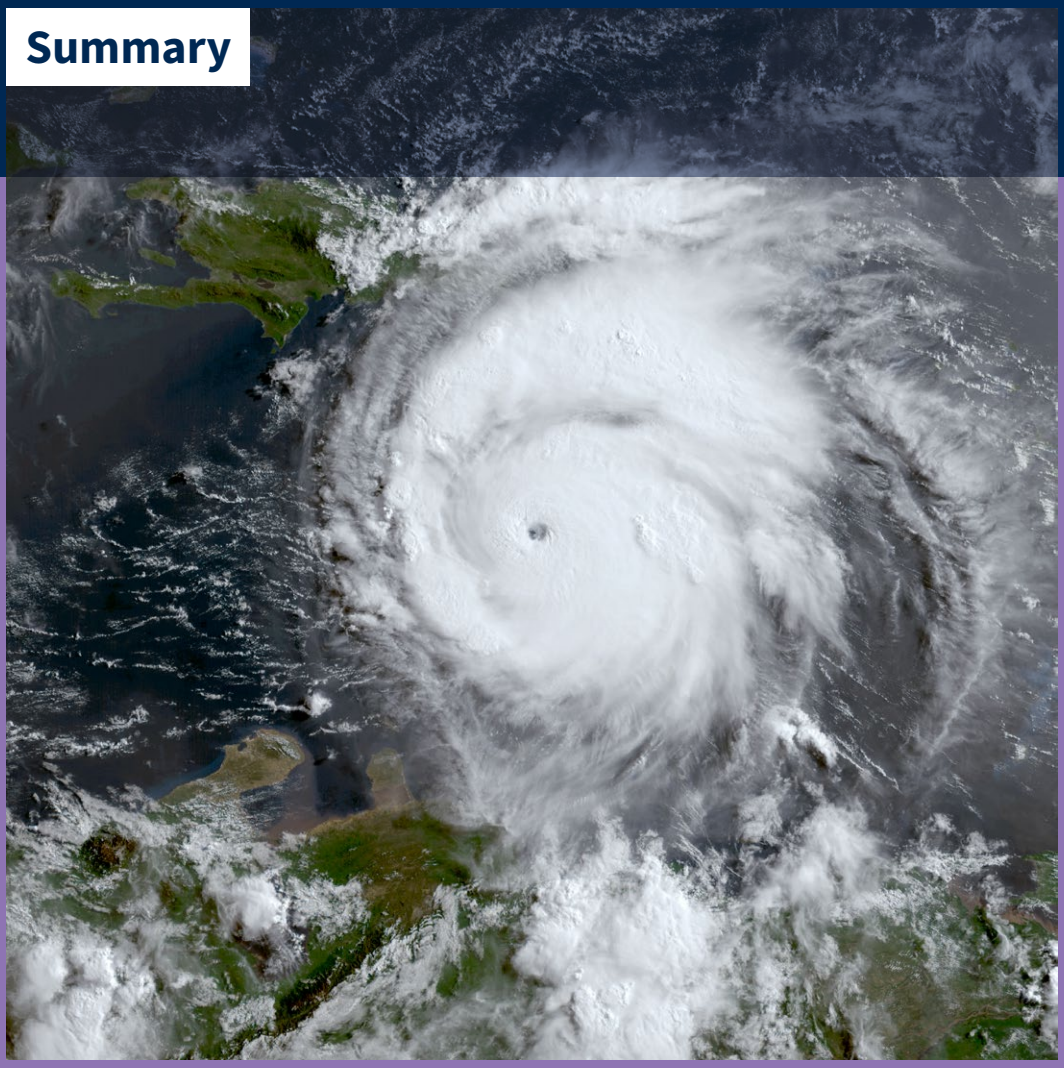
Climate Risk Index

Climate Risk Index 2026

Who suffers most from extreme weather events?

Summary



GERMANWATCH

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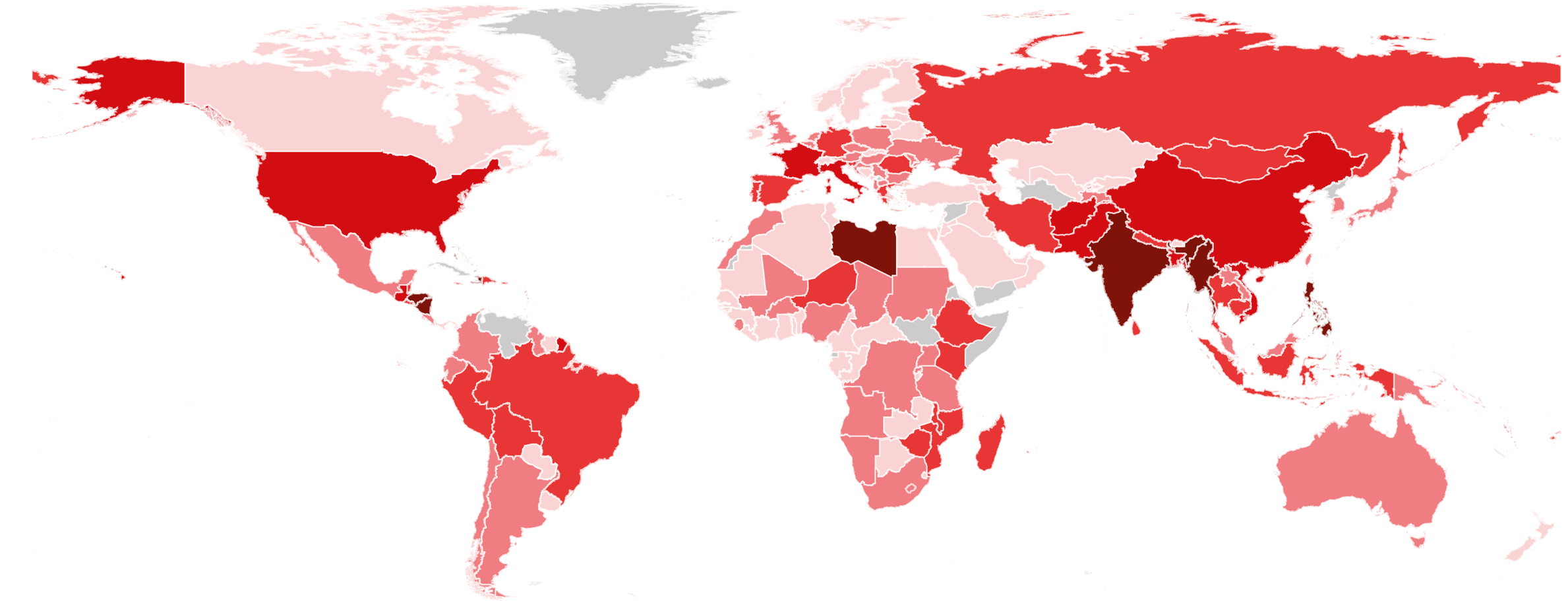
The Climate Risk Index (CRI) analyses how climate-related extreme weather events affect countries and, in doing so, measures the consequences of realised risks for these countries. This retrospective index ranks countries by economic and human effects (fatalities and affected, injured, and homeless), with the most affected country ranked first. The CRI aims to visualise how extreme weather events have affected countries, from 2 years preceding publication and over the previous 30 years. The CRI is based on data from the EM-DAT international disaster database, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund. It examines both absolute and relative impacts to create a ranking based on six indicators: economic losses, fatalities, and affected people, with the absolute and relative for each (see chapter 6 for details on the methodology).[1]

The CRI indicates that, over the three decades covered (1995–2024), the frequency and intensity of storms, floods, heatwaves, and droughts intensified, with devastating consequences on human lives and economies. There were 832,000+ fatalities and economic losses exceeding USD 4.5 trillion worldwide, directly resulting from more than 9,700 events. The CRI findings are a call for mitigation, adaptation, and action on loss and damage, and a reminder of the heavy toll climate change is inflicting globally on nations and communities. The CRI aims to contextualise international climate policy debates and processes and see the climate risks countries are facing. It simplifies the aggregation and understanding of climate-related extreme weather events' impacts across different regions and periods.

The most impacted countries rank highest. These countries should take the CRI results as a warning of their risk of frequent events or rare but extraordinary extreme events. Climate impacts' human losses and economic costs will continue to rise unless there is a sizeable shift in mitigation ambition and financial support.

1 To see full report: https://www.germanwatch.org/en/93310

Climate Risk Index:
Overall Ranking 1995–2024



- >100
- 51–100
- 21–50
- 11–20
- 1–10
- No Data

Key Messages

I. The Climate Risk Index (CRI) ranking indicates that, in 1995–2024, **Dominica, Myanmar, and Honduras** were the countries most affected by extreme weather events' impacts.

II. **St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Chad** were the most affected by extreme weather events' impacts in 2024.

III. From **1995 to 2024, more than 832,000 people died worldwide and direct economic losses of over USD 4.5 trillion (inflation-adjusted)** directly resulted from **more than 9,700** extreme weather events.

IV. **Floods, storms, heat waves, and drought** were the most prominent impacts short- and long-term. From 1995 to 2024, heat waves (33%) and storms (33%) caused the most fatalities. Floods accounted for almost half of those affected (48%). Storms caused, by far, the greatest economic losses (58% or USD 2.64 trillion inflation-adjusted).

V. The most affected countries in the long-term index, for 1995–2024, can be divided into those: (1) most affected by highly unusual extreme events **(e.g. Dominica, Myanmar, Honduras, and Libya)** and (2) affected by recurring extreme events **(e.g. Haiti, the Philippines, Nicaragua, and India)**. Climate science clearly shows that climate change raises the risk for both categories and strongly indicates that it contributes to transforming unusually extreme events into ongoing threats, creating a new normal.

VI. **The CRI indicates that all countries are affected, but those in the Global South are particularly impacted**. In both the short- and long-term indices, extreme weather events' impacts particularly affected poorer Global South countries. In 2024, eight of the 10 most affected were in the low-income and lower-middle-income group.[2] Between 1995 and 2024, six of the 10 most affected were lower-middle-income, including one Small Island Developing State and three Least Developed Countries. These countries' coping capacities are substantially lower than others'. None of the 10 most affected over the previous 30 years were in the high-income group, and only one for 2024.

2 For a definition of income groups, see World Bank 2024.

VII. The CRI ranking is based on the best publicly available historical dataset (at the time of publication) on extreme weather events' impacts. **These events and their impacts are often underreported, especially those in Global South countries**, because of data quality and coverage challenges, and data gaps. This can lead to the ranking less accurately capturing all experienced impacts for all countries.

VIII. **Human-induced climate change affects the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and leads to widespread adverse climate impacts**. El Niño influenced many extreme events at the beginning of 2024. However, attribution science found that climate change helped fuel these events even more than El Niño. [3] Climate science also found that, in 2024, human-caused climate change added 41 days of dangerous heat for billions of people worldwide, greatly impacting vulnerable populations and driving other extreme weather events, such as intensified hurricanes and wildfires. The summer of 2024 was the hottest on record, with two billion people experiencing 30+ risky heat days.[4]

IX. **COP 30 should find effective ways to close the global ambition gaps, as the CRI 2026 results illustrate: Global emissions must be reduced immediately, adaptation efforts must be accelerated, effective solutions to address loss and damage must be implemented, and adequate climate finance must be provided**. Courts this past year have confirmed this urgency. An International Court of Justice advisory opinion clarified that states have binding legal duties to prevent and address the harmful effects of climate change – including stronger mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage actions – by providing climate finance.

3 World Weather Attribution 2024.

4 Climate Central 2024.

Countries Most Affected in 1995–2024

In 1995–2024, **Dominica, Myanmar, and Honduras** were the countries most affected by extreme weather events. Libya, Haiti, and Grenada were among other highly impacted countries.

- **Dominica:** The country is regularly hit by hurricanes, the most destructive being Hurricane Maria in 2017, which caused USD 1.8 billion in damage (270% of GDP) and nearly 100 deaths. Between 1995 and 2024, Dominica endured seven cyclones, leaving 110,000 people affected and causing USD 3 billion in losses.
- **Myanmar:** A country prone to cyclones, floods, and droughts. Severely impacted by Cyclone Nargis in 2008, which killed nearly 140,000 people and caused USD 5.8 billion in damage. Between 1995 and 2024, Myanmar suffered 55 extreme events, resulting in 141,000 deaths, nine million affected, and USD 8.6 billion in losses.
- **Honduras:** Vulnerable to hurricanes, floods, and droughts, Honduras was devastated by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which caused more than 14,000 deaths and USD 7 billion in damage. Between 1995 and 2024, the country endured 60 extreme events, leaving 15,000 dead, 12.5 million affected, and USD 8 billion in losses.
- **Libya:** The country was struck by powerful Cyclone Daniel in 2023, which caused 13,200 fatalities, affected 1.6 million people, and inflicted USD 6 billion in damage. That single event accounted for almost all event-related fatalities, affected people, and economic losses between 1995 and 2024.
- **Haiti:** The country was repeatedly struck by hurricanes and floods, the most destructive being Hurricane Matthew in 2016, which caused USD 2.6 billion in damage and affected more than two million people. Between 1995 and 2024, Haiti endured 91 events, causing 8,000 deaths, nine million affected, and USD 4 billion in losses.
- **Grenada:** The Caribbean island country was severely hit by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, which caused 39 deaths and USD 1.5 billion in damage, and by Hurricane Beryl in 2024. Between 1995 and 2024, the country endured seven events, leaving 50 dead, 225,000 affected, and USD 1.8 billion in losses.
- **Philippines:** The Southeast Asian country was regularly hit by typhoons, the most destructive being Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, which caused USD 13 billion in damage and 7,000 fatalities. Between 1995 and 2024, the Philippines endured 371 extreme events, leaving 27,500 dead, 230 million affected, and USD 35 billion in losses.
- **Nicaragua:** The Central American country was severely impacted by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which caused 3,000 deaths and USD 2 billion in damage, and later by Hurricanes Iota, Eta, and Julia. Between 1995 and 2024, the country endured 50 events, leaving 3,800 dead, four million affected, and USD 3.2 billion in losses.
- **India:** India has been repeatedly struck by cyclones, floods, and deadly heat waves. The most destructive cyclone was Amphan in 2020, which caused over USD 16 billion in damage (inflation-adjusted). India also experienced devastating floods in 1993, 1998, and 2013, and severe heatwaves in 2002, 2003, and 2015. Between 1995 and 2024, the country endured 430 events, leaving 80,000 dead, 1.3 billion affected, and USD 170 billion in losses.
- **The Bahamas:** The island country was ferociously struck by Hurricane Dorian in 2019, which caused more than 400 deaths and USD 4 billion in damage. Between 1995 and 2024, the country endured 17 events, leaving 400 dead, 53,000 affected, and USD 9.1 billion in losses.

Countries Most Affected in 2024

In 2024, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Chad were the most affected countries, followed by Papua New Guinea, Niger, and Nepal.

- **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:** On 1 July 2024, Hurricane Beryl (Category 4) struck with winds of up to 260 km/h, causing eight deaths, affecting more than 40,000 people, and resulting in over USD 230 million in damage – almost 20% of the national GDP. Nearly every structure in the country was damaged, with 98% of buildings destroyed in Mayreau and other southern Grenadine islands.
- **Grenada**: Here too, Hurricane Beryl (Category 4) struck in July, affecting more than 12,000 people and inflicting USD 218 million in damage – about 16% of the national GDP. A severe drought earlier in the year affected 100,000 people, marking Grenada's worst water crisis in 14 years.
- **Chad:** Between August and September 2024, catastrophic flooding across all 23 provinces in Chad killed 576 people, affected nearly two million, and caused USD 380 million in damage. The floods destroyed 218,000 homes and damaged 433,000 hectares of cropland.
- **Papua New Guinea:** In May 2024, a massive landslide in the country's Enga Province killed 670 people, displaced 1,250, and caused USD 60 million in damage, following an earlier March landslide that killed 23. The disasters buried villages, destroyed homes, and left communities cut off from aid amid disease risks and ongoing local conflicts.
- **Niger:** Heavy rainfall triggered major flooding across all eight regions of Niger, killing 396 people, affecting 1.5 million, and causing USD 225 million in damage. Homes and livestock were destroyed, with rainfall up to double the average levels.
- **Nepal:** In September 2024, intense monsoon rains triggered widespread floods and landslides across 44 districts in Nepal, killing 268 people, affecting 2.6 million, and causing USD 338 million in damage. That July and August, floods and a glacier outburst killed 24 people, displaced hundreds, and damaged settlements in the Kathmandu Valley and beyond.
- **Philippines:** Between September and November 2024, six typhoons struck the Philippines within 30 days, affecting 16 million people, displacing 11 million, and causing hundreds of deaths and over USD 700 million in damage. The strongest of these storms, Tropical Cyclone Trami in October, killed 191 people and affected more than 9.6 million, while an April–May heatwave brought record temperatures of up to 53°C.
- **Malawi:** In April 2024, a severe drought in Malawi affected more than six million people and caused USD 400 million in agricultural losses, wiping out nearly half of the country's maize crops. Floods and Cyclone Chido had further impacts, killing 30 people and affecting over 100,000 during the year.
- **Myanmar:** In September 2024, Typhoon Yagi and subsequent floods caused more than 800 deaths in Myanmar, affected 3.4 million people, and inflicted USD 222 million in damage. Floods that July displaced thousands, while an April–May heatwave with temperatures up to 47°C killed 50 people.
- **Vietnam:** On 7 September 2024, Typhoon Yagi struck Vietnam with winds of up to 280 km/h, killing 345 people, affecting 3.6 million, and causing USD 2 billion in damage. Later floods and a 47-day heatwave compounded losses, damaging homes, crops, and infrastructure nationwide.

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