



## Scientists Fear Worst El Niño in Decades

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has confirmed the arrival of El Niño, a natural climate pattern that warms waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean and influences weather worldwide.

Scientists warn that the phenomenon is likely to intensify global temperatures already rising due to greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels. Forecasters predict this El Niño could rival or exceed the record-breaking 1997 event, which caused widespread heatwaves, floods, droughts, wildfires, and billions of dollars in damage.

NOAA estimates there is a 63% chance this El Niño will rank among the strongest recorded since 1950. Scientists warn that warmer Pacific waters release additional heat into the atmosphere, increasing the risk of extreme weather. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has described the phenomenon as an “urgent climate warning”. Its impacts are expected to vary by region, bringing heavier rainfall and flooding to parts of South America, more intense heatwaves in India, and increased risks of drought, heat, and wildfires in Australia.



## One Quarter of Global Emissions Captured by Oceans

The world's oceans absorb around 25% of the carbon dioxide emissions produced by human activities, making them one of Earth's most powerful natural defences against climate change.

As pressure grows to meet global climate goals, scientists and policymakers are looking at ways to strengthen the ocean's ability to capture and store carbon while protecting marine life. Attention is being given to blue carbon ecosystems such as mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marshes. These coastal habitats can store large amounts of carbon while also supporting biodiversity, protecting shorelines, and strengthening resilience against extreme weather.

Estimates suggest that new approaches could remove a further 8 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide annually by 2050. Shaun Fitzgerald of the Centre for Climate Repair at Cambridge University describes the ocean as “one of the biggest opportunities to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere”. However, climate change, pollution, and overfishing continue to threaten marine ecosystems, highlighting the need for stronger ocean conservation efforts.



## The Race to Decarbonise Global Shipping

Shippers including Maersk and mining giant Vale are turning to ethanol as a marine fuel to cut emissions as abundant supply and lower cost make it more attractive than other low-carbon fuels, with further commercial usage expected as early as next year.

The use of ethanol in shipping could open a new demand channel for the fuel, which in some countries is blended into gasoline, while offering shipowners another pathway to cut conventional fuel use to meet emission reduction targets. Global shipping carries around 90% of world trade, making it a critical part of the low carbon transition.

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# 25%

The ocean acts as a natural carbon sink, absorbing approximately one quarter of human produced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

# 90%

Shipping handles nearly 90% of global trade, making it central to decarbonisation efforts