

Fourth National Climate Assessment, Vol II — Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States

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nca2018.globalchange.gov

# Climate Science Special Report

#### Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4), Volume I

This report is an authoritative assessment of the science of climate change, with a focus on the United States. It represents the first of two volumes of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, mandated by the Global Change Research Act of 1990.

Recommended Citation



**Executive Summary** 



Ch. 1: Our Globally Changing Climate



Ch. 2: Physical Drivers of Climate Change



Ch. 3: Detection and Attribution of Climate Change



Ch. 4: Climate Models, Scenarios, and Projections



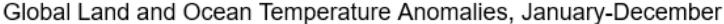
Ch. 5: Large-Scale Circulation and Climate Variability

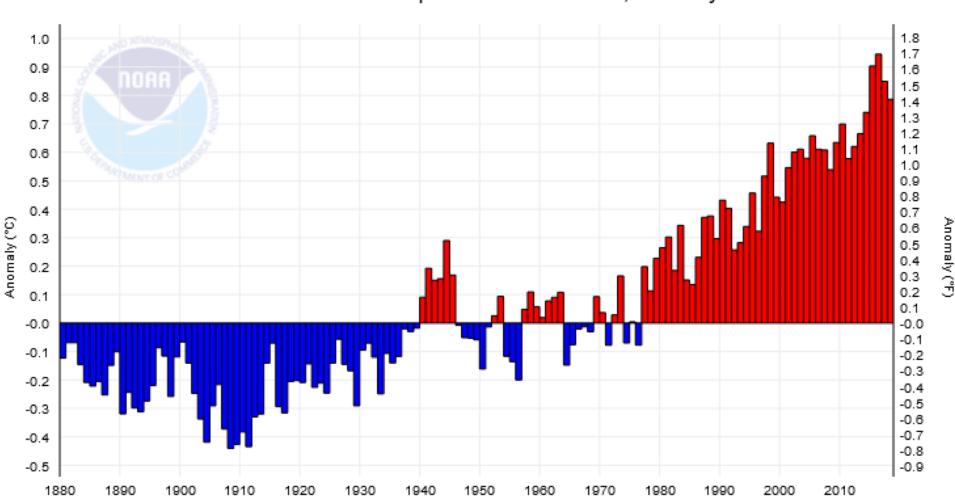


Ch. 6: Temperature Changes in the United **States** 

- •Volume 1 is the most comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the state of climate science today. 12 federal agencies, 50 authors, almost 500 pages\* It was subject to public review, two agency reviews, and a National Academy review, released in 2017
- •Volume II is the most comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of how climate change is affecting the U.S. and how we are responding. 12 federal agencies, 350 authors, over 1600 pages, also subject to public, multiple agency and National Academy reviews. Released in 2018

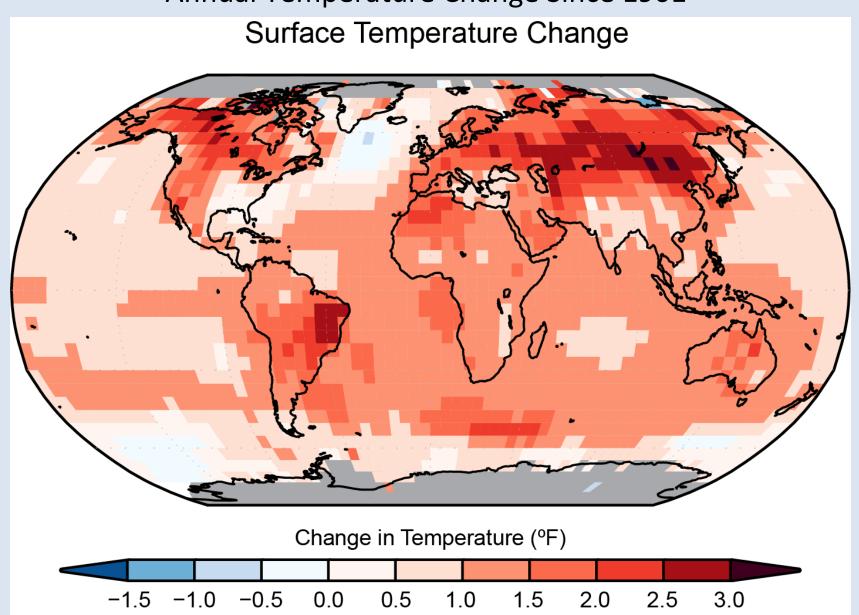
# 2018 Was 4th Warmest Year on Record



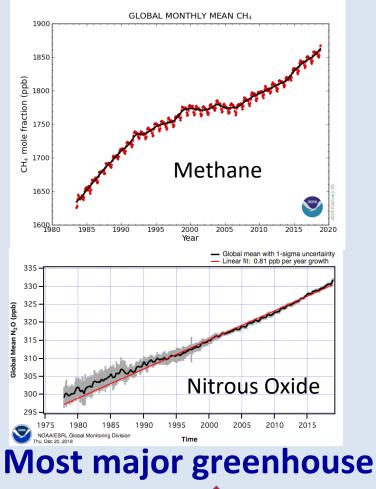


# Where Has It Warmed?

**Annual Temperature Change Since 1901** 



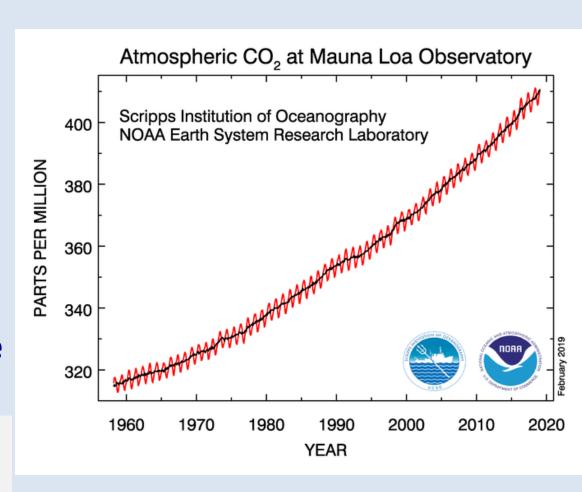
# Recent Greenhouse Gas Trends



gases are

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)

### CO<sub>2</sub> is now over 411 PPM





A collection of 700+ free, ready-to-use learning resources rigorously reviewed by educators and scientists suitable for secondary through higher education classrooms.

Ways to Search »

Browse the Collection »

Browse by NGSS »

"I appreciate how you've linked climate and energy education to NGSS, and have provided good searching tools - a valuable resource for teachers!"

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#### LEAN

Collection of Educational Resources

Guidance in Teaching Climate and Energy

**CLEAN Network** 

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About the Project

#### News

CLEAN has a new
Climate Literacy Quiz

to match our <u>Energy</u>

Literacy Quiz

CLEAN was <u>featured in</u>
the news

Register for the <u>CLEAN</u>

Webinar Series

Teachers, design your own climate and energy units

CLEAN was awarded

the <u>2017 Friend of the</u> Planet award

The CLEAN Collection is aligned with NGSS



#### Guidance in Teaching Climate and Energy Science

Essential knowledge, instructional support, and links to relevant resources in the CLEAN collection.



#### **CLEAN Network**

A community of professionals committed to improving climate and energy literacy.

About the CLEAN Project

**CLEAN Review Process** 



# **Teaching Guidance**



LEAN > Guidance in Teaching Climate and Energy







#### CLEAN

Climate and Energy Educational Resources

#### Teaching Climate and Energy

Teaching Climate

Teaching Energy

**Tools for Educators** 

**CLEAN Network** 

Get Involved About this Project

#### Guidance in Teaching About Climate and Energy

Climate and energy are complex topics, with rapidly developing science and technology.

These pages offer easy-to-read explanations of science and policy, designed to step students through the key principles of climate and energy. Each page is illustrated with examples to bring these topics alive in your classroom.

- · A summary of each of the climate and energy science principles
- · Ideas to support learners
- Suggested teaching approaches, selected for various grade levels
- · Relevant resources from the CLEAN collection



#### **Teaching Climate**

Walk students through key components of the climate system: the Sun, the atmosphere, life on Earth, human impacts, how scientists study climate, and actions humans can take.



#### Teaching Energy

Trace the story of energy in our lives, beginning with the physics of energy and how energy flows throughout the earth system. Explore energy's influence on human society, sources of energy, the ways we use energy, how we make decisions about energy, and the impacts of energy use.



#### Check out the Educator Toolbox to find more teaching resources

Explore tools for teaching about climate and energy science, including pedagogical approaches, activities, and instructional

- Creating Your Own Climate and **Energy Units**
- Earth Systems Investigations
- NCA Teaching Resources
- Newsletters

- Webinars
- Workshops

# **Teaching Guidance**



CLEAN > Teaching Climate and Energy > Teaching Climate > 6. Humans Affect Climate



Check out and register

for the 25 March 2019 CLEAN

#### **CLEAN**

Climate and Energy Educational Resources

Teaching Climate and Energy

#### Teaching Climate

- 1. The Sun Provides Energy
- 2. Climate is Complex
- 3. Climate and Life
- 4. Climate is Variable
- 5. Understanding Climate

#### 6. Humans Affect Climate

7. Climate Change has Consequences

GP. Humans can Take Action

Climate Literacy Quiz

Teaching Energy

Tools for Educators

**CLEAN Network** Get Involved

About this Project



Human activities are impacting the climate system.

Climate Literacy Principle

Jump down to: Teaching these it eas

Find activities

Teaching about the human impacts on climate is supported by five key concepts:

webinar featuring this Principle x Teaching this principle is supported by five key concepts: a. The overwhelming consensus of scientific studies on climate indicates that most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the latter part of the 20th century is very likely due to human activities, primarily from increases in greenhouse gas concentrations resulting from the burning of fossil fuels.

▶ There are 4 more fundamental concepts. See them all...

These key ideas relate to the causes and effects of human-induced climate change.

The potential for human activities to increase the temperature of the Earth through greenhouse gas emissions has been described and calculated for over a century. Volumes of scientific research across multiple scientific disciplines agree that humans are warming the climate, and the 2013 IPCC Fourth Assessment Report states, "Human influence on the climate system is clear. This is evident from the increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, positive radiative forcing, observed warming, and understanding of the climate system." (From the IPCC AR5, FAQ brochure)

There is overwhelming evidence that human activities, especially burning fossil fuels, are leading to increased levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which in turn amplify the natural greenhouse effect, causing the temperature of the Earth's atmosphere, ocean, and land surface to increase. That greenhouse gases "trap" infrared heat is well established through laboratory experiments going back to the mid 1850s when Sir John Tyndall first measured the effect.

#### Find activities and visuals for teaching this topic

Search by grade level: middle school

high school

intro college

upper college

search all grade levels

# **CLEAN Collection**

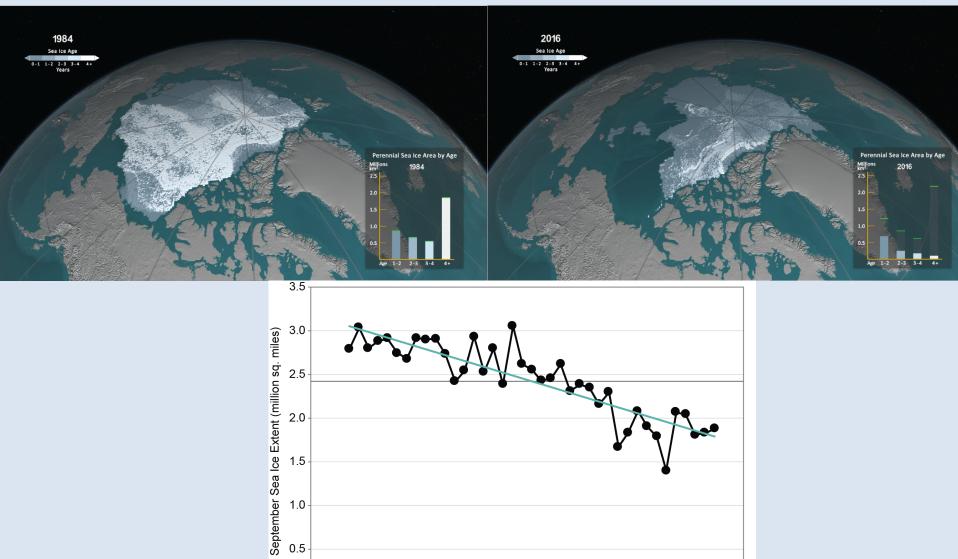
- Curated
- Community reviewed
- Expert scientist reviewed
- Classroom ready
- Online, free resources
- Aligned with NGSS, Literacy Framework
- Filter search options



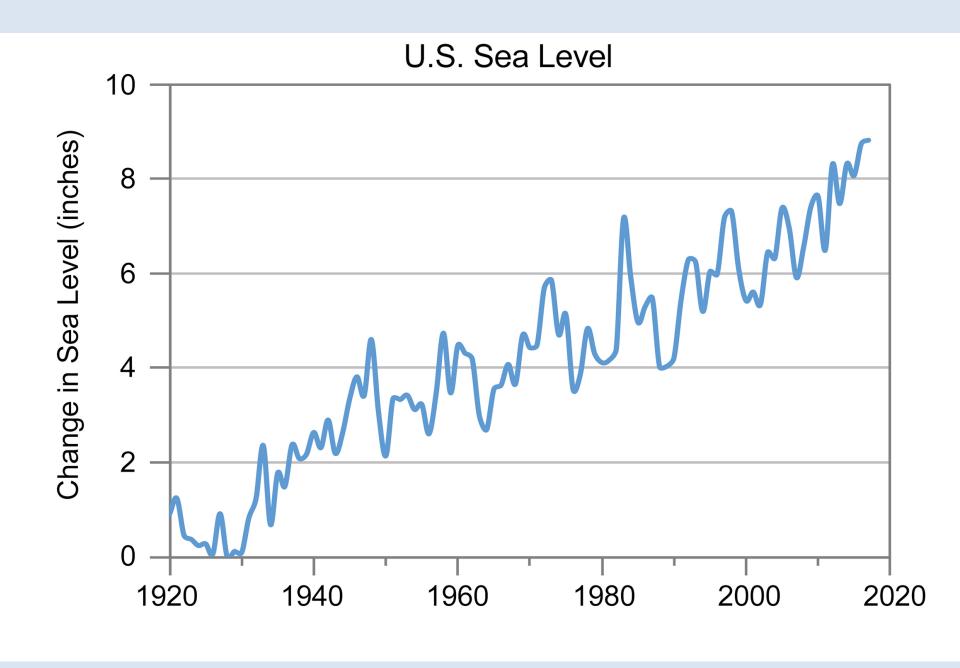
# Other Indicators of Climate Change

# Arctic Sea Ice Decline

1984 2016



Year

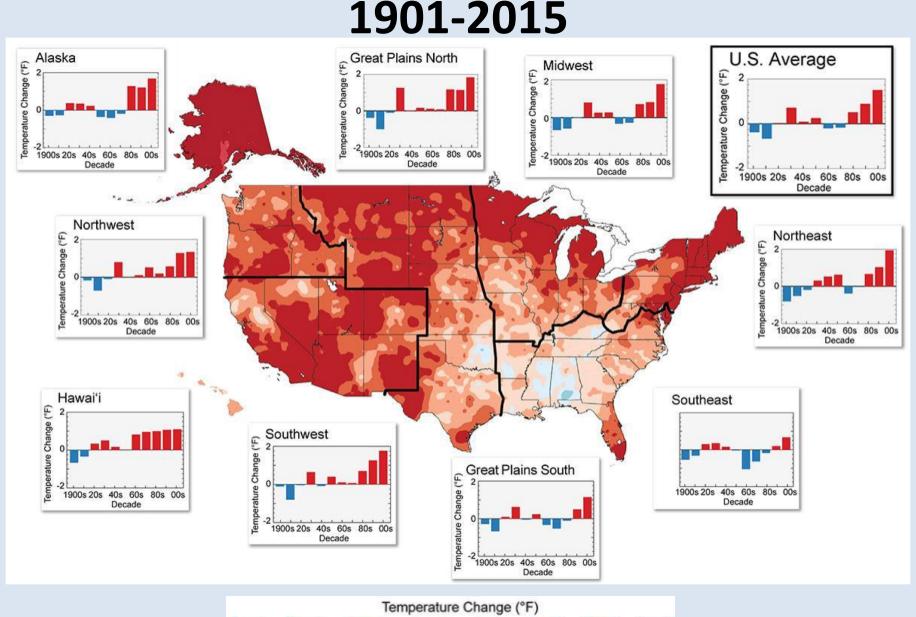


# Tidal Flooding in Charleston, SC

As sea levels have risen, the number of tidal floods each year that cause minor impacts (also called "nuisance floods") have increased 5- to 10-fold since the 1960s in several U.S. coastal cities.



# Observed US Temperature Change, 1901-2015



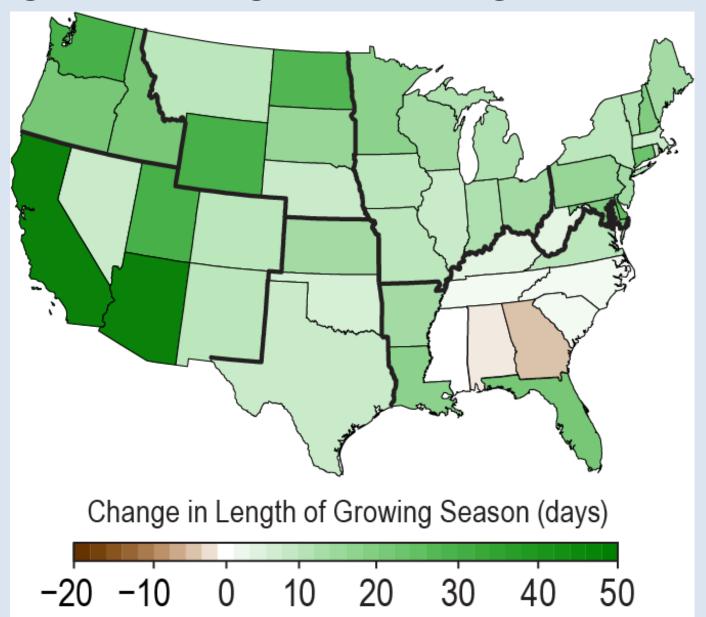
-1.0 to -0.5

-0.5 to 0.0

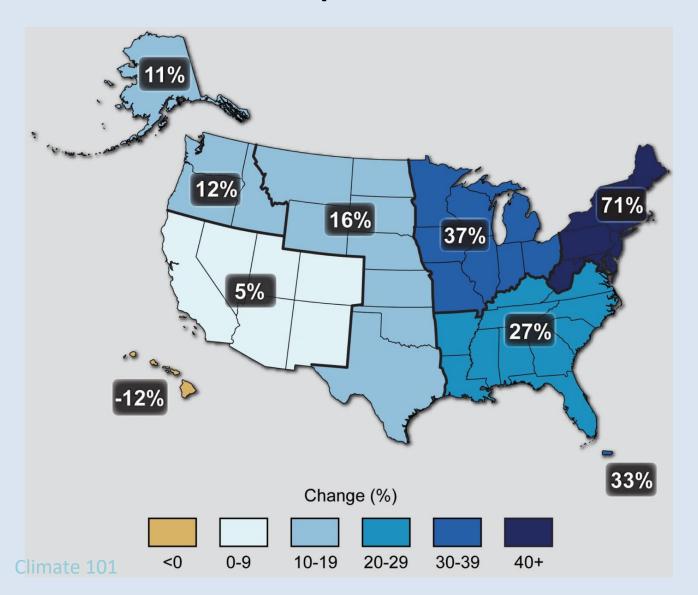
0.0 to 0.5

0.5 to 1.0

# **Change in Growing Season Length Since 1895**



# Observed Change in Very Heavy Precipitation

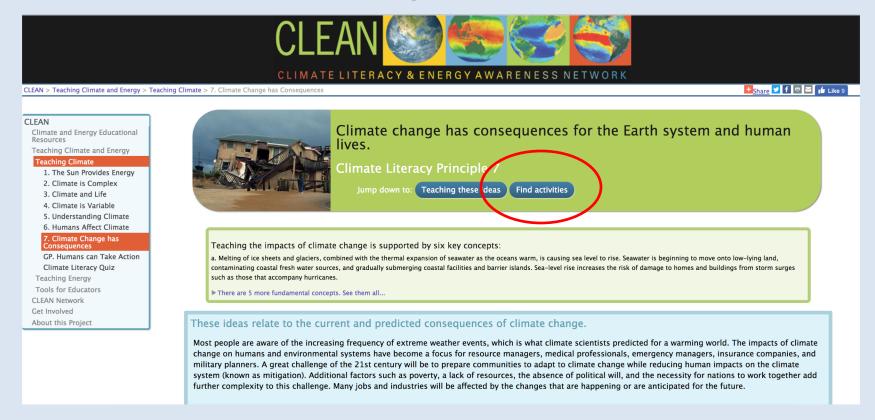


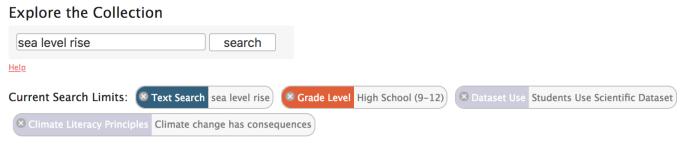
# Hurricane Harvey Flooding, Houston, 2017

Some Areas Received Almost 50 Inches of Rain Over Four Days



# **Teaching Guidance**





Refine the Results↓

Resource Type

Activity 11 matches
Curricula 1 match
Visualization 5 matches

Results 11 - 16 of 16 matches

# **Example CLEAN Activities**



https://cleanet.org/resources/42338.html

Collection of Climate and Energy Educational Resources

#### Sea Ice Index--Sea Ice Animation Tool

http://nsidc.org/data/seaice\_index/archives/image\_select National Snow and Ice Data Center

Jump to this Simulation/Interactive

This visualization tool shows sea ice data from 1978 to the present. Selected data can be animated to show changes in sea ice extent over time. Data is added by the National Snow and Ice Data

Learn more about Teaching Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness»

Me





Teaching Tips | Science | Pedagogy | Technical Details

See how this Simulation/Interactive supports the Next Generation Science Standards» Middle School: 1 Disciplinary Core Idea, 1 Cross Cutting Concept, 2 Science and Engineering Practices High School: 1 Disciplinary Core Idea, 1 Cross Cutting Concept, 4 Science and Engineering Practices

otes From Our Reviewers The CLEAN collection is hand-picked and rigorously reviewed for scientific

Graphing the Extent of Sea Ice in the Arctic and Antarctic http://www.windows2universe.org/teacher\_resources/graphs/teach\_sea\_ice\_extent.html

Randy Russell. Windows to the Universe

Jump to this Activity



In this activity, students learn about sea ice extent in both polar regions (Arctic and Antarctic). They start out by forming a hypothesis on the variability of sea ice, testing the hypothesis by graphing real data from a recent 3-year period to learn about seasonal variations and over a 25-year period to learn about longer-term trends, and finish with a discussion of their results and predictions.

Activity takes about 30-45 minutes.

Learn more about Teaching Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness»

See how this Activity supports the Next Generation Science Standards» Middle School: 1 Disciplinary Core Idea, 4 Cross Cutting Concepts, 4 Science and Engineering Practices High School: 1 Disciplinary Core Idea, 7 Cross Cutting Concepts, 4 Science and Engineering Practices

**Teaching Tips** 

· Educators should examine the site in advance and look at different ranges of data.

Notes From Our Reviewers The CLEAN collection is hand-picked and rigorously rev

accuracy and classroom effectiveness. Read what our review team had to say about this resource below or

 Instead of just watching the animation, have students take data over a one-year period and also over a 20 year time interval. Then, have students construct graphs of their data and have a class discussion about their results.

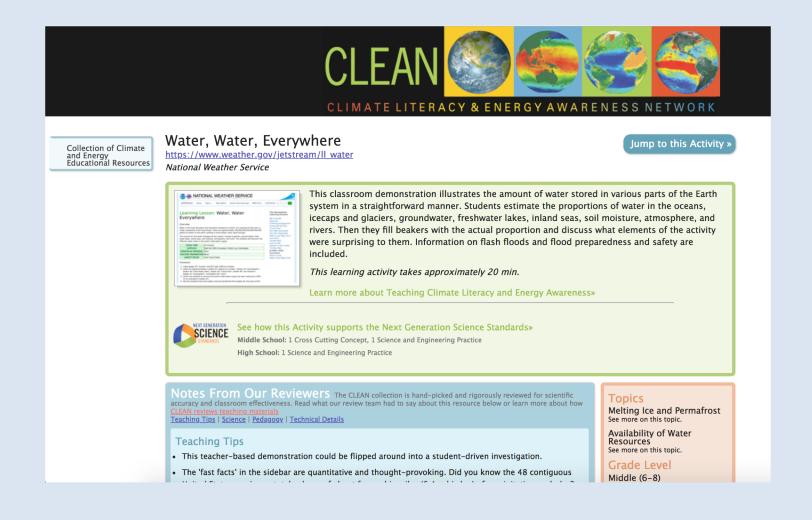
 Integrating a tool like this into a curriculum is a great way to get students involved in long-term data sets as they interact with the tool to observe changes.

• Use this tool along with the resource "Graphing the Extent of Sea Ice in the Arctic and Antarctic" from Windows to the Universe https://cleanet.org/resources/41790.html, for "Compare Images of Arctic Sea Ice Extent Side-by-Side" http://www.windows2universe.org/earth/polar/sea\_ice/sea\_ice\_compare.html and "Compare Images of Antarctic Sea Ice Extent Side-by-Side"

http://www.windows2universe.org/earth/polar/sea ice/sea ice compare south.html.

https://cleanet.org/resources/41790.html

# **Example CLEAN Activity**



https://cleanet.org/resources/56079.html

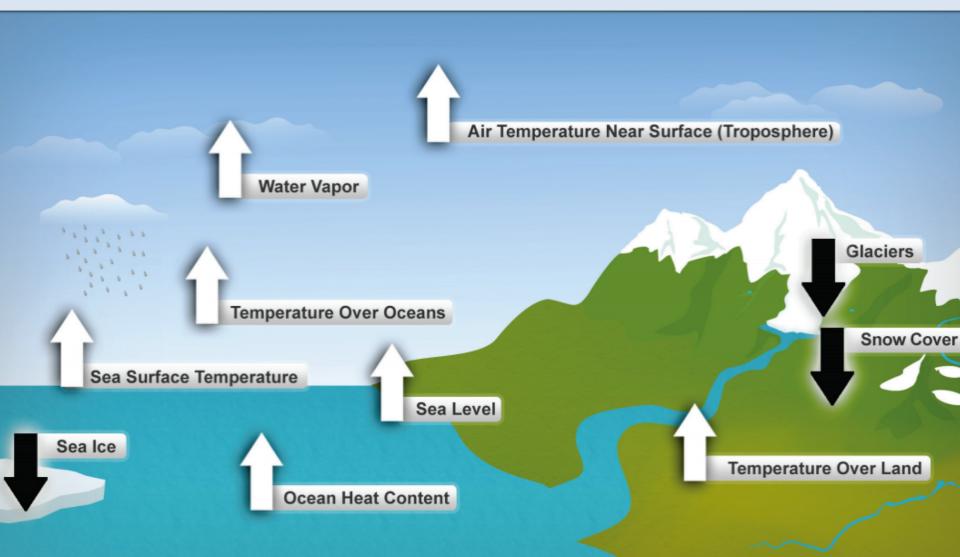
# **Example CLEAN Activity**



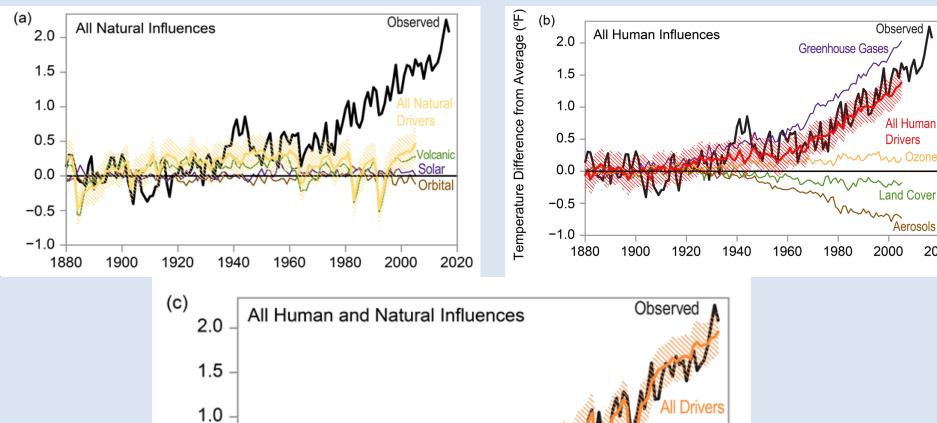
https://cleanet.org/resources/51251.html

# Why Are We Confident That Human Emissions of Greenhouse Gases Is The Dominant Cause of Warming?

# All indicators expected to increase in a warming world are increasing and those expected to decrease are decreasing



# The only way to get a climate model to simulate the observed global temperature change is to include observed increases in GHGs.



0.5

0.0

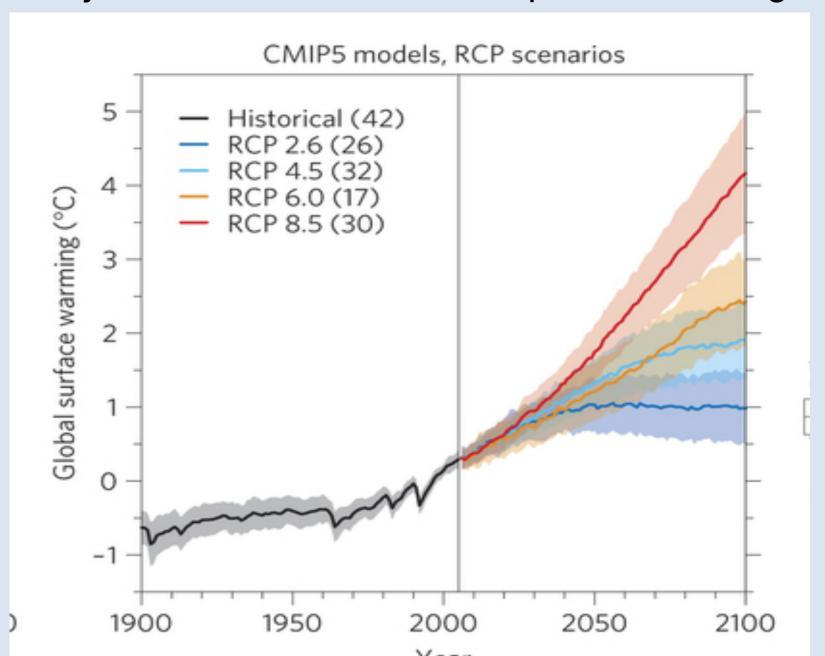
-0.5

-1.0

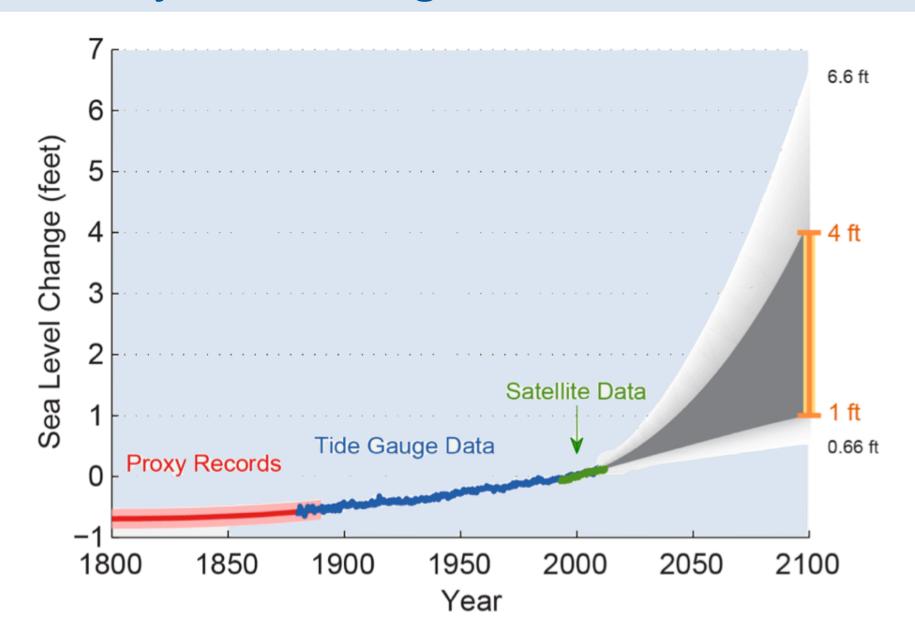
# How do we project future climate conditions?

Global Climate Models: large (hundreds of thousands of lines of code) computer programs that solve various equations (e.g. differential equations of fluid dynamics, chemistry) at thousands of individual locations covering the globe and layers in the atmosphere and ocean.

## Projected Global Surface Temperature Change



# Projected Changes Global Sea Level



# **Example CLEAN Activity**



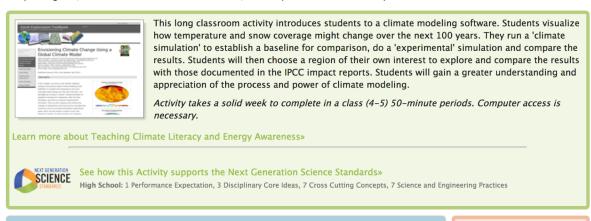


Collection of Climate and Energy

#### Envisioning Climate Change Using a Global Climate Model

https://serc.carleton.edu/eet/envisioningclimatechange/index.html

Betsy Youngman, and team of scientists and educators, Earth Exploration Toolbook Chapter from TERC



NOTES From Our Reviewers The CLEAN collection is hand-picked and rigorously reviewed for scientific accuracy and classroom effectiveness. Read what our review team had to say about this resource below or learn more about how CLEAN reviews teaching materials

Teaching Tips | Science | Pedagogy | Technical Details

#### **Teaching Tips**

 Each one of the six sections should have some kind of assessment or wrap-up discussion, a place for students to reflect and analyze findings before they go on to the next section.

#### Topics

Climate Projections
See more on this topic.

Scenario Development See more on this topic.

lump to this Activity

**Grade Level** 

High School (9-12)

https://cleanet.org/resources/41851.html

# **Example CLEAN Activity**







Collection of Climate and Energy Educational Resources

#### Supercomputing the Climate

http://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/vis/a010000/a010500/a010563/index.html

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center



This video provides an overview of how computer models work. It explains the process of data assimilation, which is necessary to ensure that models are tied to reality. The video includes a discussion of weather models using the Goddard Earth Observing System (GEOS-5) model and climate models using the MERRA (Modern Era Retrospective Analysis for Research and Applications) technique.

Video length 5:30 minutes.

Learn more about Teaching Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness»



See how this Video supports the Next Generation Science Standards»

High School: 5 Disciplinary Core Ideas, 3 Cross Cutting Concepts

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Teaching Tips | Science | Pedagogy | Technical Details

#### **Teaching Tips**

- The contemporary "nature of science" involves the union of science, mathematics, and technology
  where computer-coded equations are solved to help understand satellite and ground observations and
  predict future conditions.
- . This video can be used to introduce the roles of data, scientists, and computer models in predicting

#### **Topics**

Climate Data See more on this topic.

Global Climate Modeling See more on this topic.

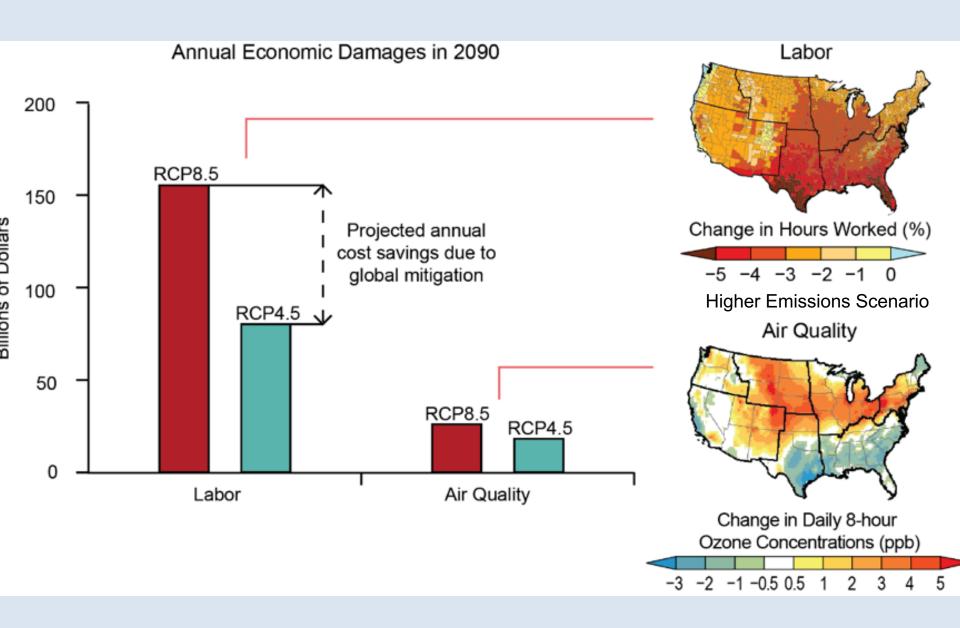
Jump to this Video »

Measuring and Modeling Climate See more on this topic.

Nature of Climate Science See more on this topic.

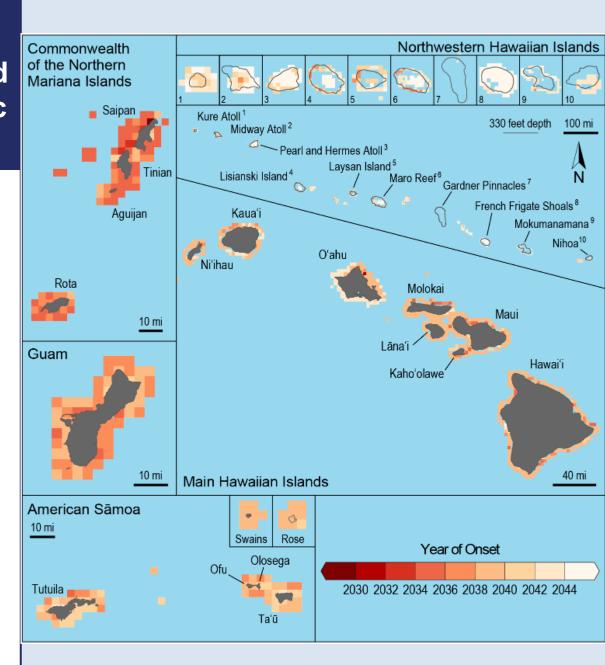
https://cleanet.org/resources/43136.html

# How will climate change impact our world and what can be done about it?



## Severe Coral Bleaching Projected for Hawai'i and the U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands

The figure shows the years when severe coral bleaching is projected to occur annually in the Hawai'i and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands region under a higher scenario (RCP8.5). Darker colors indicate earlier projected onset of coral bleaching. Under projected warming of approximately 0.5°F per decade, all nearshore coral reefs in the region will experience annual bleaching before 2050.







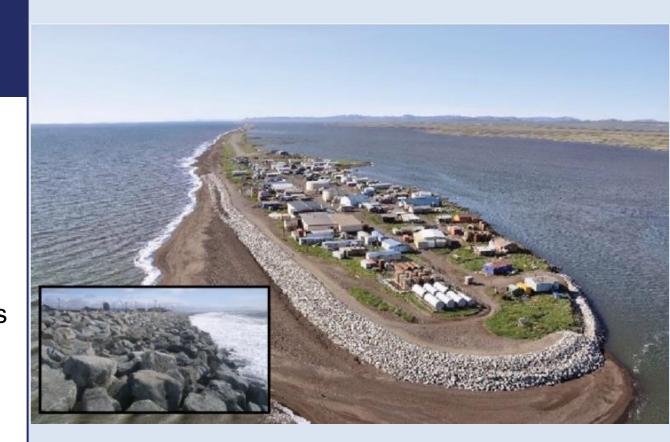
### Community Relocation – Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana

(left) A federal grant is being used to relocate the tribal community of Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana, in response to severe land loss, sea level rise, and coastal flooding.

(right) As part of the resettlement of the tribal community of Isle de Jean Charles, residents are working with the Lowlander Center and the State of Louisiana to finalize a plan that reflects the desires of the community.

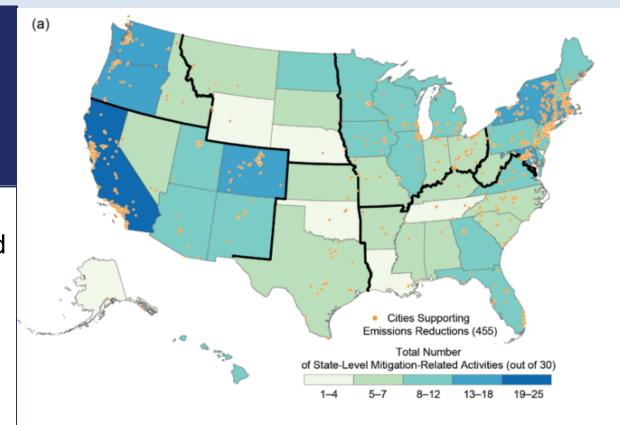
# Adaptation Measures in Kivalina, Alaska

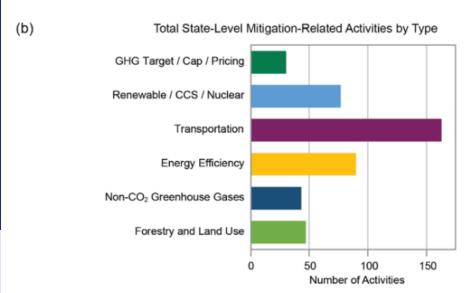
A rock revetment was installed in the Alaska Native Village of Kivalina in 2010 to reduce increasing risks from erosion. A new rock revetment wall has a projected lifespan of 15 to 20 years.



## Mitigation-Related Activities at State and Local Levels

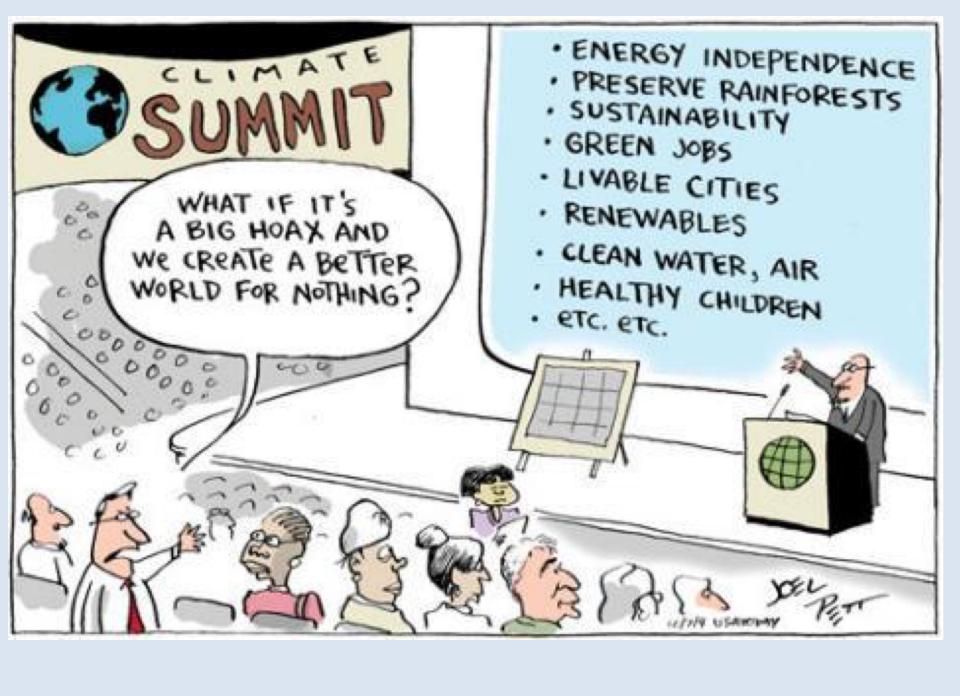
(top) The map shows the number of mitigation-related activities at the state level (out of 30 illustrative activities) as well as cities supporting emissions reductions; (bottom) the chart depicts the type and number of activities by state





# **Concluding Thoughts**

- There are both positive and negative impacts to global warming
- Overall, the net impacts are likely to be negative
- Ecosystems have evolved and human systems are adapted to the current climate



# NCA Teaching Resources

## CLEAN NCA Page

- https://cleanet.org/clean/literacy/tools/nca.html
- Climate Generation NCA resources
  - https://www.climategen.org/take-action/teach-climatechange/curriculum/next-generation-climate-for-grades-6-8/worksheets/
  - https://curriculum.climategen.org/2017/NGC/NGC2017-3 3-National-Climate-Assessment-Scavenger-Hunt.pdf

#### NOAA NCA resources

- https://www.climate.gov/teaching/national-climateassessment-resources-educators/2014-national-climateassessment-resources
- https://www.climate.gov/teaching/national-climateassessment-and-next-generation-science-standards

## Climate Explorer Tool

- <a href="https://crt-climate-explorer.nemac.org/">https://crt-climate-explorer.nemac.org/</a>
- https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/img/figure/figure25 10.p
   ng
- https://noaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html
   ?appid=92260a6bcf154d72bab62e50231e64c8&section=10

