

UNFCCC: UAE

Topic #1: Impact of Climate Change on Human Health



In 2015 massive heat waves hit the Persian Gulf area, where temperatures topped 50 °C or 122° F. This huge heat wave caused significant deaths in the UAE, and was one of the worst-ever in the UAE¹. Iran also had a Just this past July, Bandar Mahshahr, Iran, soared to a staggering heat index of 163 degrees. Not just countries in the Middle East are dealing with rising temperatures. All countries in the world have felt a spike in temperatures this past summer and winter with El Nino². Also in the summer of 2014 the UV reading for Abu Dhabi was 12. The World Health Organization says any reading on the scale above 11 poses an extreme risk of harm. At the current rate of climate change the Middle East will be uninhabitable by the year 2100 because of constant extreme heat³. In the past summers just sitting in a stationary car for ten minutes now poses extreme health risks due to the extreme heat.

Currently, the United Arab Emirates has identified energy diversification and climate change as being strategic priorities. The country became a Party of the UNFCCC in 1996 and ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2005⁴. It is also a signatory of a number of other international conventions. In addition the UAE was the first major oil-producing countries to do so to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The UAE believes the best way to stop climate change is to start to limit oil production by OPEC and by countries around the world.

By limiting the supply of oil, gas prices will rise and consumers around the world will choose more fuel-efficient cars. Therefore, this increase will lower the amount of carbon entering out Earth's atmosphere. In addition to limiting oil production the UAE strongly believes that using nuclear energy we can start down a path towards clean energy and less climate change. Nuclear energy might not be renewable energy, but it is a means to an ends to limit production of fossil fuels.

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Topic 2: Climate Refuges



Currently, the UAE has no climate refuges, but we're about to become the refuges. The UAE could lose up to 6 percent of its populated and developed coastline by the end of the

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/oct/26/extreme-heatwaves-could-push-gulf-climate-beyond-human-endurance-study-shows>

² <http://www.usatoday.com/story/weather/2015/10/26/heat-waves-persian-gulf-climate-change-global-warming/74625754/>

³ See footnote #1

⁴ http://www.ae.undp.org/content/united_arab_emirates/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/in_depth.html

century because of rising sea levels. A rise of one meter – the most modest scenario presented in the report – would put 1,155 square kilometers of the country's coast under water by 2050; while nine meters – the most dire scenario – would see almost all of Abu Dhabi and much of Dubai submerged⁵. In addition, Researchers at Germany's Max Planck Institute for Chemistry and the Cyprus Institute in Nicosia have found that temperatures would not drop lower than 30 degrees Celsius at night during the warmest periods, with temperatures potentially hitting 46 degrees Celsius during the day⁶. In conclusion, whatever part of the UAE that isn't underwater would be too hot for any human to live in.

The UAE believes the world must be prepared to accept climate refugees from the Middle East unless something dramatic is done to reverse climate change. Places in the UAE could be used for temporarily haven for refugees, but the rising temperature and rising seas could make Abu Dhabi and Dubai uninhabitable within 2071⁷. If climate refugees were moved to the UAE or Qatar it would just be a matter of time before they would have to be moved again due to rising seas or rising temperature. However, the UAE has accepted 123,000 refugees in the past five years in order to support their neighboring countries. Also, the UAE has provided more than \$750 million to support Syrian refugees, mainly in neighboring countries that are facing considerable pressure. The UAE is a viable location for having as a temporary refuge haven.

In addition, to the 123,000 refugees welcomed to the UAE, the UAE plans to bring in 15,000 more refugees over the next five years⁸. In addition to accepting refugees the UAE plans to provide a pivotal role in setting up refugee camps in Jordan, Iraq, and Greece. It is the UAE's humanitarian goal to financial aid physical support to all refugees.

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Topic 3: Steps to enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Green House Gas Emissions



The UAE became the first Arabian Gulf country to accept the agreement, which aims to combat global warming. This is great news because the UAE has now become a positive example to others in the region. It means the Government is taking this issue seriously and also sees opportunities to take action through more solar power and cleaner vehicles on the roads. The Paris agreement on climate change was drawn up last year and is due to take effect in 2020. Countries that have ratified the agreement are committed to limiting the rise in global average temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. They also agreed on the need for global

⁵ <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/energy/energy-and-climate-change>

⁶ <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/04/climate-change-could-make-north-africa-and-middle-east-uninhabitable.html>

⁷ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/11/climate-refugees-151125093146088.html>

⁸ <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-to-welcome-15000-refugees-from-syria>

emissions to peak as soon as possible, recognizing that this would take longer for developing countries and to make rapid reductions in temperatures in keeping with the best available science. Under the agreement, governments will meet every five years to set more ambitious targets as required by science and report on the progress made.

The UAE hopes to provide a model for energy and environmental stewardship. It is implementing groundbreaking renewable energy and energy efficiency programs and is committed to reducing carbon emissions. In 2005, the UAE ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Convention on Climate Change, becoming one of the first major oil-producing countries to do so. The UAE is not obligated to reduce its emission, however, has independently chosen to implement actions to slash its carbon emissions. In order to reduce its carbon footprint, the UAE monitors the emission of gases that lead to the greenhouse effect and has reduced its per capita carbon emissions. In 1990, the UAE emitted 32.6 tons of CO₂ per person per year. In 2010, the figure dropped to 21.9 tons per person per year.

By ratifying the Paris agreement and signing the Kyoto Protocol the UAE hopes larger countries like China and the United States of America will ratify it to reduce the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere. It is imperative to the human races' survival to end climate before climate change ends us.