

Keyword: climate-change

Headline: South France to sizzle due to climate change

Byline: By Agence France-Presse

Published Date: February 3, 2021

Section: news

Word Count: 329

Content:

PARIS: That dream house in southern France that so many fantasize about is going to become uncomfortably hot in coming decades, according to new climate change projections Monday by the country's national weather service.

Even if humanity manages to modestly reduce greenhouse gas emissions — which so far has only happened during a raging pandemic or a global recession — France as a whole is on track to heat up nearly three degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by about 2070, Meteo France said in a report.

And if carbon pollution continues unabated, average annual temperatures across the nation will, by century's end, soar 4.5 degrees Celsius (C) beyond that benchmark.

That is verging on an unlivable world, a raft of climate studies have shown. With just over 1 C of warming so far, the planet has seen a sharp crescendo in deadly extreme weather, including heatwaves and megastorms made more destructive by rising seas.

The 2015 Paris climate treaty set a goal of capping global warming at below 2 C, and 1.5 C if possible. Earlier climate models have predicted that France and the Mediterranean basin will be hit especially hard by heatwaves along with declining rainfall, and that reality has begun to bite.

In the summer of 2019, temperatures in picturesque wine country north of the coastal city of Montpellier reached a sizzling 46 C, a national record. Paris was only a few degrees cooler.

This and other heatwaves "were a direct consequence of climate change," said Meteo France Chief Executive Officer Virginie Schwarz in a statement. "All observations made across the planet confirm an unprecedented acceleration of climate change."

The 100-page report looked at how three different carbon pollution scenarios could shape France's climate future: a drastic reduction in carbon pollution coupled with the large-scale removal of carbon dioxide from the air; a reckless ramping up of the fossil fuel use which caused the problem to begin with; and a path somewhere between these increasingly unlikely extremes.