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Germany's Merkel warns floods highlight climate dangers – 21st July, 2021

Level 4

Germany's Angela Merkel is worried about climate change after the flooding in Europe. She is horrified by the damage across large parts of the continent. She visited hard-hit areas in Germany and listened to local residents. She said: "It's shocking. I can pretty much say that the German language does not have words to describe the destruction." Ms Merkel said: "We have to be faster in the fight against climate change."

Torrential rain caused many rivers to burst their banks. This caused flash floods that washed away houses, roads and bridges across Germany, Belgium and other countries. The death toll is now 190 and many people are missing. Towns are covered in debris and are unrecognisable. Ms Merkel said it was "surreal". The clean-up operation will take years. A politician questioned Germany's preparedness for floods and the effectiveness of flood defences.

Level 5

Germany's leader Angela Merkel expressed fears about climate change after the devastation from the severe flooding in Europe. Ms Merkel said she was horrified by the destruction across swathes of Europe. She visited the hardest-hit areas in Germany and listened to accounts of the disaster from local residents. She said: "It's shocking. I can pretty much say that the German language does not have words to describe the destruction." Ms Merkel said the world had to escalate efforts to tackle the climate crisis. She said: "We have to be faster in the fight against climate change."

Torrential rains caused many rivers to swell and overflow last week. Many burst their banks and caused flash floods in adjacent areas. Floodwaters washed away houses, roads and bridges across Germany, Belgium and other countries. The death toll is now 190, with many people missing. Towns are covered in debris and some areas are beyond recognition. Ms Merkel described this as being "surreal". The premier of one flood-stricken state said the clean-up operation would take "years". He questioned Germany's preparedness for floods and the effectiveness of flood defences.

Level 6

Germany's leader has expressed her fears about climate change after visiting the devastation caused by the severe flooding in Europe. Chancellor Angela Merkel said she was horrified by the destruction across swathes of her country. She visited some of the hardest-hit areas in Germany and listened to accounts of the disaster from local residents. She told reporters: "It's shocking. I can pretty much say that the German language does not have words to describe the destruction that has been wreaked." Ms Merkel said the world had to escalate its efforts to tackle the climate crisis. She said: "We must hurry. We have to be faster in the fight against climate change."

Torrential rains caused many of Europe's major rivers to swell and overflow last week. Many burst their banks and caused flash floods in adjacent towns and villages. The floodwaters washed away houses, roads and bridges across Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The death toll stands at 190, with many more people missing. Towns are now covered in debris. The floods reshaped many parts of towns beyond recognition, which Ms Merkel described as being "surreal". Armin Laschet, the premier of the flood-stricken state of North-Rhine Westphalia, said the clean-up operation would take "years". He questioned Germany's preparedness for floods and the effectiveness of flood defences.