

## 5x fewer people at risk from climate if we live up to 'Paris'

**If global warming continues at its current rate, around two billion people will be living in dangerously hot zones by the end of this century. If we manage to limit warming to no more than 1.5°C, the target of the Paris Agreement, that number will be five times lower.**

These figures come from a new analysis by Professor Marten Scheffer (Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality Management) and his team of international researchers, and were published in *Nature Sustainability* last week.

Temperatures of 29°C or higher are associated with negative trends including higher mortality, reduced crop yields,

more conflicts and an increased spread of infectious diseases. Three years ago, Scheffer and his team calculated the proportion of the world's population at risk of living with Saharan temperatures due to climate change. *Nature Sustainability* published details of the follow-up to that much talked-about study last week.

Currently, about one per cent of the world's population inhabit such dangerously hot zones, roughly 60 million peo-

**If temperatures rise by 2.7°C, two billion people will live with dangerous heat by the end of this century**

ple. This study shows that this number will increase by 140 million people with every 0.1°C of additional warming above current levels. If the Earth continues on its current course towards a rise in temperature of about 2.7°C, around two billion people will be living in dangerously hot zones by the end of this century. If warming is limited to no more than 1.5°C, the Paris Agreement target, that number could be reduced by a factor of five.

### Hotspots

Two hotspots around the world illustrate what the impact could be. For India, 2.7°C of warming means 600 million people living in dangerously hot places, compared to 90 million at 1.5°C of warming. For Nigeria, a 2.7°C increase in temperature means more than 300 million people subject to excessive heat. At 1.5°C, that would be 40 million. Scheffer sums it up: 'Bold climate policies have massive potential to reduce the human costs and injustices of climate change. Our findings ought to inspire a turnaround in the thinking about global climate investments.' ME



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