



WWF *for a living planet*

WWF Scotland

Little Dunkeld, Dunkeld
Perthshire
PH8 0AD
t: +44 (0)1350 728200
f: +44 (0)1350 728201

www.wwf.org.uk/scotland

SCOTTISH CLIMATE UPDATE

Embargoed: 00:01hrs 15 March 2006

One of a series of Climate Updates from WWF Scotland based on data from the Met Office.

February 2006

“How bad climate change gets depends on how much temperature increase we force upon the planet. It is now 18 months since the Government started work on revising its Climate Change Programme.”

TOP LINE:

Weather Chaos

Despite extreme low temperatures and snow in some areas of Scotland, February 2006, was more than a degree warmer than an average February

Measure	Feb 2006	Comparison*	Rating	Records start
Temperature	3.1 °C	+1.1°C	+	1914
Rainfall	75.7 mm	-27%	-	1914
Sunshine	64.0 hrs	-1%	~	1929

*compared to 1961-1990 average, ++ well above average; + above average; ~ close to average; - below average; -- well below average

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY 2006

- 28th – 100 schools shut across northern Scotland because of snow
- 24th – The Environment Agency announce that the UK is facing its worst drought in a century
- 23rd - Drought hits south China with 300,000 people short of drinking water
- 22nd – At least 3 people killed in flash floods hit Yemen
- 21st – The UN says severe droughts are threatening the lives of 11 million people in Eastern Africa
- 17th – two villages destroyed in a mud slide in the Phillipines, 2000 people missing
- 17th – scientists find that the speed of melting of the vast Greenland icesheet has doubled over the last decade
- 17th - France and Spain are facing another year of severe drought
- 16th – climate predictions for the UK for the year 3000 published
- 15th - Rains leave 50,000 refugees homeless in Algeria
- 6th - 1,500 seal pups drowned in a Canadian storm surge
- 3rd - Bitter cold kills 589 in Ukraine over a 15-day period
- 1st - Grantown-On-Spey recorded a temperature of -12.2 °C and Aviemore -11.6 °C

THE YEAR SO FAR:

Both the first two months of 2006 were more than 1°C above the long-term average temperature.

January – on 9th/10th the temperature reached 14 °C at Machrihanish. On the 15th – new figures confirm that carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are rising faster than expected. On the 22nd elephants across Russia are fed vodka as temperatures fall to -40°C. On the 29th overnight temperatures fell to -12 °C in Highland Glens.

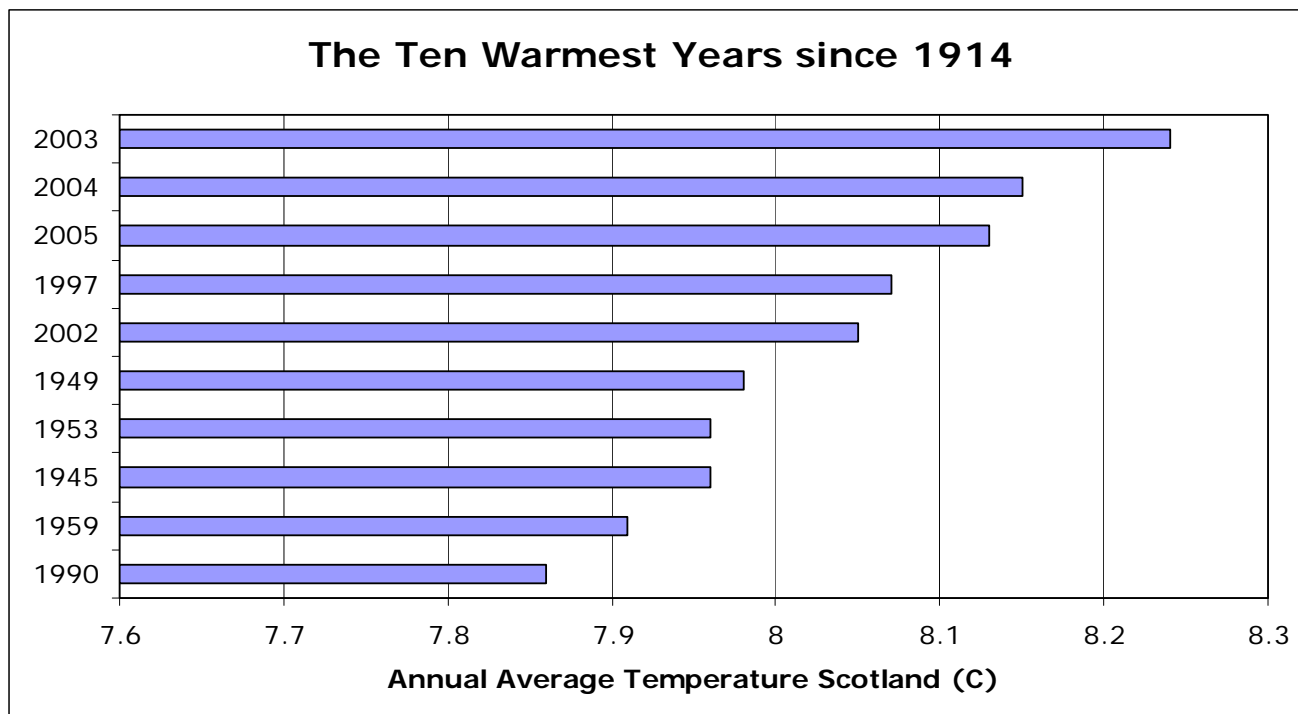


INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Director, WWF Scotland: Dr Richard Dixon
WWF Scotland is part of WWF-UK
President: HRH Princess Alexandra,
the Hon Lady Ogilvy KG, GCMG
Chairman: Christopher Ward
Chief Executive: Robert Napier

Registered office WWF-UK, Panda House,
Weyside Park, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1XR
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On the 30th a Polish conference centre roof collapses killing 66 people, and heavy rains in Brazil cause the death of 12 people



COMMENT:

Dr Richard Dixon, Director of WWF Scotland, said:

“Despite the cold snap at the end, February was yet another month with temperatures above the long-term average. Like many other parts of the world Scotland was drier than usual in February, but we are not faced with serious drought like people in East Africa or even southern England.

“How bad climate change gets depends on how much temperature increase we force upon the planet. It is now 18 months since the Government started work on revising its Climate Change Programme. On 15th September 2004 the UK Government told us what it would do to revise the Climate Change Programme. In December 2004 is started consulting. Ministers often tell us how seriously they take climate change yet here we are in March 2006 still wait for them to tell us what more they are going to do about it.

“To protect us from the worst of the predicted changes, Ministers must back the strongest possible action to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions, including setting proper climate change targets for Scotland.”

- ends -

Editor's notes

1. Data from the Met Office <http://www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/2005/august.html>, further analysis by WWF Scotland.
2. 2003 was Scotland's warmest year in the Met Office records which start in 1914, and globally was probably the warmest year in the last 1000 years. 2004 was the second warmest year in Scotland. 2005 was the third warmest.
3. According to official figures Scotland's climate change emissions fell by 10.1% between 1990 and 2003. The overall UK reduction was greater at 13.4%, and England managed 15.9%. Scottish emissions of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, fell by only 7.7% between 1990 and 2003, compared to UK targets of 20% by 2010 and 60% by 2050. The UK reduction was 5.6%.

4. WWF Scotland is part of Stop Climate Chaos, an alliance of development, environment and civil society groups aiming for tougher action to reduce emissions – <http://stopclimatechaos.org.uk>
5. WWF is now known simply by its initials and the panda logo.

For further information, please contact:

Nicky Golding, t: 01350 728220, e: ngolding@wwfscotland.org.uk