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2024's Extreme Weather Events

The world experienced a series of extreme weather events in 2024 that had significant impacts on communities and ecosystems across the globe. This map provides a visual overview of some of these major extreme weather events illustrating the widespread and varied nature of today’s climatic challenges.

North America

Every US state experienced drought except Alaska and Kentucky1. There were 27 weather-related events including hurricanes, tornados, wildfire, hailstorms, and flooding that each caused over US$1bn of damage2. There were over 64,897 wildfires in 2024 that burned over 8.9 million acres of land3.

Hurricane Helene was the deadliest hurricane to strike the US mainland since Katrina (2005). Bringing flooding across much of western North Carolina. The est. economic fallout is between US$145 billion and US$160 billion4.

Canada

2024 was the most expensive year for weather-related disasters in Canada, Events included flood, hailstorms, extreme temperatures, wildfires that saw over 5.3 million hectares of forest burned, more than double the annual average of 2.1 million hectares5.

Intense flash flooding occurred in Toronto and other parts of southern Ontario in July, where nearly 10 centimetres of rain fell in just three hours. The floods are estimated to have caused over CAN$940 million in insured damage6.

Europe

The summer of 2024 was the hottest on record for Europe7. More than 1,000 wildfires spread through central and northern Portugal in September 2024. The fires burned over 135,000 hectares of land8.

Storm Boris brought extreme rainfall and flooding to Central and Eastern Europe, with claims totalling US$2.2 billion9.

Eastern Spain and the Iberian Peninsula experienced extreme rainfall and flash floods and in October an hourly rainfall of 184.6mm broke the national record. The flooding in Valencia and across Spain more broadly cost the country's financial sector over US$20 billion according to the Bank of Spain10.

Asia

Asia is heating up faster than the global average, with increased casualties and economic losses from floods, storms, and more severe heatwaves11.

China's third-quarter economic losses from natural disasters more than doubled from the first six months of 2024. Direct economic losses in July to September reached 230 billion yuan (US$32.3 billion)12. In March, wildfires swept through the Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces in southern China. The total area affected in Sichuan's Yajiang County alone exceeded 24,710 acres13.

In late November Thailand and Malaysia had the worst flooding the region had experienced in years, with six months of rainfall in just five days14.

Typhoon Yagi combined with seasonal monsoon rains triggered catastrophic floods and landslides across south-east Asia15.

Africa

In March, a deadly heatwave took hold across west Africa and the Sahel region of the continent, and temperatures soared above 48C in Mali16.

Namibia declared a state of emergency in May as the country grappled with its worst drought in a century17.

Seasonal rains across Africa were displaced much further north, bringing flooding to the Sahara for the first time in half a century. Errachidia a desert city in southeast Morocco recorded nearly 3 inches of rainfall in two days in September more than four times the normal rainfall for the whole month18.

1. 2024 in Review: A Look Back at Drought Across the United States in 12 Maps
2. 2024: An active year of U.S. billion-dollar weather and climate disasters | NOAA Climate.gov)
3. Wildfires and Acres
4. Hurricane Helene: Economic Losses Could Total $160 Billion
5. Canada's 10 most impactful weather stories of 2024 - Canada.ca
6. July flash floods in Toronto and southern Ontario caused over $940 million in insured damage
7. Extreme weather: floods, droughts and heatwaves
8. Portugal to use €500 million from European funds for wildfire recovery
9. Natural Catastrophe Review: Expert insights, lessons learned and outlook
10. Spain's devastating floods cost financial sector over $ 20B

11. The extreme weather events of 2024 as year declared warmest on record
12. China's Q3 economic losses from natural calamities surge
13. Severe wildfires in southern China claim 4 lives, spawn huge pyroCb clouds
14. 2024 Southeast Asia Floods
15. The extreme weather events of 2024 as year declared warmest on record
16. Climate change: Deadly African heatwave 'impossible' without warming
17. State of Emergency declared as the country faces national disaster due to drought | Namibia Economist
18. The Sahara Desert flooded for the first time in decades. Here’s what it looks like

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