

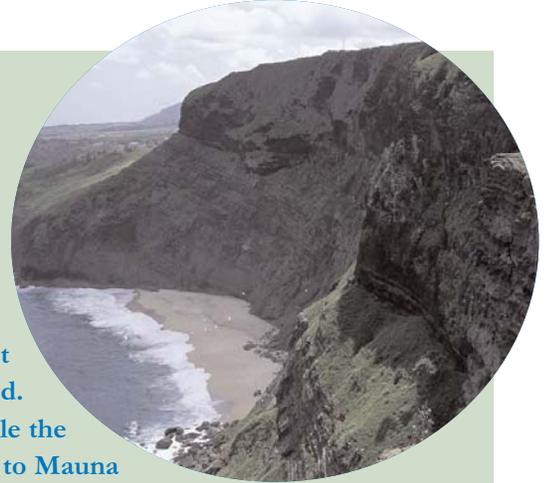


CHANGE THE FORECAST FOR WILDLIFE

SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL WARMING

Global Warming and HAWAI'I

Hawai'i is a nature-lover's paradise, but it also has the unfortunate distinction of being the "endangered species capital of the world," thanks to an onslaught of development and invasive species that have decimated many of the state's native plants and animals. Global warming adds yet another problem to the mix of human-caused threats to wildlife on this rugged yet fragile chain of islands and atolls. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates average temperatures in Hawai'i could rise about 3 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100 if global warming continues unabated. Sea level rise along beaches could inundate coastal properties, while the rise in average temperature could displace alpine species endemic to Mauna Kea and other island summits. Given the state's abundance of delicate ecosystems, global warming could spell extinction for several species.



Global warming effects on Hawai'i wildlife



Hawai'i struggles to protect its native wildlife—which includes 317 listed threatened and endangered species—from a number of threats ranging from invasive plants and animals to habitat destruction. Rising temperatures and sea level will likely add to these challenges, changing the makeup of entire ecosystems and forcing wildlife to shift their ranges or adapt.

- Sea level rise is threatening habitat for endangered Hawaiian monk seals, threatened sea turtles and millions of nesting seabirds. Already, erosion has completely submerged Whale Skate Island, located to the northwest of the main Hawai'ian Islands.
- The 1997-98 El Niño caused widespread coral bleaching around the globe, and continued warming could threaten corals around Hawai'i. The state's coral reefs serve multiple purposes, both as nursery to many Pacific pelagic fish species and also as storm barriers for the main islands. Destruction of coral reefs could drastically reduce fish species that currently call the Hawaiian Islands home.
- As temperatures rise, suitable forest bird habitat will be lost as the mosquito-breeding zone shifts upwards. Mosquitoes spread avian malaria and pox to native forest birds. Birds occupying high-elevation forests currently free of diseases will become infected.
- The wekiu bug, endemic to the slopes of Mauna Kea, depends on snowfall to trap its food. Since 1982, Mauna Kea has experienced less snowfall, threatening this tiny insect with extinction.

What is Global Warming?

When coal, gas and oil are burned, they produce carbon dioxide that builds up in the atmosphere and traps the sun's heat. Much of this greenhouse gas released today remains in the atmosphere after even 100 years, trapping more and more heat.

Since the mid-1800s, emissions of carbon dioxide have skyrocketed, and subsequently global temperatures have risen by about 1 degree Fahrenheit in the last century. Earth has not experienced such a rapid change in temperature in thousands of years.

Unless we reduce the pollution that causes global warming, temperatures could climb between 2-10 degrees Fahrenheit this century. Such a rapid rise in temperature would fundamentally reshape the planet's climate, forever changing the landscape and water resources people and wildlife depend upon.



What's at stake for Hawai'i's people?

When Hurricane 'Iniki hit Kaua'i in 1992, it was a sober reminder of just how destructive a massive storm can be. The hurricane brought 130 mph sustained winds and ultimately caused \$2.3 billion in property damage. Scientists project global warming will contribute to more intense storms in the future, causing more damage to low-lying areas and beaches. It is just one of many ways Hawai'i could be affected by global warming, as warmer average temperatures send repercussions throughout the agriculture and tourism industries, affecting the livelihoods of the state's residents.

- Taro and other crops have been damaged by erosion and saltwater infiltration in low-lying areas as a result of both sea level rise and drought.
- At Honolulu, Nawiliwili and Hilo, sea level is already rising 6-14 inches per century, and the EPA estimates it is likely to rise another 17-25 inches by 2100. Sand replenishment to protect the coasts from a 20-inch sea level rise could cost \$340 million-\$6 billion.
- Loss of wildlife and habitat could mean a loss of tourism dollars. In 2001, more than 324,000 people spent more than \$261 million on hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing in Hawai'i, which in turn supported 4,873 jobs in the state.

“Global warming poses an overriding challenge to our responsibility to protect wildlife for our children's future. We must advance balanced solutions that work for people, wildlife and the economy to overcome this challenge.”—

Larry Schweiger
President, CEO
National Wildlife Federation

THE CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP ACT:

The Climate Stewardship Act is a bipartisan plan of action in Congress that sets achievable goals for reducing global warming pollution in the United States. The bill requires power plants, oil companies and other major sources to collectively reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to what they emitted in the year 2000. The bill also allows businesses to implement their own solutions, using a flexible emissions trading system that has successfully reduced air pollution under the Clean Air Act at a fraction of the anticipated costs. The Act will:

- Create more than 2,700 new energy technology jobs in Hawai'i by the year 2020.
- Provide Hawai'i with at least \$4.8 million each year in additional wildlife conservation funding to help protect the state's wildlife from the impacts of global warming.
- Provide new income to Hawai'i's farmers by rewarding environmentally friendly farming and forestry practices.

For more information, visit:
www.nwf.org/globalwarming.



PowerLight (NREL)

Hawai'i's solutions to global warming

With sun and wind aplenty, Hawai'i has an impressive potential to substitute renewable energy in place of dirtier power sources that emit global warming pollution.

- In 2004, a measure was enacted requiring utilities to use clean energy for 8 percent of the state's electricity production by 2005, increasing to 10 percent by 2010, 15 percent by 2015 and 20 percent by 2020.
- Hawai'i allows residents and businesses to claim a 35 percent income tax credit on solar water heating or photovoltaic device purchase and installation costs. Also, residents or businesses who install photovoltaic devices may sell their surplus electricity back to the power grid as a means to reduce their power bill.
- The City and County of Honolulu uses 20 percent biodiesel fuel for their diesel fleet vehicles. Biodiesel is made in Hawai'i by Pacific Biodiesel's facility on Maui. This alternative fuel is made from vegetable oil or soybeans, burns cleaner and can be used in heavy-duty diesel vehicles such as large trucks, boats and buses.

Following some simple guidelines, you can cut your global warming pollution, become more energy efficient and give something back to nature.

- **Plant shade trees:** The Department of Energy says planting three trees strategically around your home can reduce your annual heating and cooling costs by an average of 40 percent.
- **Become a Green Tag subscriber:** Many states now offer options for homeowners to buy electricity from clean, renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass that produce little or no global warming pollution. Green energy can also be purchased through the National Wildlife Federation by visiting www.nwf.org/energy.

National Wildlife Federation
Myra Wilensky
303-786-8001
globalwarming@nwf.org

Conservation Council for Hawai'i
808-593-0255
info@conservehi.org

