wrought havoc along the Mekong river and its tributaries running through Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. More than 4.5 million people were affected, most severely in the large delta in southeastern Cambodia and southern Vietnam, where the Mekong meanders before feeding into the South China Sea. The flooding was the worst in decades along the Mekong River in Cambodia and flooding continued through October 2000. In Italy, flooding due to a weekend of heavy rains left several hamlets isolated and caused massive floods along the country's coastline. New flooding killed more than 700 people in eastern India and Bangladesh during the month. Rescue workers used boats and military helicopters to help some of the millions of people washed out of their homes by floods.

### **October 2000**

A series of storms hit the western European continent in October, and at mid-month various media sources reported that southeast England was suffering from its worst flooding in years. From the Rhone valley in France to the Po valley in northern Italy, the death toll from floods and landslides reached 28, with 19 reported as missing. Twenty-one deaths were confirmed in Italy, and 7 were confirmed in Switzerland. In the US, drought conditions worsened in the southeast. Some stations in the Carolinas reported no rainfall for the entire month. Typhoon Xangsane brought death and destruction to the Philippines in late October, and whirled across the South China Sea into Taiwan. The storm in Taiwan left 62 dead, and officials estimate that the storm did U.S. \$2.03 billion in damage to valuable farmland and crops in Taiwan. Hurricane Keith hit Belize, Nicaragua, and Mexico, with up to 22 inches of rain reported, and more than 30 fatalities.

### **November 2000**

Media sources reported that Typhoon Bebinca left 24 dead and 4 missing after hitting the Philippines. Government offices, schools and financial markets reportedly closed as flood waters inundated Manila. The "Big Island" of Hawaii was pounded by heavy thunderstorms at the beginning of the month. Localized heavy rains across the eastern half (windward side) of the "Big Island" of Hawaii gave Hilo 27.24 inches of rain in a 24-hour period. The rains flooded numerous homes, forcing dozens of families to evacuate. In addition, several landslides were reported on Hawaii Belt Highway, and schools and most businesses were closed. At least 151 people were killed by torrential rains, floods, and landslides ravaging Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia during late November.

### **December 2000**

Widespread heavy rains with flooding and landslides killed several hundred people in Southeast Asia in November and December. The flooding was most severe over parts of Indonesia and the worst that region had experienced since the 1940's. Parts of the southeastern U.S. received accumulating snow in early December. The western areas near and along the Appalachian mountains received 1 to 7 inches of snow in some locations, while a storm along the coast dropped up to 15 inches of snow on the coastal plain of North Carolina. In Mongolia, early snows this season killed almost 16,000 head of livestock and forced thousands of families to migrate to save herds from another devastating winter.

The scope of this report is to highlight the major climate and weather events for 2000 and is not all inclusive. This report was compiled at the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) on 12/21/00 by NCDC meteorologists Tom Ross ([tom.ross@noaa.gov](mailto:tom.ross@noaa.gov)); Neal Lott ([neal.lott@noaa.gov](mailto:neal.lott@noaa.gov)) and William Brown ([william.brown@noaa.gov](mailto:william.brown@noaa.gov)).

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