

NASA's Earth Minute: Usual Suspects



Something's changing Earth's climate. Temperatures are rising. Ice sheets are melting. Weather patterns are changing. Sea level is rising.

What's causing these and other changes? Time to round up the usual suspects. In ages past, big changes have been caused by volcanic eruptions... Ocean currents, changes in the Sun and Earth's orientation to it... and there's been that occasional giant asteroid. But none of these natural causes can explain what's happened to our planet in just the last 150 years.

So what's the difference between today and a century and a half ago?

It's how we live and work. Our industrial societies have changed more than the landscape. We've been burning fossil fuels. And that's added lots of greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide, to the atmosphere, which traps the sun's heat. That's why the earth is warming. More and more as each year passes.

So what's causing this climate change?

All the evidence points to us. That's the bad news.

The good news?

It's a lot easier to change our behavior, than any of the usual suspects.