

How the Oceans Affect Our Storms

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Eight years ago my city--NYC- was hit with Hurricane Sandy, one of the biggest and most catastrophic hurricanes to land on our shores with winds of over 110 mph. Sandy affected thousands of people in New York and New Jersey. Other storms that were deadly were Hurricanes Dorian, Maria, and Harvey. But *why* were they so catastrophic? Did you know they're linked to climate change and our heating earth, specifically our oceans and coral reef? Hurricanes increase their intensity over warm water which is why you see most hurricanes forming in the Caribbean. Because of climate change, hurricanes are now starting to form everywhere and are more severe.

Coral and the ocean are responsible for absorbing 90% of our carbon emissions. But coral reefs are getting bleached and dying. When the ocean gets warmer coral reefs expel certain algae that live on them that helps give them their vibrant colors and gives them 90% of their energy. This causes them to turn white and eventually die. When they die they are unable to soak up our carbon emissions which causes our planet to get warmer, including our oceans where they live. When coral gets bleached it soaks up less of our emissions making our earth and oceans warmer making our storms and hurricanes more severe. The biggest coral reef is the Great Barrier Reef which is 134,634 square miles. Scientists say about 1/3 of the Reef is currently bleached.

Some say that the earth is not heating up and that the climate has been changing all along. They say temperatures have always been rising. This is true, the ocean temperatures have always been rising but they have not been rising this radically. They have risen much more in the past decade than they have ever before. This makes it clear that humans are the cause of climate change and climate change is real.

Humans started global warming and they can stop it too. Imagine if your house was completely destroyed from a hurricane, all because we refuse to help our planet. Take action by educating yourself on small steps you can take to impact climate change-turn off your lights; fly less; recycle; and take more public transportation. Make sure you march when climate actions are taking place. We can't give up and neither can the coral reefs because they are sending us the message to ACT NOW.

Sources

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