

How extreme heat could spread across the world

By Brad Plumer and Nadja Popovich, New York Times

Extremely hot days, when temperatures soar to 95 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, can be miserable. Crops wilt in the fields. Electric grids strain to keep pace with demand. People are at greater risk of dying. And those hot temperatures are expected to be much more frequent in the coming decades.

Based on analysis from the Climate Impact Lab, 95-degree days are expected to multiply this century if countries take moderate climate action. In this scenario, countries would take some measures, but not drastic ones, to curb emissions – roughly the trajectory of the current pledges under the Paris climate agreement.

The resulting global warming would still cause significant shifts for many cities. In Washington, from 1986 to 2005, an average of seven days each year had temperatures of at least 95 degrees. By the end of the century, the city can expect 29 of these extremely hot days per year, on average. (The likely range is 14 to 46 hot days per year.)

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