

Climate change, extreme weather 'strongly linked' to increased violence across the globe: study

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Climate change could turn the world into a more violent place, according to a new study, with murders, assaults and even wars set to spike if extreme weather conditions occur with greater frequency.

Scientists at the University of California, Berkeley found even small changes in temperature or rainfall correlate to more murders, rapes and conflicts, [according to the BBC](#).

Study co-author Marshall Burke said the analysis looked at data from countries across the world going back hundreds of years. The study, published in the journal *Science*, cites an increase in domestic violence in India and Australia and murders in the US and Tanzania during extreme weather.

Droughts, heat waves or floods can trigger conflict, said the study which also looked at the roles temperature changes played in the collapse of the Mayan empire.

"We found that a one standard deviation shift towards hotter conditions causes the likelihood of personal violence to rise four percent and intergroup conflict to rise 14 percent," Burke said in the study, [according to the Daily Mail](#).

"For a sense of scale, this kind of temperature change is roughly equal to warming an African country by 0.4C. These are moderate changes, but they have a sizeable impact on societies.

"We often think of modern society as largely independent of the environment, due to technological advances, but our findings challenge that notion."

Co-author Dr Hsiang said: "We can show that climatic events cause conflict, but we

can't yet exactly say why."

"We want to be careful, you don't want to attribute any single event to climate in particular, but there are some really interesting results," **Mr Burke added.**

"One of the main mechanisms that seems to be at play is changes in economic conditions. We know that climate affects economic conditions around the world, particularly agrarian parts of the world.

"There is lots of evidence that changes in economic conditions affect people's decisions about whether or not to join a rebellion, for example."

He said studies also suggest heat causes people to become aggressive.

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