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2023 European State of the Climate Report Highlights Alarming Climate Change Trends

Key policies: *European Climate Law, European Green Deal, Fit for 55 Package, European Climate Risk Assessment, Communication on Climate Risks (April 2024), Copernicus Programme*

On Earth Day 2024, the **EU Copernicus Climate Change Service**, in collaboration with the **UN World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)**, published the annual **European State of the Climate Report**. The report provided a stark assessment of climate change impacts in 2023, showcasing Europe's continued vulnerability to rising temperatures and extreme weather events.

A Record-Breaking Year

In 2023, Europe experienced its **second warmest year on record**, marked by an increase in extreme heat stress days and devastating heatwaves. These heightened temperatures exacerbated the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including:

- **Droughts:** Severe water shortages impacted ecosystems and agriculture.
- **Floods:** Precipitation levels were 7% above average, elevating flood risks across several regions.
- **Wildfires:** Warmer and drier conditions amplified fire outbreaks, causing widespread damage.

Additionally, the **average sea surface temperature across Europe** reached its highest level on record, underscoring the pervasive impacts of global warming.

Human and Economic Toll

The report highlighted the significant **economic losses due to floods** and the **health impacts of heat stress** as key consequences of 2023's extreme weather. The findings served as a reminder of the pressing need to strengthen climate adaptation measures across Europe.

Europe: The Fastest Warming Continent

Europe continued to warm at nearly **twice the global average rate**, as emphasized in the **European Climate Risk Assessment**. This rapid warming posed serious challenges to ecosystems, infrastructure, and human well-being, underscoring the urgency of achieving climate neutrality and resilience.

Calls for Action

The findings of the report reaffirmed the EU's commitment to achieving **climate neutrality by 2050**. By 2030, the EU aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **at least 55%**. In April 2024, the European Commission published a **Communication on Climate Risks**, outlining strategies to better prepare the EU for climate impacts and enhance resilience.

Copernicus: Europe's Eyes on Earth

The Copernicus Climate Change Service, a cornerstone of the **EU Space Programme**, continued to play a vital role in monitoring and analyzing environmental changes. By providing accurate and timely data, Copernicus supported evidence-based decision-making to combat climate change and mitigate its effects.

A Pivotal Moment

The 2023 European State of the Climate Report served as a wake-up call for policymakers, businesses, and citizens. It reinforced the need to accelerate the **clean energy transition**, scale up **renewable energy adoption**, and enhance **energy efficiency measures** to address the escalating impacts of climate change.

The findings from 2023 highlighted both the challenges and opportunities for Europe to lead the global fight against climate change while building a sustainable and resilient future for its citizens.

Source: https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/2023-european-state-climate-report-confirms-alarming-trend-climate-change-impacts-our-continent-2024-04-22_en