

# Climate migration and displacement:

## No place to run

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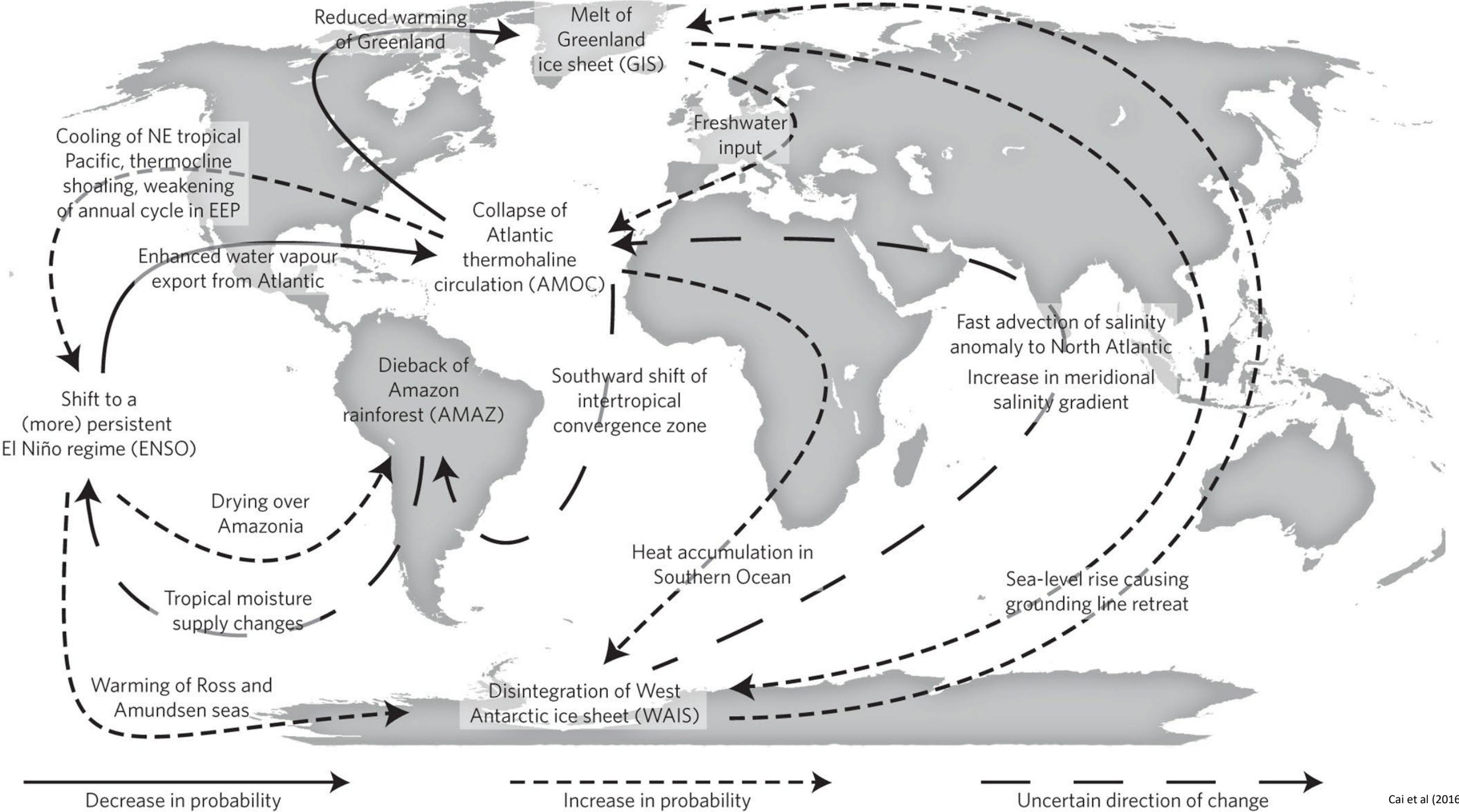
**NOT FOR CITATION**

# Headlines

- Climate **shocks and stresses** are increasing in intensity and frequency around the world;
- Disproportionate effects on **lower- and middle-income** settings;
- Some countries and populations **more at risk** of climate threats than others;
- Expectations of **hundreds of millions and possibly billions of people** on the move by 2050;
- Still **no clear international protection** for climate migrants and displaced.
- Growing focus on **migration governance** and managing migrants and displaced (rather than ending it altogether).

# Overview

- Climate-related threats and hot spots
- Theories and assumptions
- Climate migration and displacement trends
- Wider effects and impacts
- Global, regional and national responses

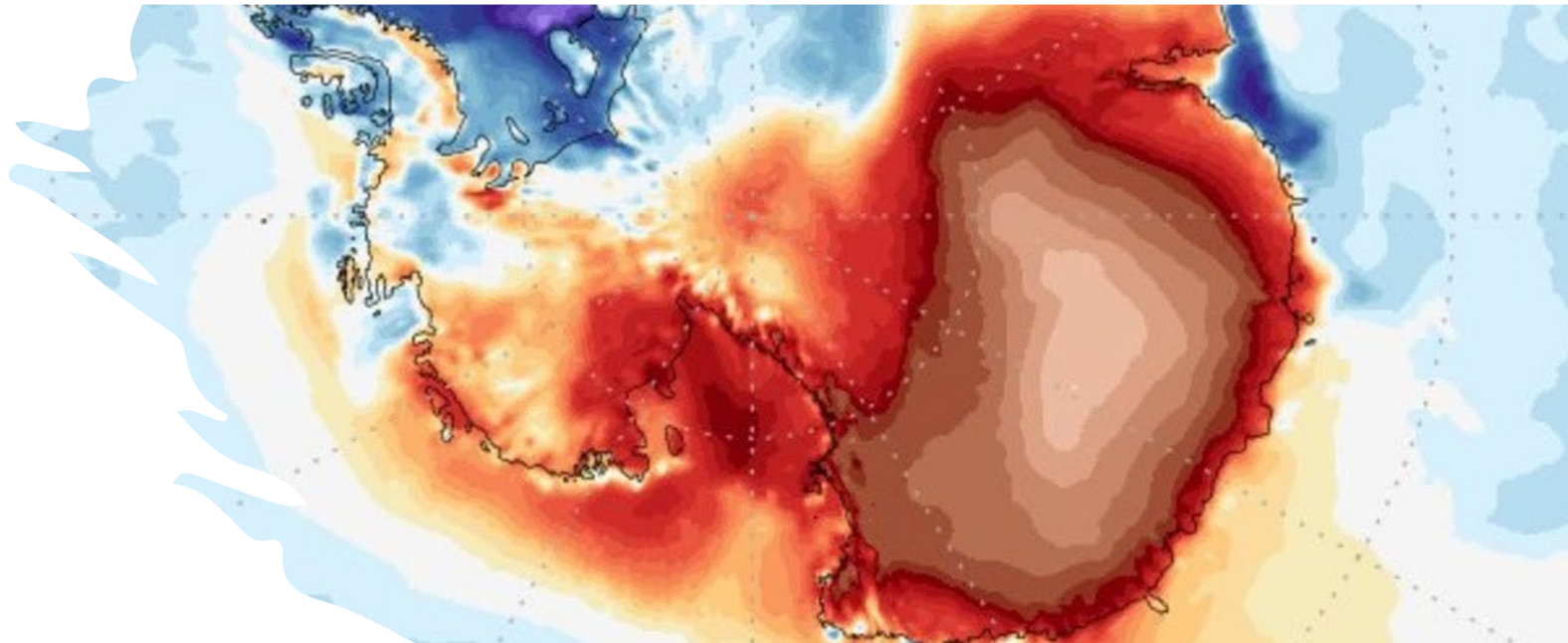
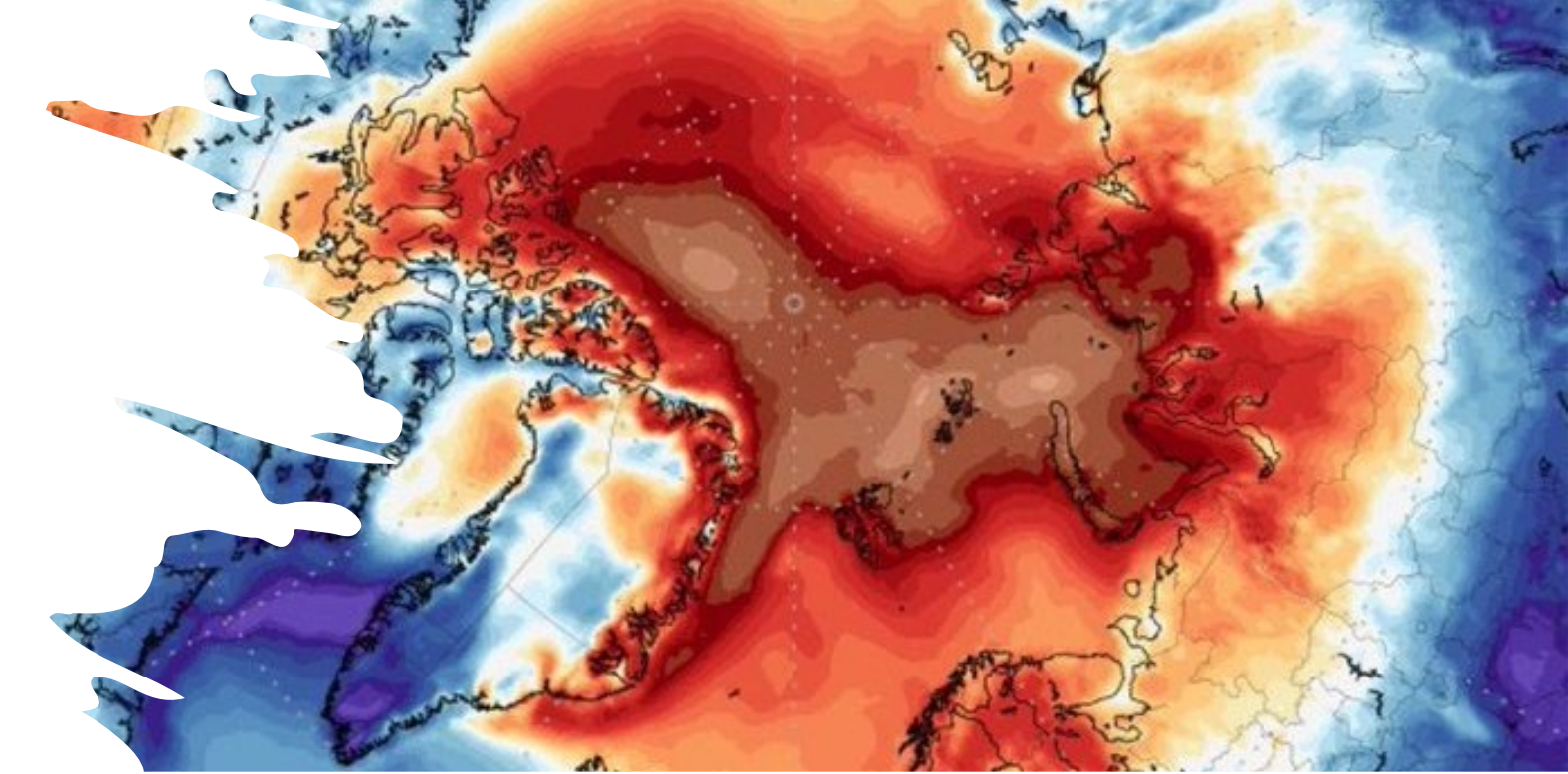




# Antarctic and Arctic

(NOAA - 2022)

- The Arctic and Antarctic experienced simultaneous heat waves with temperatures 50 degrees higher than average.
- This is contributing to rapid thawing and melting of permafrost and potential release of massive emissions deposits.
- The regions are melting two to four times faster than the rest of the world and could contribute to massive sea level rise.

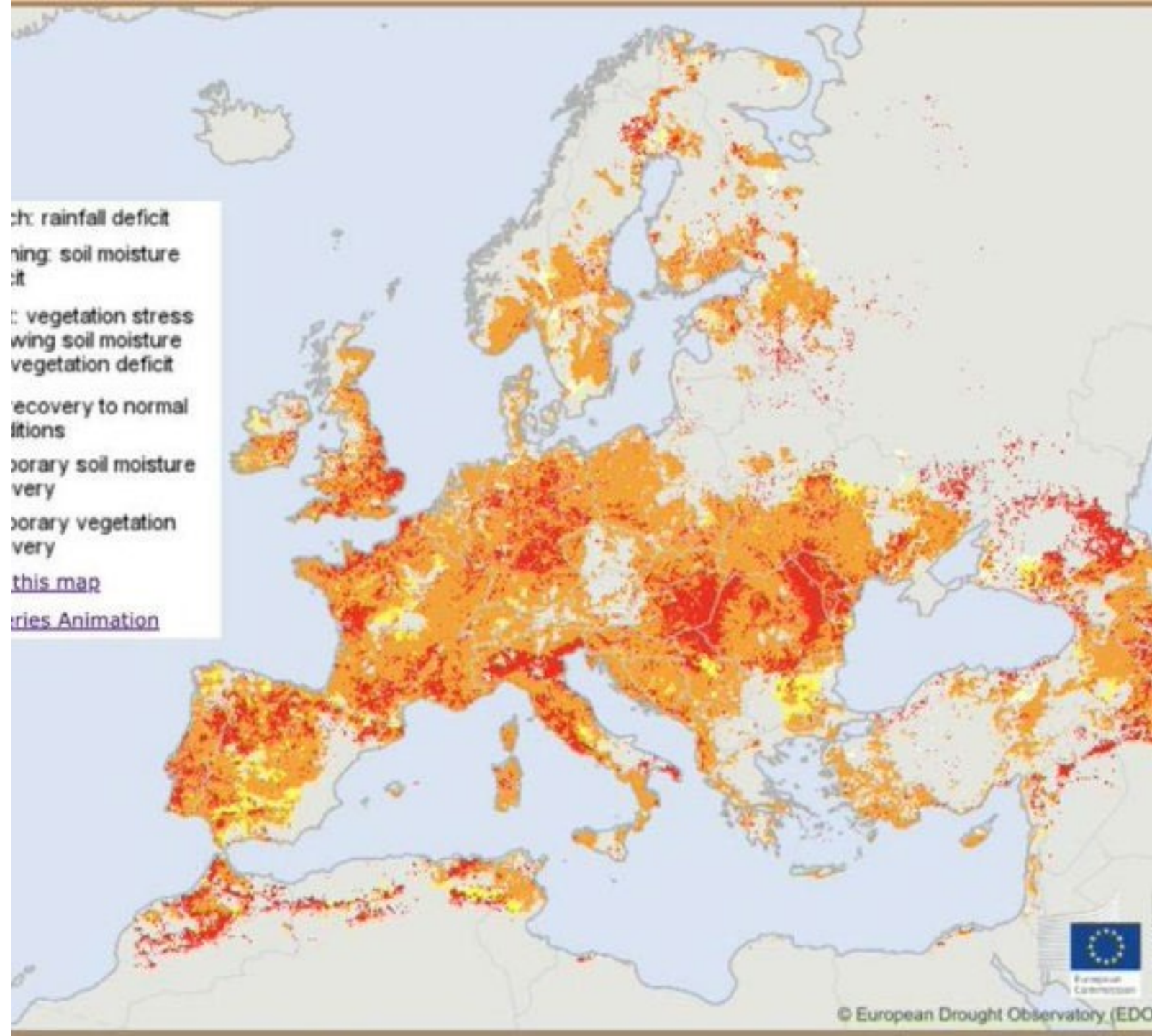




# Europe

(EDO - 2022)

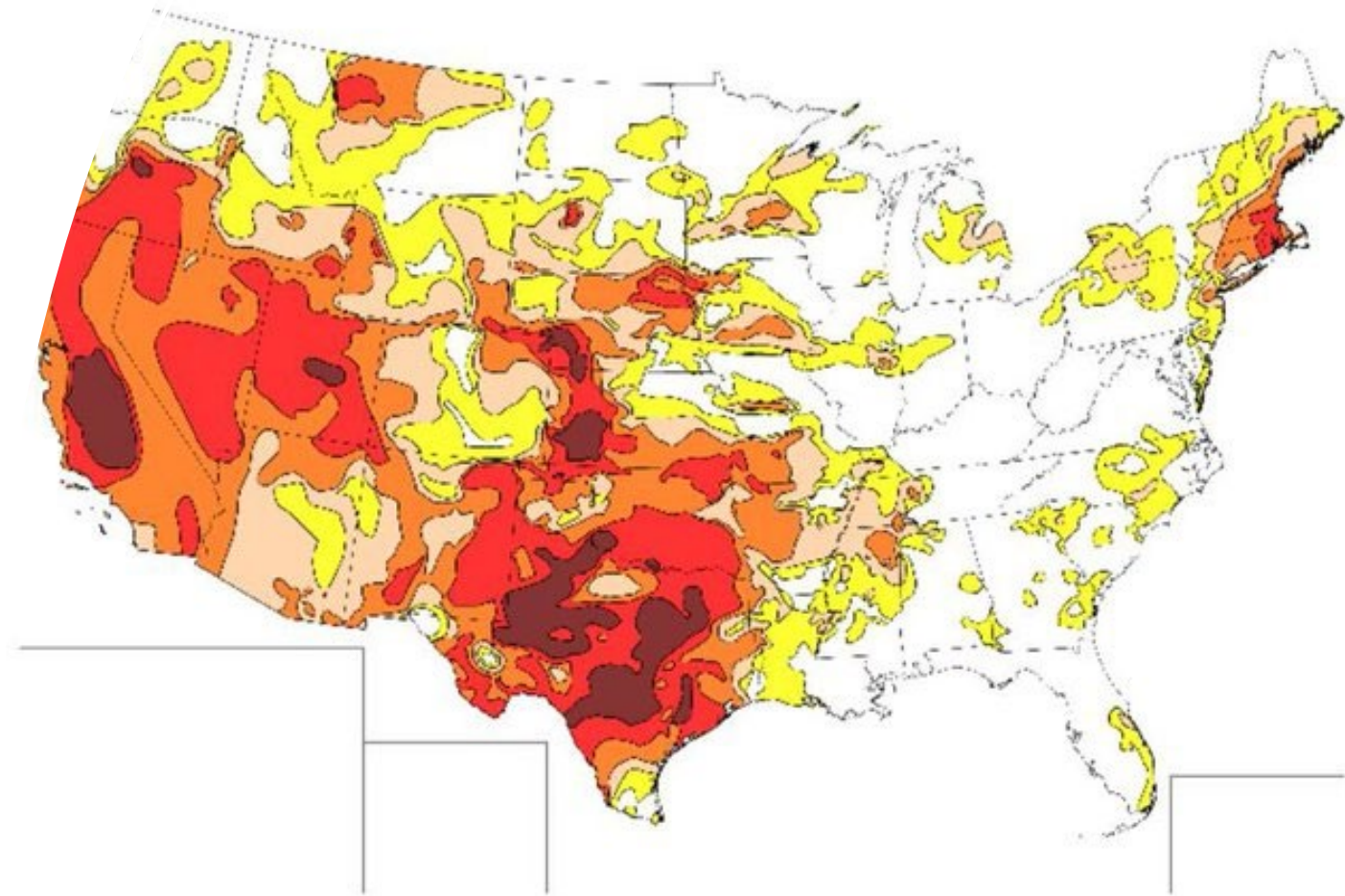
- Europe faced persistent heat waves resulting in evacuations and up to 53,000 excess deaths.
- Temperatures reached 47C, with anomalies reported across the continent.
- Widespread droughts occurred across the continent, with major rivers like the Danube, Po, Loire and Rhine drying-up.



# United States

(USG -2022)

- The US experienced a heat dome generating all-time record heat.
- Hotter weather fueled fires, stressed the power grid, and generated excess deaths.
- Temperatures exceeded 47C in California and is associated with an increase in weather-related events such as hurricanes, tornadoes and floods.



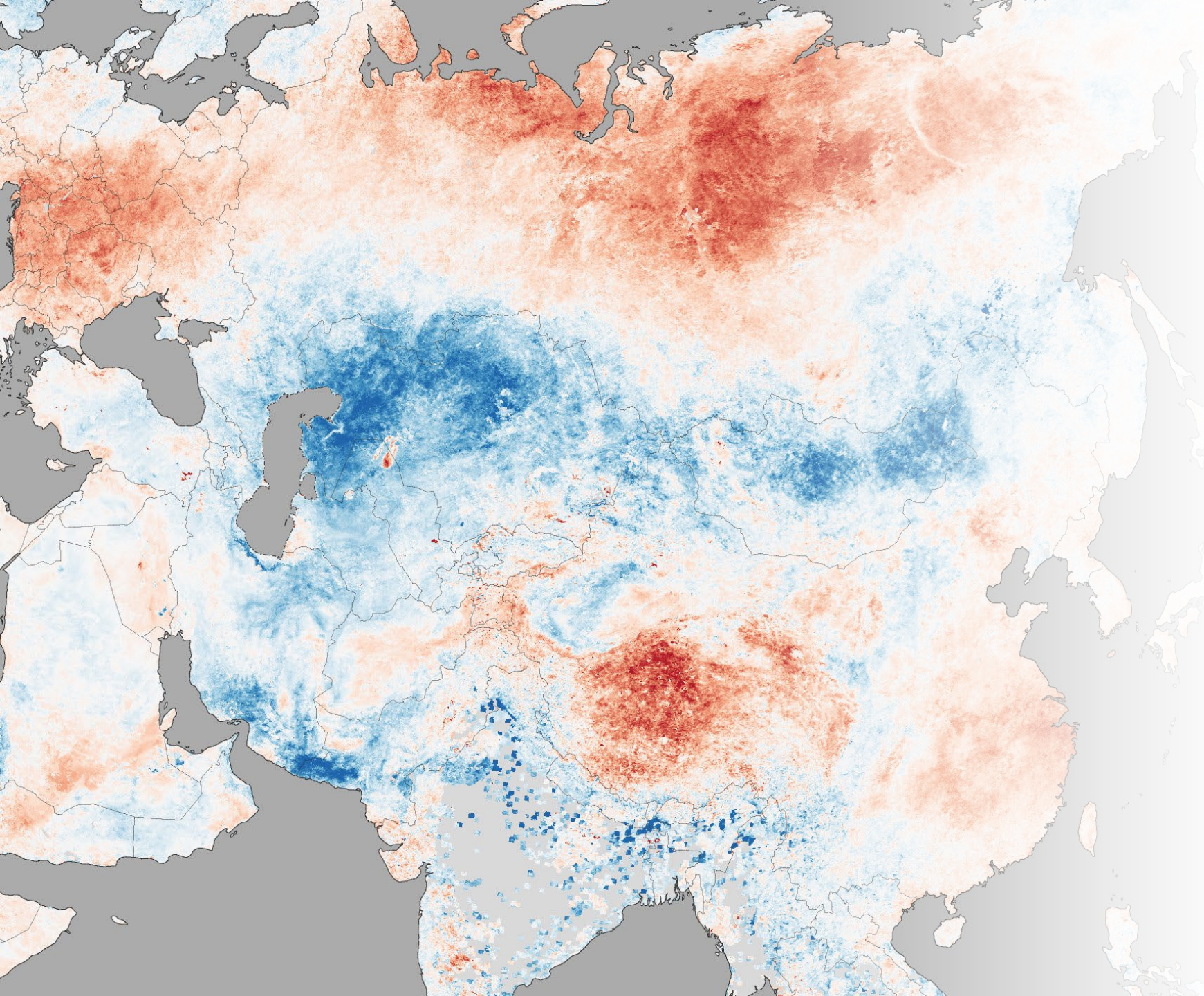
## U.S. Drought Monitor Categories



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA  
Updated - 08/16/22

[Drought.gov](https://drought.gov)





# East Asia

(NASA - 2022)

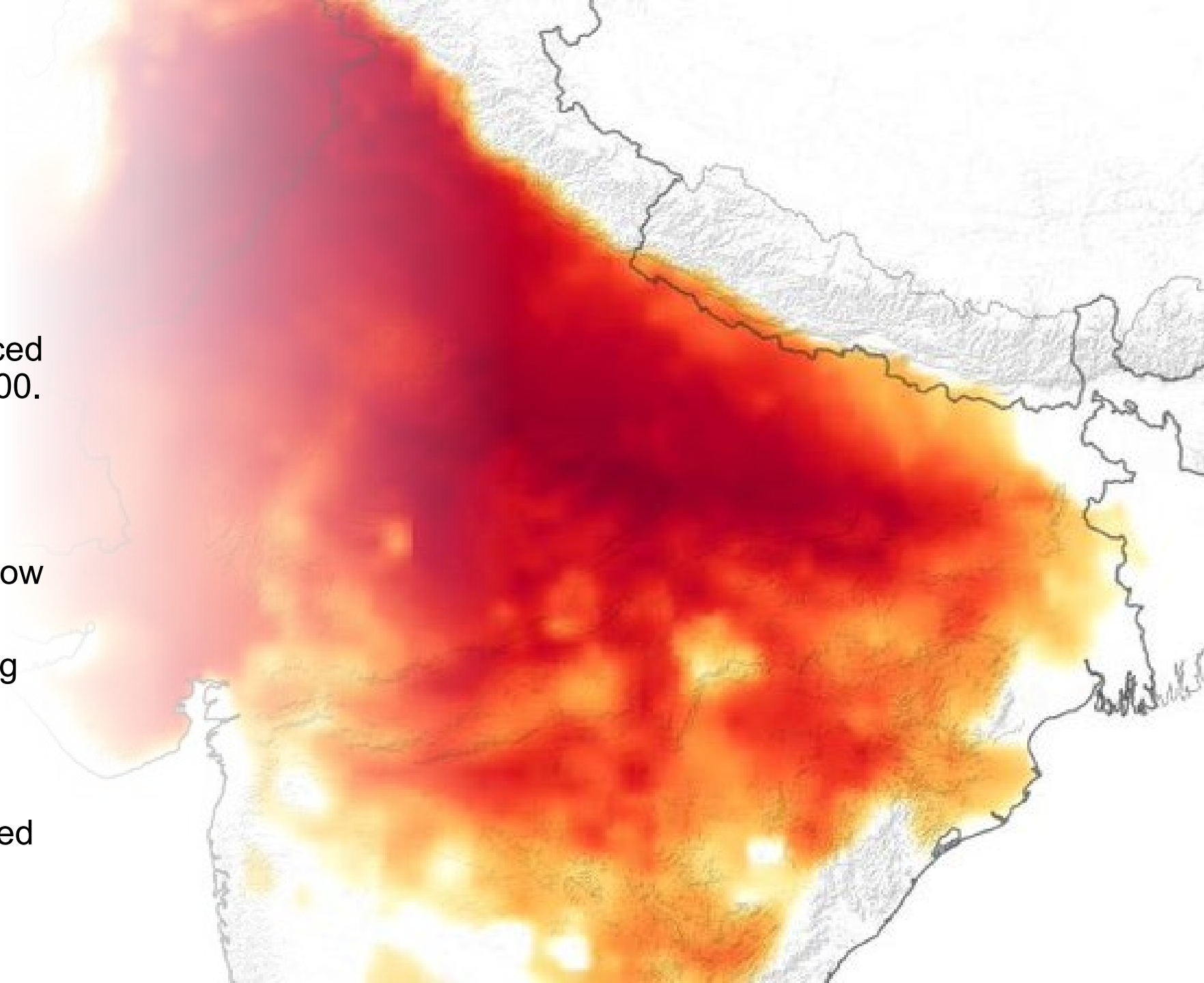
- China recorded highest temperatures and lowest rainfalls in its recorded history.
- Average temperatures were at least 1.2C higher than the norm.
- Heat waves triggered forest fires, damaged crops, affected power supplies.



# South Asia

(NASA 2022)

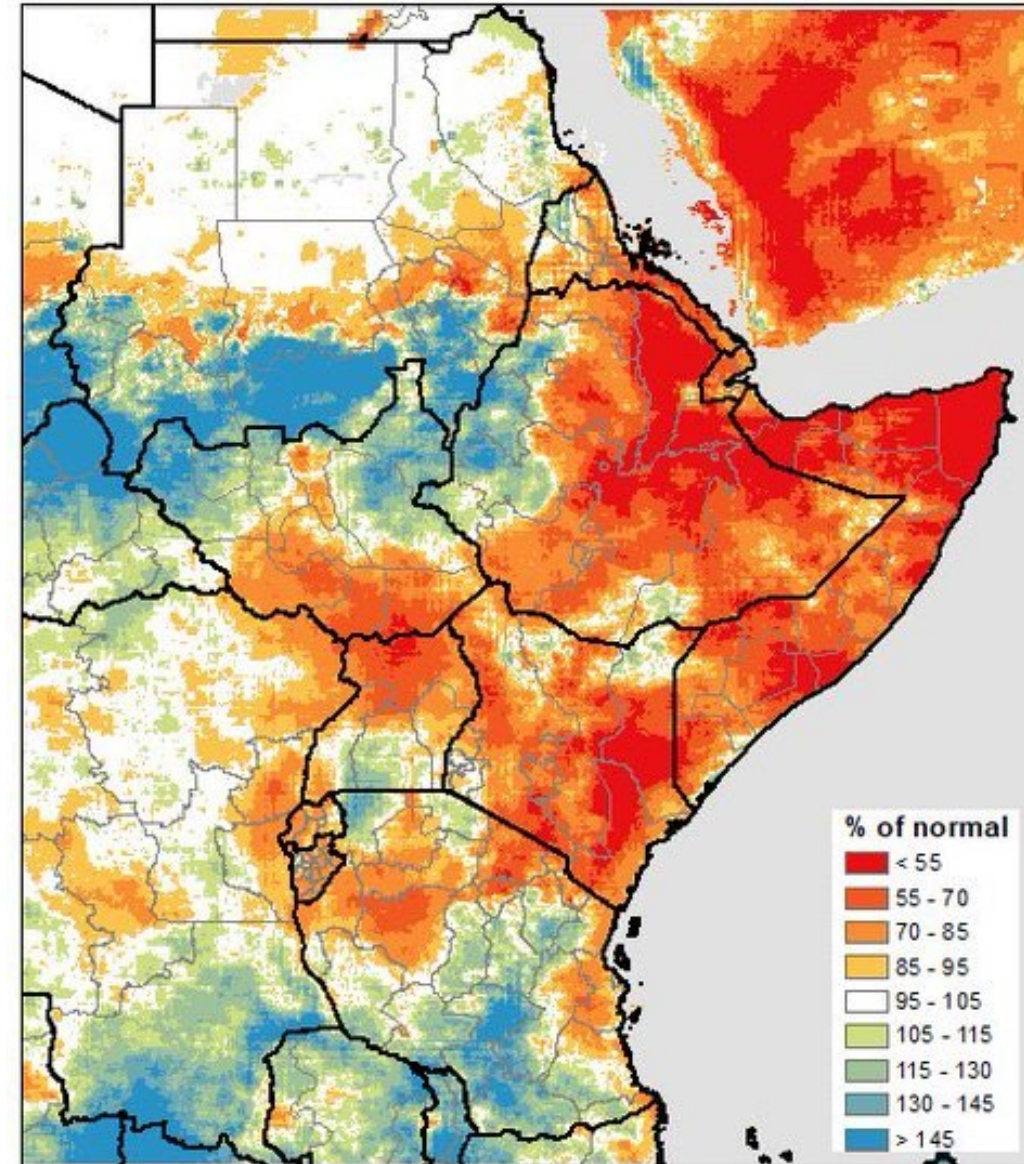
- India and Pakistan experienced the hottest weather since 1900.
- Several cities exceeded 45C and some reached 49.5C.
- The heat affected wheat growing with rainfall 70% below the norm.
- Extreme floods due to melting glaciers and monsoons affected 33 million people in Pakistan
- Costs of flooding alone exceed \$40 billion and will rise.



# East Africa

(USGS, USAID, FEWS NET 2022)

- Consecutive rains are failing in East Africa, the first time in over 40 years.
- The worst drought in 70 years has left 16 million short of drinking water, destroyed key crops, reduced milk production and killed almost 10 million livestock
- An estimated 18-21 million people face acute food insecurity and up to 60 million are facing food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Additional challenges include glacier melt as well as rising sea levels in Kenya and Somalia.



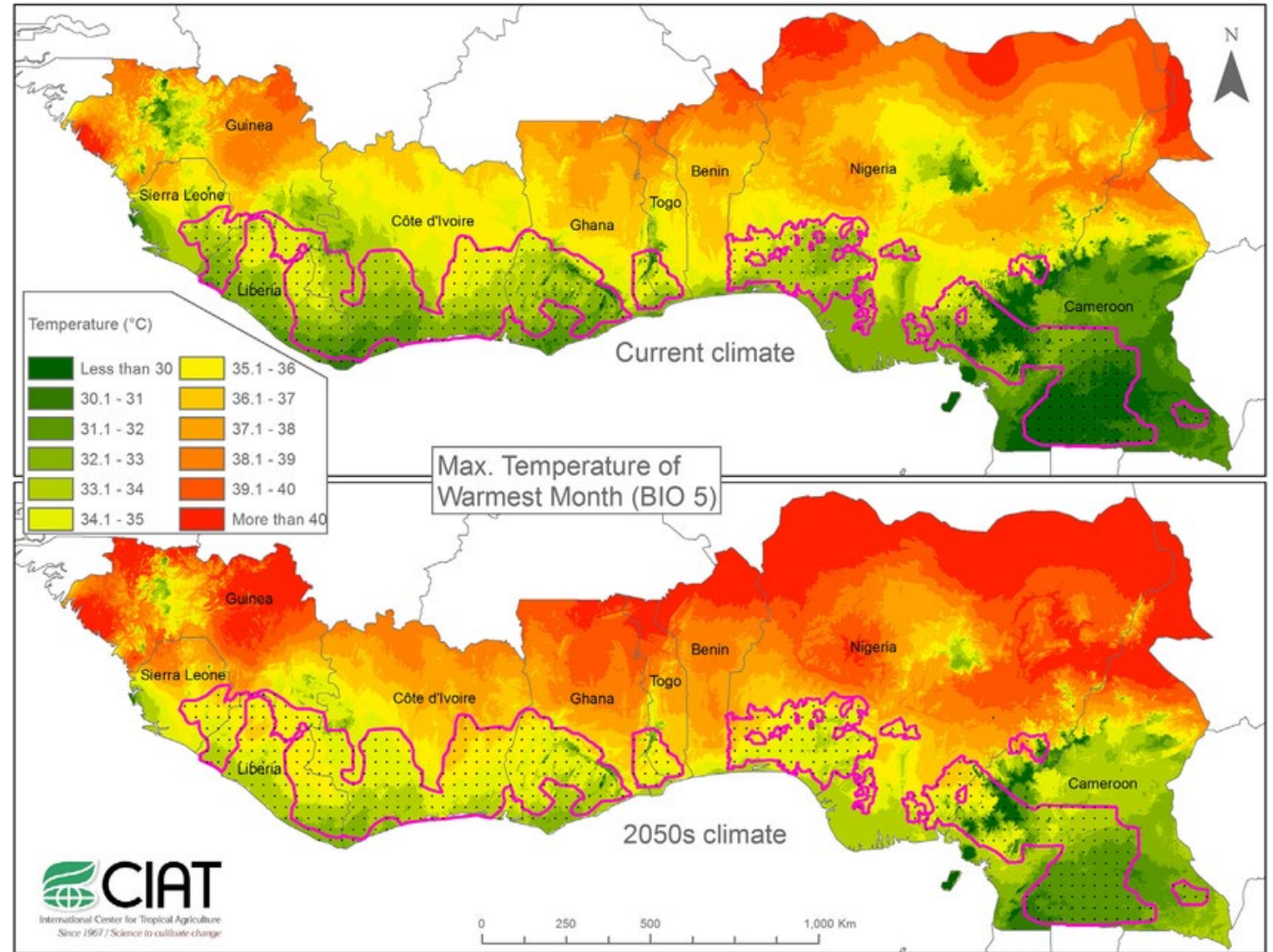
Source: CHIRPS version 2.0 *prelim*



# West Africa

(CIAT 2020)

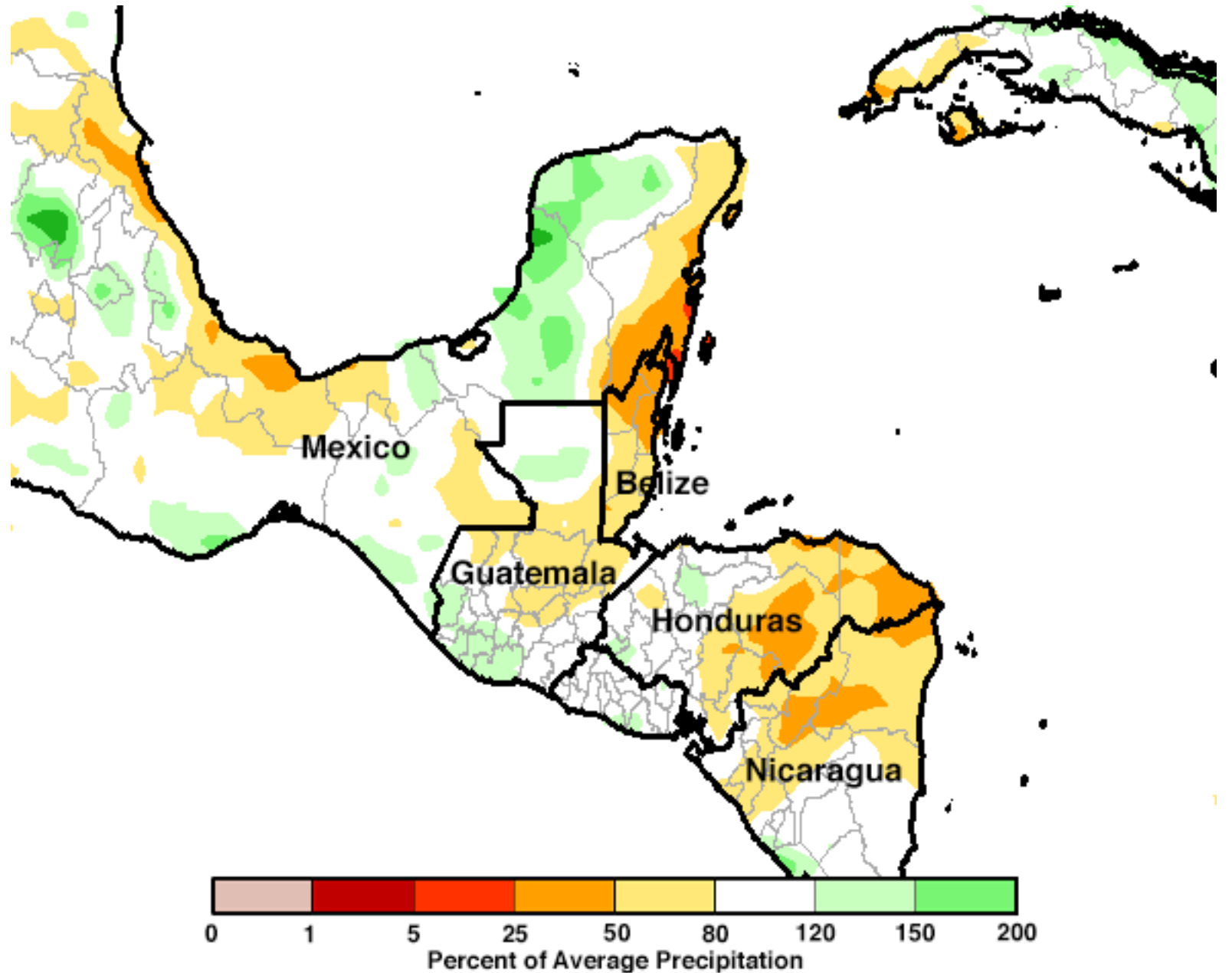
- The 2011-2021 decade was the hottest ever recorded.
- Temperatures increased 2-4 times faster than the global average.
- The region could warm 6C by 2100, contributing to intense droughts and intense rainfall.



# Mexico and Central America

(NOAA 2021)

- Worst droughts in 30 years (last ones in 2011, 1996).
- Drought affecting over 85% of the country in 2021.
- Over 20% less rainfall resulting in crop failures.
- Increasing risks in Central America.

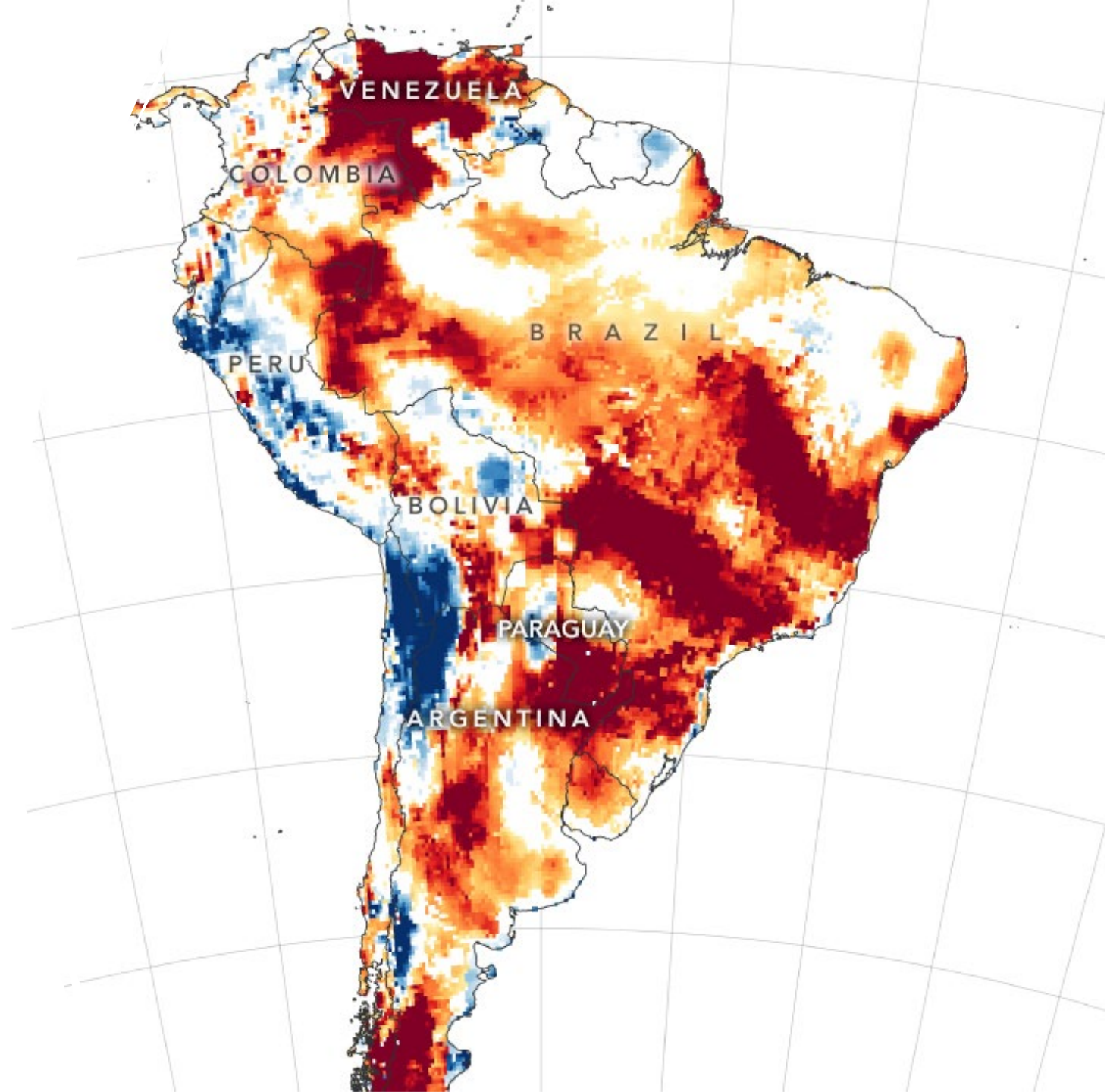




# South America

(NOAA 2022)

- South American countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay experienced highest temperatures on record.
- Some cities reached 45C contributing to prolonged drought, reduced grain production and excess deaths.
- It also affected power grids and scorched crops such as corn and soy.



# Small island states

(IEED 2022)

- Most populations and assets located in coastal zones susceptible to rising sea levels.
- Storms, cyclones and floods are generating monumental damages.
- Risks are existential, with entire populations forced to relocate to higher ground.





# Climate migration and displacement theory

- Migration (voluntary) versus displacement (involuntary)
- Ambiguous conceptual categories
- Climate, conflict and development overlaps
- Temporariness and permanence
- Different legal regimes and common outcomes
- Links between migration and destabilization

# Migration and displacement taxonomy

| Category                             | Type   | Characteristics   |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Migration                            | Labor and family related movements                             | Short- to long-term migration. Can be both cross-border and internal. There are also occasions described as “voluntary” migration that may be closer to displacement as described below |
| Development-induced                  | Infrastructure and urban upgrade<br>Resources and land-related | Short-, medium- and long-term displacement. Can result from dams, electricity grids, mega-events, large agro-projects and often affects lower-income households                         |
| Disaster-induced                     | Dramatic climate events<br>Long-term land degradation          | Short-, medium- and long-term displacement, with peripheral areas most at risk and can result in other forms of migration   |
| Violence-induced (refugees and IDPs) | Gangs and militia-induced<br>State (army and police) related   | Short-, medium- and long-term displacement. Can be cross-border, inter and intra-city   |
| Statelessness                        | Mostly asylum claimants or would-be refugees                   | Short- to long-term displacement, albeit a minor issue in Latin America   |

# Trends and patterns

- **21.5 million** displaced **across borders** per year for past few years (UNHCR)
- **40.5 million** climate displaced **internally** in 2022 (out of 59 million in total) (IDMC)
- Between **143 million** and **216 million** climate migrants and displaced by **2050** (World Bank).
- As many as **1.2 billion** people displaced by climate change by 2050 (IEP / Zurich).
- **South Asia, East Asia, Africa** and **Central America** particularly affected.



# Multiple impacts

- **Humanitarian consequences** – health and wellbeing, income and mobility across generations
- **Exacerbating political instability** – tensions over resources and overstretching government capacities
- **Non-state actor manipulation** – triggering events, exploitation and profiteering through trafficking, resource extraction and crime
- **Engineering crisis by malign and weak states** – displacement from non-democratic states or precipitation due to violations

# The case of Central America

- Increased intensity and frequency of **storms** and **changes in rainfall** affecting **crop** production in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador
- **Droughts since 2014** contributing to **losses of 70%** or more of harvests pushing families deeper into hunger/poverty (especially in dry corridor).
- **Eta and Iota storms in 2020** contributed to the displacement of at least **1.5 million people**, with populations still not recovered.
- **Food insecurity** coupled with **extreme violence** and **unstable governance** pushing people to Costa Rica, Mexico, the US and Canada.
- Central Americans spending **\$2.2 billion** a year to migrate (average costs to pay smugglers to enter US is \$7,500).
- Some investments in **agriculture and smallholder farming** as well as urban violence prevention, but challenging environment.
- **SICA** emphasizing human security approaches.

# Global solutions

- Global shift from “ending” to “**managing**” migration due to climate.
- Still **limited recognition** of climate migrants and climate displaced.
- **UNHCR** not according refugee status but developing funds and strategies for “environmental migrants”.
- **Nansen Initiative, Global Compact on Refugees, Global Compact on Migration** and other measures emphasizing cooperation, standards, responses.
- Specialized **funds and strategies** emerging.



# Regional approaches

- **Regional strategies:** EU strategy on climate change adaptation in 2021 and MCIC strategy in Asia are examples
- **Regional declarations:** Cartagena Declaration on Refugees (1984), San Jose Declaration (1994), Pueblo Process (1996), Mexico Declaration (2004), Brasilia Declaration (2010), Cartagena (2014), Leticia Declaration (2019)
- **Demonstration projects:** Solidarity Resettlement Plans, Cities of Solidarity, Borders of Solidarity, and other strategies with international funding.
- **Enforcement gaps remain:** Emphasis on solidarity and resettlement but criticized for limited financial support and enforcement and investment in resilience.

# National interventions

- **Countries** also developing strategies (US), creating visas (Argentina), accepting migrants (New Zealand) and relocating populations (Indonesia, Maldives and South Pacific).
- **Operational approaches** include disaster risk reduction (DDR) and distinguish between “hard” (infrastructure) and “soft” (early warning) approaches.
- **White House** released first ever climate change and migration strategy in November 2021 – recommending relocation for refugees affected by migration.
- **Increasing investment in climate financing** – including multi-country risk pools and contingency funds.