CLIMATE NEWS

From Sheldon Whitehouse, Barbara Boxer, and Jeff Merkley
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Manhattan Heat-Related Mortality Could Increase with Climate Change

A study published recently in *Nature Climate Change* found that climate change could increase the number of heat-related deaths in Manhattan, NY by as much as 22 percent by the 2020s, and by as much as 91 percent by the 2080s. The researchers ran a number of climate models with projected greenhouse gas emissions scenarios and found that even when taking into account the decrease in cold-related deaths due to warmer winters, the overall temperature-related mortality rate would likely still rise by as much as 31 percent by 2080. Cities like New York are especially vulnerable to increasing temperatures due to the absorption of heat by buildings and other infrastructure, which turns cities into "heat islands" that maintain warm temperatures at night. Study coauthor Dr. Patrick Kinney, a professor of environmental health sciences at Columbia University, stated, "What our study suggests is that the heat effects of climate change dominate the winter warming benefits that might also come: climate change will cause more deaths through heat than it will prevent during winter." *(EESI/nclimate1902)*

Over 100 U.S. Ski Resorts Sign Climate Action Declaration

Faced with the increasing threat of warmer winters and more erratic weather, 108 U.S. ski areas have signed a declaration calling on federal policymakers to take action on climate change. Some of the country's top resorts—including CO's Vail Mountain, UT's Park City Mountain Resort, and WY's Jackson Hole Mountain Resort—are among those on the declaration. U.S. ski areas generate about $12.2 billion in annual revenue, and the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) reported over 56 million visitors during the previous season. If the ski industry suffers significantly from climate change, 160,000 jobs are at stake. The declaration—organized by nonprofit advocacy group Ceres—is the latest in the industry's efforts to raise awareness of how climate change can affect the business of winter sports. NSAA has been working to address climate change since 2000, when it launched its "Climate Challenge" initiative to reduce emissions at ski areas, educate skiers about climate change, and advocate for policies to tackle the issue. *(ClimateWire)*

Snows of Kilimanjaro Likely Gone by 2020

Glaciers on Mount Kilimanjaro shrank by 80 percent over the last century, and on Sunday, Tanzanian Vice President Mohammed Gharib Bilal cited the fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report to say that the remaining 20 percent is likely to be gone by 2020. That would be the first time in 11,000 years that Kilimanjaro would be free of snow cover. Speaking at a climate change and economic development forum, Bilal said many African economies are threatened by climate change, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism. In the near future, rainfall in parts of Tanzania is expected to increase by 5 to 45 percent and decrease by 10 to 15 percent in other East African regions. Africa contributes only 3.8 percent to global greenhouse gas emissions, yet climate change stands to have a major effect on the continent's development as droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events will likely increase in frequency. This year's African Development Bank report says 40 percent of Africa's population lives on less than $1.25 per day, and about 80 percent of those people depend on rain-fed agriculture. *(ClimateWire)*

Catastrophic Climatic Events Force Corals into Long Recovery

Marine conservationists from England's Plymouth University and Brazil's Universidad Federal da Bahia have spent over 17 years analyzing coral colonies off of the South American coast. Their research coincided with the catastrophic El Niño of 1997-1998, allowing for the first detailed assessment of the long-term effects that a major environmental incident of this nature can have on corals. This El Niño was the most extensive global event of its kind in history, with record high seawater temperatures occurring in the 18-month period before and subsequently. It caused flooding in some parts of the world and drought in others, and severe coral bleaching and mortality in Central America, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Gulf, the tropical Pacific, and Brazil. The study found that it took 13 years for Brazil's coral reef system to recover after the El Niño, suggesting that corals may be highly vulnerable to future effects of climate change, including significant changes in water temperature. Plymouth's Martin Attrill said that, "if climatic events become more frequent, as is suggested, it is likely corals will never be able to fully recover." He noted that reefs hold an estimated 25 percent of known marine species, which would also be affected by long-term coral changes. *(ScienceDaily/journal.pone.0065073)*