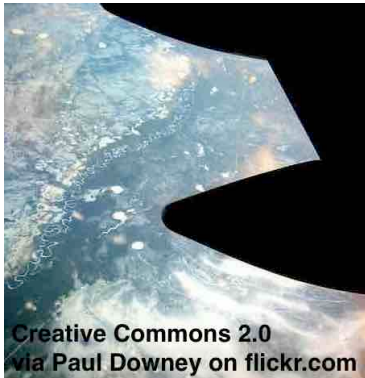


## Arctic wildfires visible from space

28th July, 2019



Hundreds of huge wildfires have broken out all across the Arctic Circle. Areas in the Arctic are warming twice as fast as anywhere else on the planet. There are so many fires and they are so big that the smoke from them can be seen from space.

Meteorologists report that the Arctic is having its hottest June ever and is suffering its worst wildfire season on record. There are huge blazes covering large areas of Greenland, Siberia, Scandinavia and Alaska. In Alaska, there are as many as 400 fires burning out of control. In Greenland, melting on the vast Greenland ice sheet has started a month earlier than usual. The World Meteorological Organization has said the Arctic fires are "unprecedented".

Scientists say the fires and suffocating smoke could have an effect on global warming. Meteorologist Mark Parrington explained what is causing the wildfires. He said: "Temperatures in the Arctic have been increasing at a much faster rate than the global average, and warmer conditions encourage fires to grow and persist once they have been ignited." Dry ground, more lightning strikes and strong winds have caused the fires to spread very quickly. A lot of ice has melted and the flames have set fire to methane-filled earth below the ice. This is releasing huge amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The fires have also caused serious habitat loss and have killed uncountable numbers of animals.

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com) / [sciencealert.com](http://sciencealert.com)

## Writing

People cared more about Notre Dame fire than about the Arctic wildfires. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

wildfires / Arctic Circle / planet / smoke / space / meteorologists / Alaska / Siberia / global warming / temperatures / average / lightning / ice / methane / atmosphere

## True / False

- a) The article said there are thousands of fires burning in the Arctic Circle. T / F
- b) The Arctic Circle is warming at half the speed as the rest of the planet. T / F
- c) This wildfire season is the worst ever for the Arctic Circle. T / F
- d) The Greenland ice sheet started melting a month later than usual. T / F
- e) The smoke from the fires will not affect global warming. T / F
- f) Dry ground has caused the fires to spread more quickly. T / F
- g) The fires have ignited methane in the earth below the ice. T / F
- h) The article said the fires have killed uncountable numbers of animals. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <b>broken out</b>    | a. huge                |
| 2. <b>suffering</b>     | b. speed               |
| 3. <b>covering</b>      | c. unheard of          |
| 4. <b>vast</b>          | d. volume              |
| 5. <b>unprecedented</b> | e. experiencing        |
| 6. <b>suffocating</b>   | f. set alight          |
| 7. <b>rate</b>          | g. started             |
| 8. <b>ignited</b>       | h. natural environment |
| 9. <b>amounts</b>       | i. blanketing          |
| 10. <b>habitat</b>      | j. choking             |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about the Arctic?
- b) What do you think of global warming?
- c) Why has this news got less attention than the Notre Dame fire?
- d) How can we stop the fires in the Arctic?
- e) How often are there wildfires in your country?
- f) What happens if the Greenland ice shelf melts?
- g) Why are there so many fires in the Arctic?
- h) How has the weather been recently in your country?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Hundreds of huge wildfires have             | a. large areas of Greenland |
| 2. warming twice as fast as anywhere else      | b. loss                     |
| 3. huge blazes covering                        | c. "unprecedented"          |
| 4. melting on the vast                         | d. than the global average  |
| 5. the Arctic fires are                        | e. smoke                    |
| 6. the fires and suffocating                   | f. on the planet            |
| 7. increasing at a much faster rate            | g. filled earth below       |
| 8. encourage fires to grow and persist once    | h. broken out               |
| 9. set fire to methane-                        | i. they have been ignited   |
| 10. The fires have also caused serious habitat | j. Greenland ice sheet      |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about global warming?
- What would you do if you were caught in a wildfire?
- What do you know about the methane under the tundra in Siberia?
- What three adjectives best describe this story?
- What will the world's climate be like in 20, 50 and 100 years from now?
- How can we help animals in wildfires?
- What questions would you like to ask the meteorologists?

## Spelling

- Hundreds of huge wildfires have onrkbe out
- anywhere else on the etpnla
- its worst wildfire esoans on record
- There are huge ebalsz
- started a month earlier than uslau
- fires are ncddeepenuert
- fires and ffiacugotsn smoke
- have an feeftc on global warming
- at a much faster rate than the global earagev
- the femlsa have set fire to methane-filled earth
- athitba loss
- tcuunlebnao numbers of animals

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. b	8. f	9. d	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Wildfires

You think wildfires are the biggest causes of global warming. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): cars, deforestation or inability to change.

### Role B – Cars

You think cars the biggest causes of global warming. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): wildfires, deforestation or inability to change.

### Role C – Deforestation

You think deforestation is biggest cause of global warming. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): cars, wildfires or inability to change.

### Role D – Inability to Change

You think our inability to change is biggest cause of global warming. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): cars, deforestation or wildfires.

## Speaking – Global warming

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest causes of global warming at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| • factory farming     | • wildfires     |
| • use of aerosols     | • cars          |
| • overfishing         | • deforestation |
| • inability to change | • use of coal   |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.