5 NOBODY IS SPARED

It was the fifth year of the great fires in California, fires that ate tens of thousands of square kilometers of forests, ate towns and villages . . . smoke that reached New York City . . . seawater lapping at South Pacific islands, glacier melt in Nepal, an ice storm in Texas. Of too much, not enough, and water arriving with a force that hit us like violence. We are leaving behind our old familiar world whose stability we can remember as a great kindness and entering into a rough new set of circumstances.

From 'Sky Full of Forests' by Rebecca Solnit[1]

In 2022 and 2023, global temperature records were shattered. In January 2022, over 50 cities in Argentina recorded temperatures above 40 °C, far above their averages. India and Pakistan experienced their hottest temperatures since 1901, with Jacobabad, Pakistan, reaching a peak of 49 °C in May – when it wasn't yet summer. Portugal reported 230 heat-related deaths in just two weeks in July, while Great Britain saw 40 °C for the first time since humans had set foot on the island. China also endured its most severe and prolonged heatwave on record. Just months after its record-breaking heatwave, Pakistan saw record-breaking floods. From June to October 2022, extreme rainfall caused floods in Pakistan that displaced 8 million people and killed a reported 1,739.[2] The year 2023 was hotter still, becoming the hottest ever year recorded. With a global average temperature of 14.98 °C, 0.17 °C higher than the previous highest in 2016, 2023 marked the first time on record that every day within a year exceeded 1 °C above the 1850–1900 pre-industrial

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009605960.006

level.[3] Andrew Dessler, a climate scientist at Texas A&M University, put it into bleak context: 'Every year for the rest of your life will be one of the hottest [on] record. This, in turn, means that 2023 will end up being one of the coldest years of this century. Enjoy it while it lasts'.[4] Dessler's word were scarily prescient for the people of Delhi, India, for whom temperatures reached 52.3 °C in May 2024 – smashing both the city's records and the national highest, previously held by Rajasthan's Phalodi town hitting 51 °C (124°F) in 2016.[5] Needless to say, beating a national temperature record by over 1 °C is not normal.

Until recent years and months, some people still believed in a dichotomy of 'climate winners and climate losers'. That yes, OK, some small island nations will disappear under the sea, but great swathes of arctic North America and Russia will thaw and open up to fertile farmland. That somehow the negatives will be balanced by positives, and people in small island developing states (SIDS) can just move to new islands – or better still, the Continental mainland. Or that people from vulnerable countries can simply turn their hand to becoming Siberian farmers. Such myths, however, are now firmly dispelled.

Although vulnerable countries are the hardest hit, no country on Earth is spared from the negative impacts of climate change. Indeed, countries and regions once thought to potentially benefit from a rise in global temperatures, such as Canada, Russia, and Scandinavia, are set to incur significant economic losses because of rising temperatures.

As global warming progresses, more and more countries will experience the types of impacts felt so far primarily in vulnerable nations and regions. *The Monitor* projects that dengue fever, previously eradicated from Europe, may re-emerge in the European Mediterranean region, including Greece, Italy, and Spain. Additionally, up to 100% of the Baltic coastline could become suitable for *Vibrio*, food-borne bacteria responsible for gastrointestinal illness and potentially lethal

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009605960.006

skin infections, affecting tens of thousands of people worldwide each year. It is in Europe that the largest estimated losses to GDP per capita growth of any continent are expected to unfold.

Wealthier regions, although less vulnerable and commanding greater resources, will nevertheless experience substantial negative impacts from climate change. Adaptation remains peripheral to planning, owing to the still prevalent notion that climate change will harm mostly poor and vulnerable nations. Instead of working with and systematically learning from decades of experience from the nations already tackling the urgent challenges of climate change, developed economies appear to be sleepwalking toward greater danger. Extreme rainfall events and flooding are projected to increase at global warming levels exceeding 1.5 °C in all regions of Europe, except the Mediterranean.[6] Drought events in all regions of the world are projected to become 5–11 times more frequent by 2050 in a 'below 2 °C' scenario compared with the recent past. By the end of the century, they would be 8–12 times more frequent, increasing to 12–14 times more frequent for a 'no action' scenario. Exposure to life-threatening heatwaves for vulnerable age groups will increase for all countries by the end of the century.

Iria Touzon Calle, a programme officer in the UNDRR team in Bonn, Germany, is originally from Spain. More accustomed to helping and working with those in vulnerable countries, she finds that climate change experience in her own country offers clear parallels. 'My region of Spain is in the rainy northwest Atlantic coast,' says Iria. 'I remember not having concerns about heat during my childhood. Air conditioning was unheard of, even in cars. Now, heatwaves are a significant concern, especially for the ageing population. We've experienced droughts and water shortages in an area that used to be known for its rain.' When she moved to Germany in 2022, she was amazed to find similar stories there, too: 'I was surprised by the impacts of floods – housing and infrastructure impact

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was still very visible more than 1 year after the event as well as droughts and water shortages here in Germany . . . Even developed countries with better risk assessment and early warning systems were caught off guard by these events.' On the same call, Iria's colleague, Le-Anne Roper, has an unnervingly similar story from where she grew up, in Jamaica. 'We've noticed changes like afternoon showers becoming more torrential. What used to be gentle rain over a few hours is now similar volumes falling in less than an hour, leading to more flooding. Another change in the parish where my family is from, in northeastern Jamaica, which used to receive the most rainfall is now experiencing droughts to the extent that communities need water transported to them, and rain-fed agriculture is struggling. Growing up, I never imagined farmers there would need to rely on public systems or to buy water.'

Head of the Bonn office Animesh Kumar moved to Germany in summer of 2021, to an idyllic house (or so he thought) beside the River Rhine. An Indian national, his new role included leading on the monitoring and evaluation of the Early Warning for All initiative – to cover every person on Earth with climate early warning systems by 2027. Little did he know he was about to experience one himself within weeks of his arrival. 'I remember the siren going off in the night,' he says, still slightly surprised by the recollection. 'Being new in Germany and in the middle of COVID, I had no idea why the siren was sounding. There was no information available.' He later discovered he was supposed to install an app on his phone that would have explained the alert – but understandably, having knowledge of that, or being calm enough to download an app in the middle of a climate disaster, is all easier said than done. 'The next morning, I saw that the road in front of my house was underwater. By the next evening, we were moving our cars from the basement garage because the water was threatening to enter it. It was devastating in Bonn itself and even worse in the upper reaches of the Ahr valley. Hundreds of people died, clearly unprepared . . .

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Many people didn't know what to do when the early warning was triggered.'

A subsequent UNDRR report into the disaster found that forecasts on 9–10 July 2021 for the Rhine catchment, which covers Germany and Switzerland, had shown a high probability of flooding within a few days. In some areas, warnings were issued through official channels, and authorities took action to evacuate people, erect temporary flood defences and move vehicles to higher ground – but this did not happen everywhere. Data from an online survey in flood-affected areas in Germany showed that more than 29% of the respondents did not receive any warning and that 85% of those warned did not expect very severe flooding, with 46% not knowing what to do. In addition, 'there was a forensic analysis indicating that at least 30% of the impact was due to climate change, possibly more,' says Kumar. 'The authorities were completely caught off guard by the magnitude of the disaster. Nobody expected a flood of this scale in this region, even though we have floods in the Rhine River almost every year. Last December, the river flooded again but not to the same extent as in mid-2021. A sense of complacency among the authorities, thinking we were okay, perhaps led to the delay in response.' This, he says, reminded him of his childhood in northeast India, at the foothills of the Himalayas. 'Every monsoon, from July to September, we are flooded due to melting mountain glaciers. Growing up, our house was the only concrete one in the area, and we would shelter many people, with the World Food Programme [WFP] helicopters dropping food at our house. That was when I decided to join the disaster management efforts – these were the good people who gave us food. I joined WFP in 2006. So, my introduction to climate change was through these disasters.'

For Swenja Surminski, a German national and now distinguished Professor in Practice at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, LSE, the floods in Germany in July 2021 also brought work and life

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clashing uncomfortably together. 'It was a shock and a wake-up call for many, who hadn't really thought about the risks from these extreme rainfall events,' recalls Surminski. 'However, we have had quite a few of these wake-up calls recently, and you start wondering whether there will be a change to the way we prepare for and manage climate risks. As seen so many times, immediately after the event, there was significant fallout; people lost their jobs, ministers had to resign, and lessons-learned reviews were conducted.' The region was more used to 'gradual river flooding, which usually provides some advanced notice. The July 2021 event was different, more sudden and overwhelming.' Cologne recorded 154 mm of rainfall in just 24 hours, nearly double its monthly average for the month of July (87 mm). In Reifferscheid, 207 mm of rain fell in only 9 hours, a quarter of its annual average rainfall (see Figure 5.1). The world watched as houses and cars flowed down picture-postcard black-timbered streets, and whole fields disappeared into sinkholes. The flooding resulted in at least 184 fatalities in Germany and 38 in Belgium and caused considerable damage to infrastructure, including houses, motorways, railway lines, and bridges.[7] On 16 July, Fridays for Future activist Luisa Neubauer tweeted: 'Here in Germany, dozens have died in floods, hundreds are missing, thousands have lost their homes. It's devastating. This is the climate crisis unravelling in one of the richest parts of the world – which for a long time thought it would be "safe". No place is "safe" anymore.'[8]

In May 2023, after experiencing its driest start to the year since records began, southern Spain saw similar record-breaking rainfall cause flash flooding and widespread disruption, including the closure of schools in over 30 municipalities. Parts of the region reportedly received as much as 140 mm in just 8 hours, with one weather station in La Alcayna registering 87.9 mm in just one hour[9] – more rain in one hour than the Region of Murcia had received in the previous (typically more rainy) five months.[10] In January 2024, Los Angeles, USA, was also

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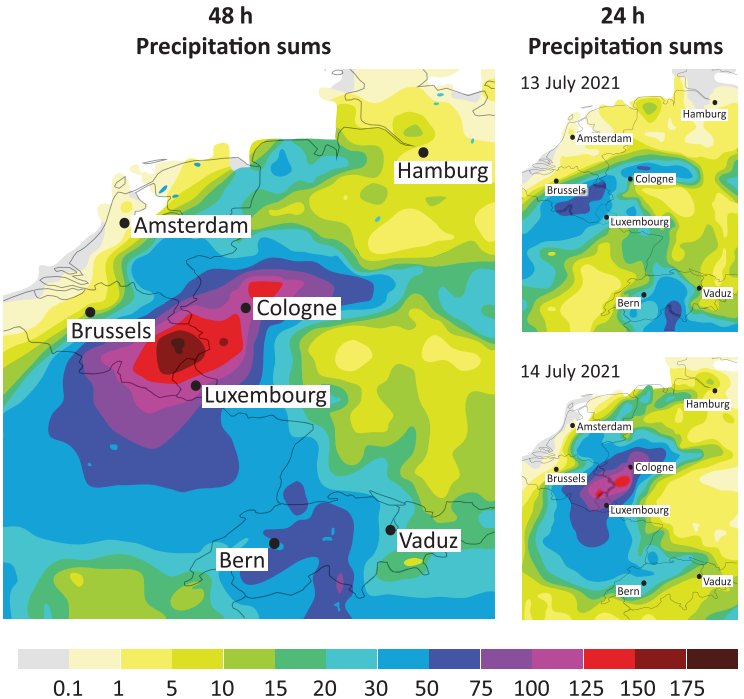

Figure 5.1 Germany floods, July 2021, rainfall in 24–48 hours. (Tradowsky et al. Attribution of the heavy rainfall events leading to severe flooding in Western Europe during July 2021. *Climatic Change* 176, 90, 2023)[11]

hit by an atmospheric river event that saw 272 mm fall in one day – equivalent to three-quarters of its annual average rainfall.[12] Authorities must start dealing with this as 'the new normal', yet often they are still caught off guard. And arguably talk of 'once in 200-year' or 'once in 500-year' events does little to help, given that these are now arriving seemingly annually. Our baselines have immeasurably shifted, but not everyone has got the memo. Germany's reaction to the catastrophic events of 2021 echoes that of other 'developed' nations. 'People are often taken by surprise, calling these events "unprecedented",' says Surminski. 'But that's exactly what we need to understand about climate change.' After each such disaster, the likes of

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Surminski are called in to conduct another review. Recommendations are made. 'Right after the event, there's a short window to change how we deal with these issues,' she says. And yet, 'Often, the urgency and attention fade until the next event.'

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When *The Monitor*'s lead economic editor Florent Baarsch first saw the results from his modelling for the report, 'I was concerned – I thought we'd messed up.' He immediately ran the numbers again. But after checking and rechecking, the results were irrefutable: 'Northern economies, which are sometimes considered to be "benefiting" from a changing climate, are actually some of the largest losers of a changing climate.' Traditional econometric models had failed to account for precipitation as a stress driver, explains Baarsch. Many former climate models had also assumed that countries with vastly different GDPs and temperature ranges have the same vulnerability to changing temperatures – mistakenly thinking that 1 degree Celsius has uniformly the same impact globally. 'The breakthrough came when we used a calibration allowing us to set specific coefficients for each country based on its vulnerability to its unique temperature range. What we found was striking: high-income countries in the North are not prepared for the consequences of climate change.' While we speak for this book, a news story breaks in his home country, France, of children unable to go to school because of flash flooding. Baarsch highlights it as another example of how 'we're not adequately prepared [in France], and it's just the beginning. What's concerning is the lack of readiness among decision-makers.'

In September 2023, more typically when the weather begins to cool for autumn, France was hit again by an unexpected heatwave. In an alarming episode that highlights the far-reaching impact of climate change in even the most developed nations, the French authorities found themselves conducting

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inquiries into the untimely deaths of four grape harvesters in the Champagne region (in typically cooler northeastern France). The local authorities did not consider the deaths suspicious and did not order autopsies, refusing to speculate on the potential correlation with extreme temperatures. Maxime Toubart, head of the Champagne growers' association, reported by AFP, conveyed his distress: 'Maybe it will turn out that the sun had something to do with this. I am very sad. People don't join the harvest to lose their lives.'[13] This was no mere freak weather event, but part of a growing trend. According to France's public health agency, 5,167 deaths – or 3 out of every 100 fatalities – were attributable to heat throughout the summer of 2023. As bad as this was, it didn't surpass France's 7,000 deaths attributable to heat in 2022.[14]

France's struggle with heatwaves is evidently part of a global pattern amid rising temperatures. During the summer of 2022, excess deaths associated with heat exceeded 15,000 in total across France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom.[15] Around 4,000 accidents a year are attributed to extreme heat in Italy alone.[16] The narrative that 'nobody is spared', including in the Global North, should therefore come as no surprise. Europe is warming at twice the speed of the global average. In 2022, the region was approximately 2.3 °C above the pre-industrial average used as a baseline by the IPCC, and 2023 was hotter still.[17]

'As a rule of thumb, climate change makes all our other problems much harder, it is a risk multiplier,' Surminski summarises. 'Whether it's water availability, famine, or supply chain issues, climate change exacerbates these challenges. There are a few exceptions, like wine growing in the UK, or improved shipping through the Arctic, but these are rare. For most areas, it's not going to get any easier. Climate change highlights our failure to address our underlying issues.' This comes back to climate change being non-linear, and not always readable via a thermometer. 'Some changes that seem beneficial at first glance can have unforeseen difficulties. For

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instance, while Scandinavia might get warmer, it will face other issues too, like the spread of diseases [and wildfires], that we need to consider. What looks like an opportunity needs careful examination. This is a global issue that won't be beneficial for most of us.'

The Middle East, for example, is one of the fastest-heating places on the planet. In Doha, the capital of Qatar, the daily high temperatures in its World Cup hosting year of 2022 were already 0.8 °C hotter than when its winning World Cup bid was announced just 12 years previously.[18] By 2100, temperatures could rise to the point that just going outside for a few hours in some parts of the Middle East and North Africa will exceed the 'upper limit for survivability, even with idealized conditions of perfect health, total inactivity, full shade, absence of clothing, and unlimited drinking water,' according to a 2020 paper by Raymond et al. in *Science Advances*. 'Humans' ability to efficiently shed heat has enabled us to range over every continent, but a wet-bulb temperature of 35°C marks our upper physiological limit, and much lower values have serious health and productivity impacts.' A 'wet-bulb' temperature reading is measured by a thermometer covered in a wet cloth, to mimic how the human body cools itself with sweat. The comprehensive evaluation of weather station data by Raymond et al. shows that some coastal subtropical locations have already reported reaching the fatal wet-bulb temperature of 35 °C, and that extreme humid heat overall has more than doubled in frequency since 1979.[19]

As *The Monitor*'s Health Editor Marina Romanello says, 'It doesn't matter how wealthy you are; you're on the same planet as everyone else. Shielding yourself in an air-conditioned apartment is not what anyone wants. Every human exposed to a heatwave, especially the vulnerable, is at risk, regardless of their net worth ... The social tipping points of climate change affect the whole social fabric, and everyone is embedded in that fabric.'

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Dina Zayed, Programme Director at the Climate Emergency Collaboration Group (CECG), is Egyptian, but recalls an international upbringing. 'We moved every three to four years when I was growing up, and my whole career and education were quite mobile. I've lived in twelve cities and four continents. When you have a life of travel like that, it's very easy for me to return to places and see how they've changed. The speed and scale of that change has been not just grounding but anchoring for the work that I've done . . . We often talk about climate change in apocalyptic terms, but what really scares me is the slow, invisible-onset changes that we don't pay significant attention to on a day-to-day basis.' She recalls one particular incident as a 'turning point' for her life and career. 'We were on a bus coming back from the Red Sea, near the desert in Egypt – and suddenly we saw flooding coming towards us . . . the land was parting. There was a big group of us on the bus, and soon the water was reaching up to the windows in the bus, and before we knew it, we were floating, completely helpless.' The flood subsided just as quickly as it had appeared – but the fear took far longer to dissipate. 'What really put things into perspective for me at that moment was watching little tin shacks get swept away in the flood. And then coming back to Cairo . . . I didn't see a single story in a single newspaper about what happened that day. I'd seen someone's life swept away. That's what really scares me about climate change. It's the stories that we do not tell.' Zayed also tells of how the Nile Delta at Alexandria has dramatically shifted the coastline in her lifetime, too, 'quite radically and in a visible way – I tried to find a beach I knew from my childhood but discovered that that beach no longer exists. This is not a particularly unusual story.'

In a debate in the UK parliament in September 2023, Scottish MP Fabian Hamilton told the House, 'We have seen devastating examples of extreme weather this summer, as heatwaves and wildfires have caused devastation and loss of life . . . this will end up hitting us in the UK as well. We are seeing its effects already, with floods and heatwaves

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becoming the norm, not the exception . . .. Global heating will hurt us all.'[20] Yet the climate change adaptation advisor to the UK government, Baroness Brown, admitted on *The Watershed Investigations* podcast in August 2023, 'we have a history of underinvestment and under preparation for the impacts of climate change in the UK . . . we are seeing in Europe, temperatures rising at about twice the global average, we're expecting to see hotter and drier summers and warmer and wetter winters. And yet, we've not been putting the preparations in place.' She added, against the backdrop of another record-breaking hot summer, 'I don't think people [in the UK] have really taken on board the speed at which the climate is changing. We are seeing more extreme events coming more frequently. But actually, we're not even prepared for the less extreme events.' And the rising temperature is not only happening in Europe but also across Asia, North America, and South America, as shown in the visual representation of the increase in average annual temperature compared with the 1961–2010 baseline (see Figure 5.2 a–c). The UK's Climate Change Act and Net Zero Plan may be seen as world-leading, but it only looks at one side of the coin, said Brown: 'On the

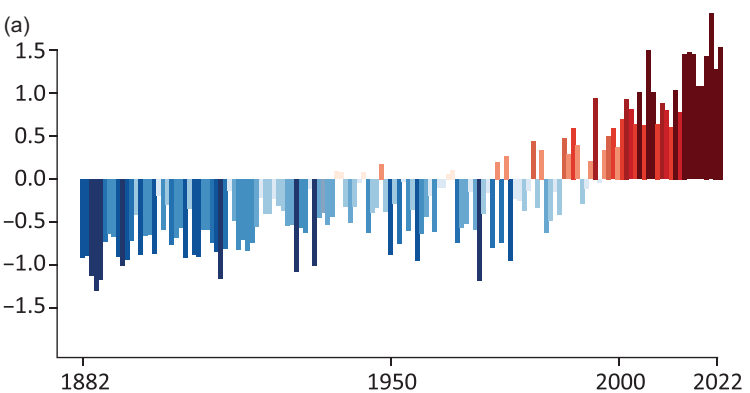

Figure 5.2 (a) Temperature change in Asia relative to average of 1971–2000 (°C). (Hawkins. Show your stripes. University of Reading. https://showyourstripes.info/)[21]

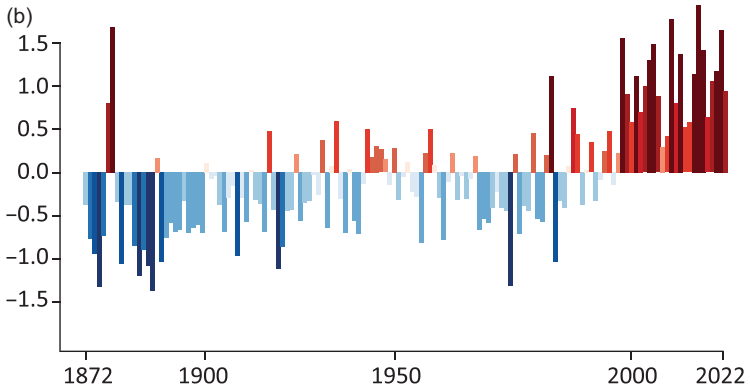

Figure 5.2 (b) Temperature change in North America relative to average of 1971–2000 (°C). (Hawkins. Show your stripes)

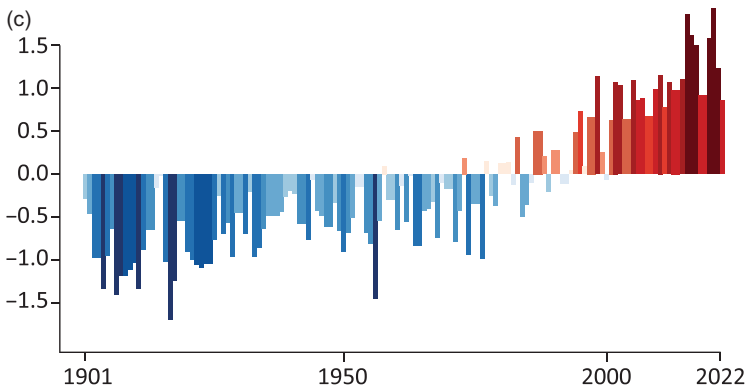

Figure 5.2 (c) Temperature change in South America relative to average of 1971–2000 (°C). (Hawkins. Show your stripes.)

climate change mitigation side, we have plenty of targets, and some of them very ambitious, but a lack of action. On the adaptation side, we don't even have targets, and we have very little action.'[22]

The concept of climate migration or relocation is not limited to CVF countries. Between 2017 and 2022, California

lost just over 31,000 homes to wildfires, reports PBS NewsHour.[23] According to the California Department of Finance, the state had 135,600 more people move out than moved in from July 2019 to July 2020, marking the third straight year of net migration losses, tipping into negative population growth for the first time in over a century.[24] Swenja Surminski argues that the concept of 'managed retreat' is one that many developed nations will have to address: 'Politically, it's challenging to concede parts of a country, but realistically, some areas are already being claimed back by the sea. Countries like New Zealand are proactively addressing this, recognising the inevitability of relocation in some areas and preparing accordingly. However, most countries are reluctant to openly address this due to its sensitivities.'

A global overview in 2021 of planned climate relocation, 'Leaving Place, Restoring Home', by the Platform on Disaster Displacement, identified cases spanning 60 countries and territories, with the United States, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, China, Indonesia, and Japan amongst those with the highest numbers of cases. About half of all identified cases were in Asia, and approximately 70% were associated with intense weather events increasing due to climate change.[25]

One of India's first cases of large-scale managed retreat due to climate change came in 2016 when coastal erosion in Kendrapara district prompted the resettlement of 571 families to a colony 12 kilometres away. Some described the displaced as India's first 'climate refugees'.[26] A similar case in the United States involving the relocation of the Native Village of Shishmaref, Alaska, due to coastal erosion, highlights how politically and economically difficult it is to do. With the sea ice pack that typically buffers the shoreline from coastal storms now melting away because of global warming (see Figure 5.2d), by 1997 more than 9 metres of shoreline had already eroded. In 2004 the US Army Corps of Engineers calculated the costs of the relocation options on the table:

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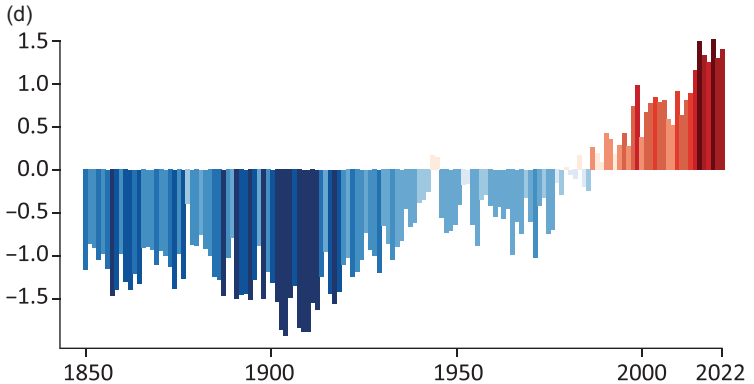

Figure 5.2 (d) Global ocean surface temperature change relative to average of 1971–2000 (°C). (Hawkins. Show your stripes.)

staying in place ($110 million), relocating to a new site ($180 million), collocating to Nome ($94 million), and collocating to Kotzebue ($141 million). Yet by 2023, Shishmaref was still seeking funding, and the villagers remained in place. 'It's really sad to see our native land go and disappear into the ocean,' Sadie McGill told *Anchorage Daily News*. 'I want to stay here where we were raised and born – and (where) we know how to survive.'[27] Meanwhile, the US Government has identified another 30 coastal villages in Alaska that may need fast-paced relocations due to land erosion and melting permafrost.[28]

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We need a multifaceted approach to climate change adaptation, encompassing immediate and long-term strategies – both home and abroad. Surminski notes, in a commentary article penned for LSE, 'Our new normal will mean higher frequency and intensity of weather extremes such as floods, heat, and drought, as well as long-term shifts such as sea-level rise … The scale of the recent disasters is a reminder that

adaptation to climate risks is as important as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.'[29]

This is not simply a 'development' issue – it's a domestic security issue that all countries must address. Surminski's work at the Grantham Research Institute with the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance offers valuable insights into what can be done with proper planning. Her research team conducted an in-depth analysis using the Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) tool, which combines 44 indicators ranging from structural protection to risk communication and emergency response. Following the costly flood events of 2002 and 2013, Germany invested in structural protection and revamped its flood risk governance. Yet most efforts targeted slow-rising floods. The complexity of governance structures in Germany, according to Surminski's research, hampered efficient action against flash and surface water floods. Surminski stated in July 2021, after the latest shocking floods – the accounts of which opened this chapter – 'Unfortunately, this will not be the last flash flood Germany will see, but hopefully it will be the last with such a terrible loss of life and livelihoods.' Her recommendations for mitigating flash flood risk in Germany included creating comprehensive flash flood and surface water maps, improving early warning systems, raising awareness, conducting regular climate checks on critical infrastructure, enforcing stronger planning regulations and building codes, and enhancing the resilience of digital and communication infrastructure.

Germany, then, has a long adaptation 'to do list' to be getting on with. And to adapt, all countries need to learn the tools and techniques of climate resilience. Here, the CVF-V20 countries are the experts, with years of hard-earned experience. The CVF-V20 Climate Prosperity Plans (CPP) are therefore highly relevant for all countries to study and collaborate with. CPPs are national climate resilient investment strategies that leverage human, natural and financial capital of countries to transform climate vulnerability into economic opportunity. They address the gaps

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in the international financial system by appealing to investors directly with fully costed climate-resilience projects. The CPPs, pioneered by Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Ghana, are rapidly emerging as essential tools for vulnerable countries to achieve both long-term climate resilience and prosperity. And, while each CPP is unique to each country, they serve as both investment and upskilling opportunities for developed country partners.

Surminski comments that the CPPs emerging from the CVF-V20 'portray adaptation as an investment opportunity, not just as a means to prevent worsening conditions. If we present it as part of our development and prosperity challenge, it becomes a more integral and compelling argument . . . a more resilient world is in everyone's interest. There are multiple benefits to early action – the "triple dividend of resilience" that we developed a few years ago and that is now used by the World Bank and others – but far too often, adaptation tends to be seen as a cost. Climate change is a key driver of migration, it affects supply chains, and poses ethical and moral issues . . . it's important for developed countries to engage with and support these plans.' Renato Constantino similarly argues that 'wealthy economies need to realize they need to cover a lot more ground in understanding not just the ways in which climate change harms their long-term interests but also the ways in which working far more closely with vulnerable countries – in mutual collaboration. This can inform their long-term regional, national, and local resilience strategies. But such realisation only takes place with a large dose of humility, starting with the recognition that they have much to learn from groups like the CVF-V20.'

The transfer of knowledge and experience, so often seen in development circles as flowing from north to south, increasingly needs to flow in both directions. But so do the flows of international finance. As the UK MP Fabian Hamilton concluded in his speech to the House of Commons, 'The truth is that developing countries and people living in poverty are the most exposed to the worst consequences of the climate

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emergency. At COP27 in Egypt ... the agreement to create a new [loss and damage] fund was an important step forward in recognising the consequences of the climate crisis for the world's most climate-vulnerable countries.' While the onus must be on developing countries to cut their emissions in line with the Paris Agreement or exceeding it, he continued, 'the reality is that those most likely to be affected by climate change are the least able to afford to adapt to it ... Loss and damage is about coping with its disastrous effects. This is not about mitigating or preventing; it is about helping the poorest countries to cope with the effects that have already happened.' Supporting 'poorer countries' is not only 'the right thing to do,' he said, 'but in our self-interest.'

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