

Posted by Joan Russow
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Scientists Warn of Permanent Drought for 25% of Earth By 2050 If Paris Goals Not Reached

"Reducing greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere in order to keep global warming under 1.5°C or 2°C could reduce the likelihood" of widespread drought, researchers concluded

by [Jake Johnson, staff writer](#)

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"Our research predicts that aridification would emerge over about 20-30 percent of the world's land surface by the time the global mean temperature change reaches 2°C," said Manoj Joshi, one of lead researchers of the study. (Photo: Joshua Tree National Park/Flickr/cc)

In a [new study](#) that adds to the lengthy and ever-growing list of [potential consequences of global climate inaction](#), scientists warn that around [a quarter of the Earth](#) could end up in a permanent state of drought if the planet warms by two degrees Celsius by 2050.

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"Our research predicts that aridification would emerge over about 20-30 percent of the world's land surface by the time the global mean temperature change reaches 2°C," [said](#) Manoj Joshi, one of lead researchers of the study, which was published on Monday in the journal *Nature*

Scientists [have for years linked widespread and more intense](#) droughts to human-caused climate change. The only way to avoid these conditions is to limit global warming to 1.5°C, Joshi concluded.

"The world has already warmed by 1°C," added Dr. Su-Jong Jeong, a researcher from China's Southern University of Science and Technology. "But by reducing greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere in order to keep global warming under 1.5°C or 2°C could reduce the likelihood of significant aridification emerging in many parts of the world," including Central America, Southern Europe, Southern Africa, Southern Australia, and Southeast Asia— [home to more than 20 percent of the world's population](#)

Though the Paris climate accord has [long been criticized](#) by environmentalists and researchers as wholly inadequate to the task of confronting the climate crisis already wreaking havoc across the globe, the agreement's central objective is keeping average global temperatures from rising 2°C by the end of the century. Meeting that mark by taking "early action" would substantially "constrain" the spread of drought, the study concluded.

The problem, of course, is that the world's second-largest emitter of carbon—the United States—has, under the leadership of President Donald Trump, [withdrawn from the Paris accord](#) and begun to move in the opposite direction that scientists have recommended. During his first year in office, Trump has moved at a [rapid pace to gut even the most basic environmental protections](#) put in place by the Obama administration and has shown little sign of slowing down.

Trump also appeared to indicate that he [wouldn't mind a perpetually warming](#) planet last week, when he tweeted that the U.S. "could use a little bit of that good old global warming" to combat the cold weather currently gripping eastern states.

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"Please let someone preserve this tweet forever so that future generations at least know why the American government didn't take action to deal with the climate change crisis that now afflicts them," concluded David Sirota of the *International Business Times*.

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