

# Will Malaysia be arid like Africa?

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As global warming looms, many scientists are sounding the alarm. Some are predicting doom. How will it affect Malaysians? Are we prepared for it? **MINDERJEET KAUR** wades through the gloom to find out

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Heatwaves, floods, costlier food, water shortages and more diseases.

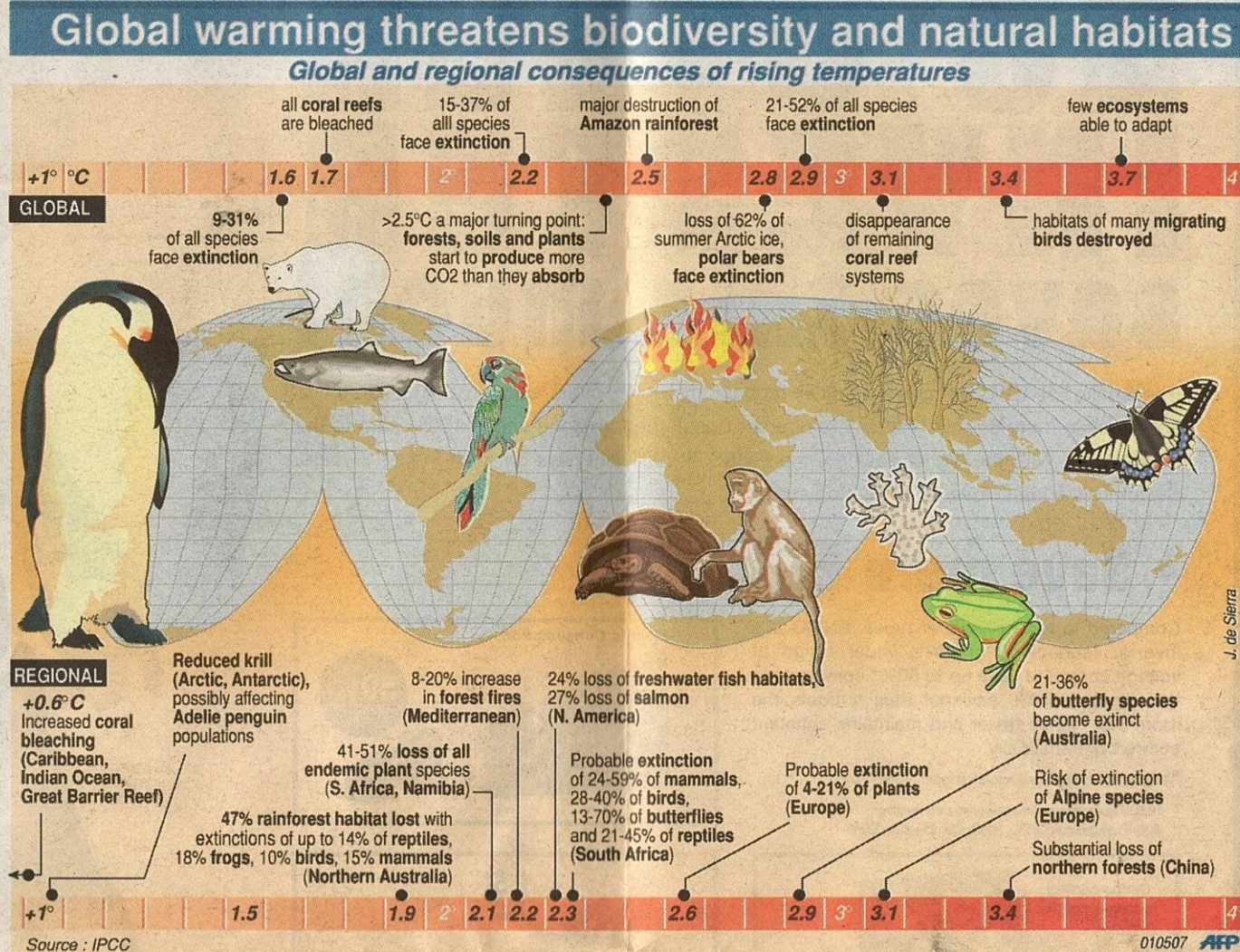
Malaysians must prepare for these over the next 20 years.

Global warming could even turn Malaysia into an arid state akin to Africa's parched states, according to a weather expert.

And no less a person than Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid says 1,200 sq km of coastline will be under water if no measures are taken to tackle global warming.

The journal *Environment and Urbanization*, in its latest issue, quoted a recent study which showed that more than two-thirds of the world's large cities were in areas vulnerable to global warming and rising sea levels. Some 600 million people could be affected.

Malaysians are already feeling the effects of freak weather not



...many states are already feeling the effects of freak weather patterns and now experts warn that by 2025, higher temperatures will cause prolonged droughts and intense floods.

The impact is likely to reduce food supply, causing the prices of vegetables, rice, seafood, fruits and meat to rise.

And families, instead of enjoying mother nature, will either ensconced themselves in air-conditioned homes or in shopping malls.

Parents are likely to restrict their children from playing outdoors.

Climatologist and physical oceanography Professor Dr Fredolian Tanggang said the weather was expected to increase by 1° Celsius in the next 20 years.

“The last 100 years saw an increase of 0.7° Celcius but because of rapid development, the temperature is expected to increase further in a shorter span of time.

“In just 20 years, our temperature would have risen five times more than it did in the last 100 years.”

He said cities were getting warmer and more droughts and floods would occur.

“There will be stronger winds, something like typhoons.”

He added that the recent Johor floods were tell-tale signs of global warming.

“It should not have happened.

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*Dr Fredolian Tanggang  
Climatologist and physical  
oceanography professor*

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A shortage of drinking water is one likely outcome of the global warming catastrophe.

It was unexpected. But if temperatures continue to rise, we can expect more such floods.”

A Meteorological Department spokesman agreed, saying temperatures were rising.

He said: “We are monitoring the weather patterns. That’s all our department can do.”

Drainage and Irrigation Department director-general Datuk Dr Keizrul Abdullah said more floods could be expected as the climate worsened.

Tanggang said: “The climate change will affect everyone. Farmers will suffer and agricultural yield is likely to be reduced.

“If we want to see how we will live in a hundred years from now, take a look at Africa — famine, droughts and people fighting for food.”

To escape the heat, he said, almost every home would have air-conditioning.

The demand for power would go up and more carbon dioxide

would be emitted.

He lamented that people were not taking climate change seriously and not enough energy-saving devices were being used.

Tanggang said rising sea levels would cause erosion and submerged shores.

“We need to take measures to avoid this.

“Malaysia has not done enough of its own research and most of our facts are based on foreign research.”