# Climate change prompts urgent action in New Haven and Brazil



Recent wildfires in Los Angeles have underscored the dramatic impacts of climate change on urban environments. While the city of New Haven, Connecticut, may not face wildfires of similar intensity, it is confronted with challenges posed by rising sea levels and flooding, which have become major concerns for local officials and residents.

As part of an ongoing discussion about climate preparedness, experts in New Haven, including Alexey Fedorov, a professor of Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences, emphasised the increasing probability of extreme weather events due to climate change. "With climate change, the probability [of extreme weather] increases, so we have to think about this and just be a little bit better prepared than we are," Fedorov said. Despite the looming threat, he noted that fluctuations in natural weather patterns could also contribute to these extreme conditions, distinguishing them from direct consequences of climate change.

Rising sea levels are particularly alarming for New Haven, as they heighten the risk of storm surges, which are abnormal rises in sea levels typically associated with severe weather. "If you have already high sea levels, a storm surge can do much more damage,” Fedorov remarked, indicating that further inland flooding is a critical issue that should be addressed in the context of climate preparedness.

David Kooris, a professor at the School of the Environment and the Executive Director of the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority, echoed these sentiments by highlighting the necessity for improved infrastructure to manage excessive floodwaters. He accentuated the importance of investing in systems such as culverts—structures that carry river water beneath roads—and bioswales, which are specially designed patches of vegetation that help to control water runoff. Kooris also pointed to a collaborative project with the Army Corp of Engineers that aims to utilise I-95 as a flood wall to alleviate flood risk in the region.

On a broader scale, Kooris elaborated on the state’s ongoing revisions to building codes and floodplain regulations. "The state is constantly updating its building codes, raising the bar for municipalities, so that their floodplain regulations and coastal zone management regulations are constantly raising the bar for future development," he stated.

The city is also preparing for extreme heat events exacerbated by urban density. Kooris proposed that city planners need to consider modifications to neighbourhoods, including planting trees for shade and creating splash pads for children to help combat the heat.

Meanwhile, the New Haven Climate Movement is actively working to influence local policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a move deemed essential for tackling the climate crisis. Suprya Sarkar, Chair of the Outreach Committee for the movement, shared insights regarding a resolution drafted for the city government, aimed at decreasing emissions within the transportation sector, which is currently the foremost contributor to such emissions in the state. "The resolution is essentially focusing more on greenhouse gas reduction in the transportation sector," Sarkar said, highlighting demands for increased funding for sustainable urban development and improved public transportation access.

In parallel, the impact of global climate change continues to be felt acutely in Brazil, where a comprehensive study has linked rising global temperatures to a significant increase in climate-related disasters. Analysing data from 1991 to 2023, researchers observed that each 0.1°C rise in average global temperature correlates with an increase of 360 climate disaster events and substantial economic damages. The country has experienced an alarming increase in climate catastrophes, with recorded annual events rising sharply from 725 occurrences in the 1990s to an average of 4,077 per year since 2020.

The study, entitled "2024 – The Hottest Year in History," indicates that from 1991 to 2023, Brazil witnessed 64,280 climate-related disasters affecting over 219 million people. Economic losses linked to these disasters totalled R$ 547.2 billion (approximately $94.8 billion) over the years, with recent figures showing an average annual loss of R$ 47 billion ($8.14 billion) since 2020.

Janaína Bumbeer, a co-author of the study, stated, "When you talk about climate change, it seems like a far-off or difficult topic. Now we know how much each 0.1°C represents in terms of increased loss, more disasters and the increasing number of lives that are impacted." The findings have prompted calls for urgent measures to mitigate climate impacts in Brazil, particularly regarding greenhouse gas emissions reduction and investment in resilient infrastructure.

Carlos Nobre, a climatologist, expressed the necessity for immediate action to avoid surpassing the critical temperature thresholds outlined in the Paris Accord, which aim to limit global temperature increases to 1.5°C. With climate change-induced risks on the rise, experts have advocated for increased financial investment in prevention strategies rather than solely emergency management in order to better prepare vulnerable regions.

The overarching narrative from both New Haven's concerns about rising sea levels and extreme weather, along with Brazil's alarming increase in climate disasters, highlights the pressing need for comprehensive strategies to combat the effects of climate change—regionally, nationally, and globally.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.worldweatherattribution.org/climate-change-increased-the-likelihood-of-wildfire-disaster-in-highly-exposed-los-angeles-area/> - This URL supports the claim that climate change has increased the likelihood of wildfires in regions like Los Angeles, highlighting the role of climate change in exacerbating fire conditions.
* <https://www.carbonbrief.org/media-reaction-the-2025-los-angeles-wildfires-and-the-role-of-climate-change/> - This article discusses the media reaction to the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires and the role of climate change, emphasizing how climate 'whiplash' contributes to fire conditions.
* <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/summary-for-policymakers/> - The IPCC report provides comprehensive insights into climate change impacts, including rising sea levels and extreme weather events, which are relevant to New Haven's concerns.
* <https://www.noaa.gov/topic-center/climate-sea-level-rise.html> - This NOAA webpage explains the impacts of rising sea levels, which aligns with New Haven's concerns about storm surges and flooding.
* <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement> - The Paris Agreement outlines global efforts to limit temperature increases, which is relevant to Brazil's efforts to mitigate climate impacts and avoid surpassing critical temperature thresholds.
* <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf> - The IPCC AR6 report discusses global climate change impacts, including increased climate-related disasters, which supports the findings from Brazil's study on climate disasters.