



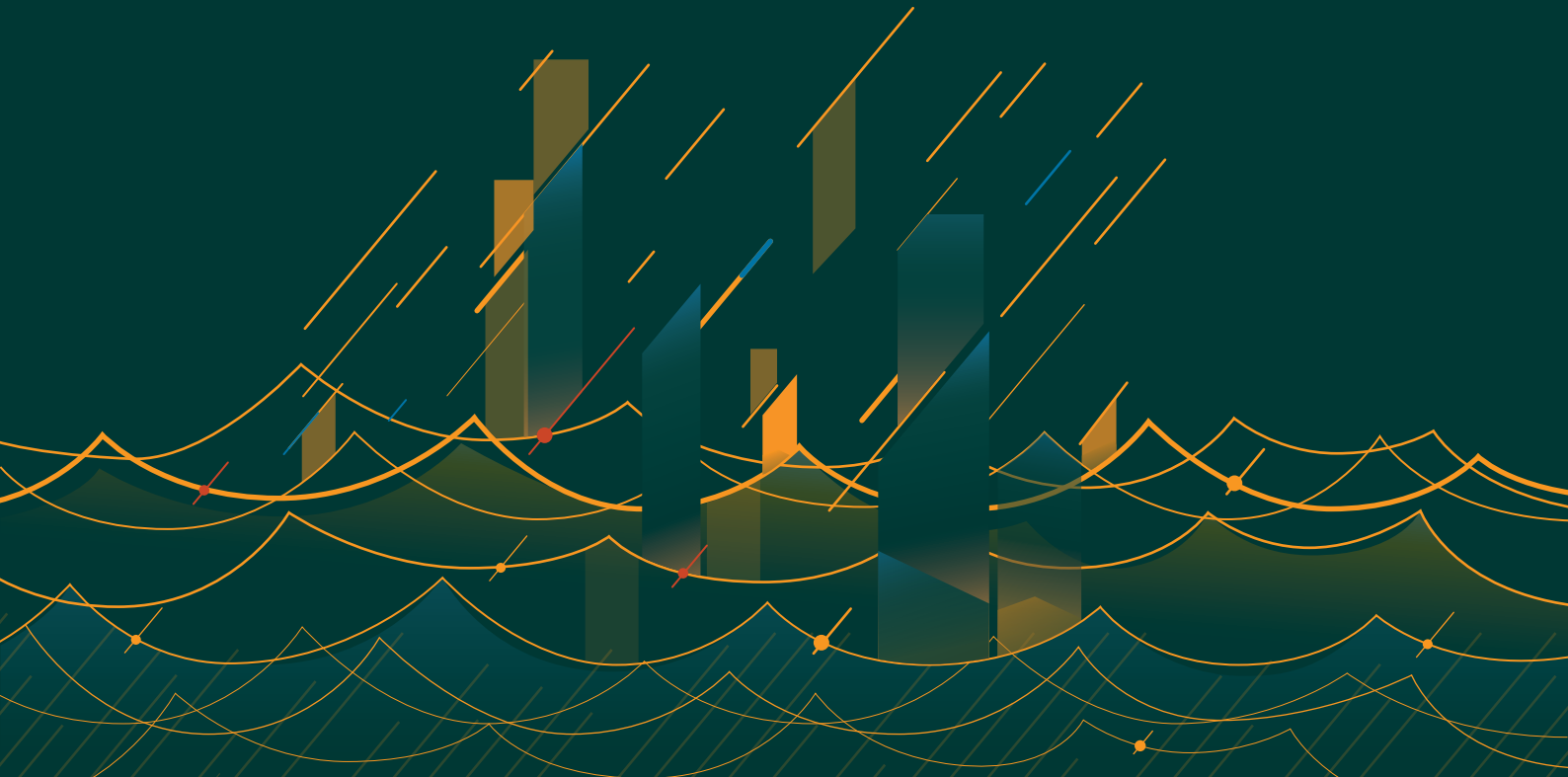
Ecological Threat Report 2025 Briefing

○ Results and
Trends

○ Rainfall Continuity
and Conflict

○ Freshwater
Accessibility

○ Shared Water
Systems



Ecological Threat Report 2025 Briefing

Analysing ecological threats, resilience & peace

This is the sixth edition of the Ecological Threat Report (ETR), which analyses ecological threats in 172 countries and territories. The research takes a multi-faceted approach by analysing ecological threats at the national and subnational levels, while also assessing the threats against societal resilience and levels of peace. Comparing ecological threats against societal resilience enables IEP to identify the global regions, countries, and subnational areas most at risk of an ecological disaster, both now and into the future.

2025 Key Findings

44

countries deteriorated

74

countries improved

Between 2019 and 2024, global ecological threat levels rose by 0.8 per cent, a significant shift given the slow-moving nature of societal and environmental systems. Ninety-six countries experienced deteriorations, while 74 improved.

80%

More than 80 per cent of the world's cultivated land does not use irrigation. Increasingly unpredictable rainfall puts food production at higher risk in these areas. Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest irrigation rates in the world, with less than two per cent of its cultivated land currently irrigated.



Globally, the rate of conflict deaths is more than 50 per cent higher in areas where rainfall is becoming increasingly concentrated in fewer months of the year, as compared to places where rainfall seasonality is decreasing.

70%

Global freshwater supply per capita has fallen by 70 per cent since 1950 as global population has tripled, even as the overall volume of annual freshwater flows has remained largely the same.

Agricultural sector

71.4%

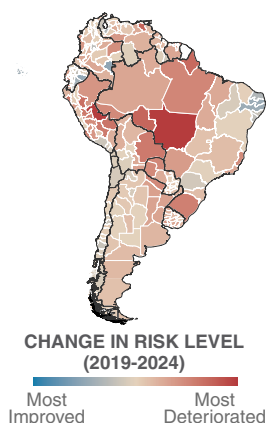
Industrial sector

15.3%

Municipal sector

13.2%

The agricultural sector consumes 71.4 per cent of global freshwater withdrawals. Industrial use is around 15.3 per cent and municipal (household and local) use is around 13.2 per cent.



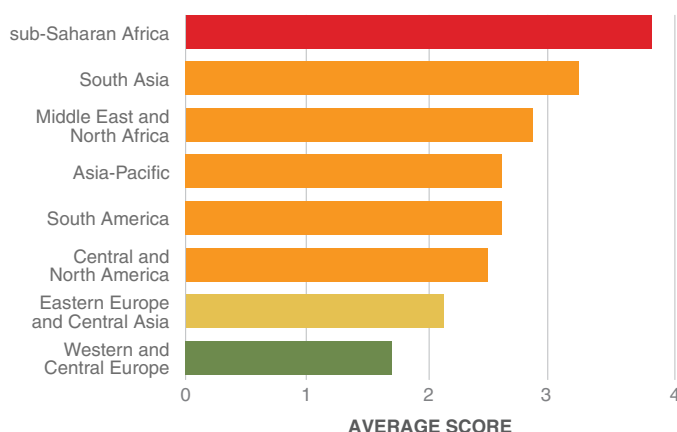
Ecological Deterioration in Central-West Brazil

Between 2019 and 2024, Brazil's Central-West region recorded some of the world's sharpest deteriorations in overall ETR score, aggravated by exceptionally severe wildfires in 2024. The region encompasses the states of Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Goiás, which together span a diverse range of climatic and ecological zones – including the Amazon rainforest, the Pantanal wetlands, and the Cerrado savanna. Mato Grosso registered the second-largest increase in ecological threat of any subnational area worldwide. Rising risks of natural events, water scarcity, and food insecurity have driven much of this deterioration.

The impact of natural events was most severe in Mato Grosso, which recorded the largest deterioration nationwide since 2019. In 2024, the state experienced an exceptionally intense wildfire season. These fires burned over 7,200 square kilometres across Mato Grosso and neighbouring Mato Grosso do Sul. While global average temperatures have exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, temperatures in the Pantanal have risen by 3–4°C in recent decades, greatly intensifying fire risk. The region has also recorded a substantial increase in its water risk score, having experienced severe droughts in recent years. The removal of certain forest protections and the expansion of agricultural activities have placed further pressure on limited freshwater resources.

Average ETR score by region, 2024

Countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia face the highest level of ecological threat on average.



Source: IEP

Indexed trend in global ETR indicator scores, 2019–2024

The global level of ecological threat has risen by 0.8 per cent since 2019, though some ETR indicators – specifically the impact of natural events and water risk – show substantial year-on-year variation.



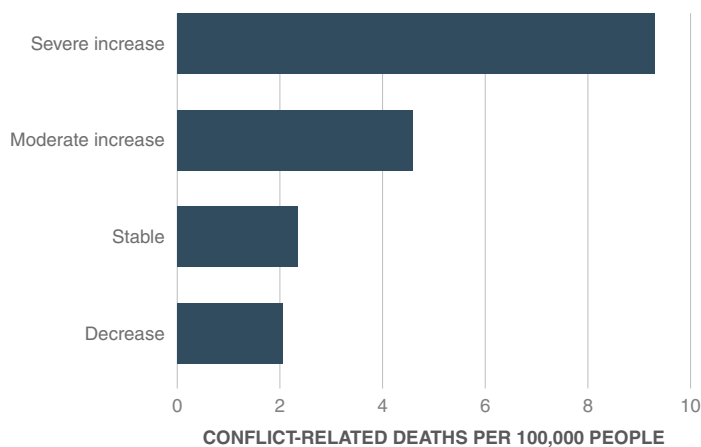
Source: IEP

Note: Demographic pressure is the only ETR indicator that does not include time series data.

1 For More Information
See the 2025 Report,
Section 1: Results

Average subnational conflict fatality rates, by rainfall seasonality trend, annual averages for 2018–2025

Globally, places experiencing the most severe increases in seasonality tend to have the highest conflict fatality rates.



Source: CHIRPS, ACLED, IEP

Note: Outliers more than three standard deviations away from the mean have been excluded from the averages.

2 For More Information
See the 2025 Report, Section 2:
Rainfall Continuity and Conflict

Per capita water withdrawals by sector and country income groups, 2022

People in high-income countries use the most water overall, though those in middle-income countries use the most on agriculture.

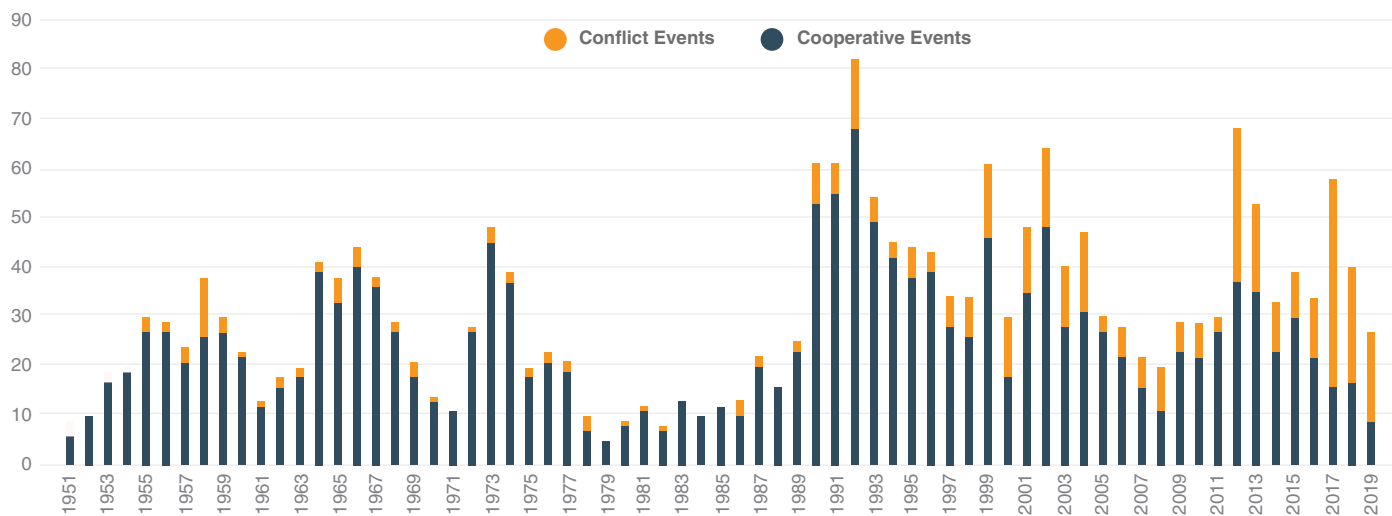


Source: FAO

3 For More Information
See the 2025 report,
Section 3: Shared Water Systems:
Cooperation, Co-Existence and Conflict

Total water-related conflict and cooperation events, 1951–2019

Over the past seven decades, recorded cooperation events related to water have been far more common than conflict events, but since 2013 conflict events have been on the rise.



Source: Kåresdotter, E., et al. (2022)

3 For More Information
See the 2025 report,
Section 3: Shared Water Systems:
Cooperation, Co-Existence and Conflict

RESULTS



Many communities worldwide face growing risks from inconsistent access to freshwater, with the global water risk score increasing by 0.5 per cent since 2019.



While many fragile countries face sizable challenges related to accelerating population growth, these demographic pressures are easing in other places. Population growth projections have repeatedly been revised down in recent years.

RAINFALL CONTINUITY AND CONFLICT

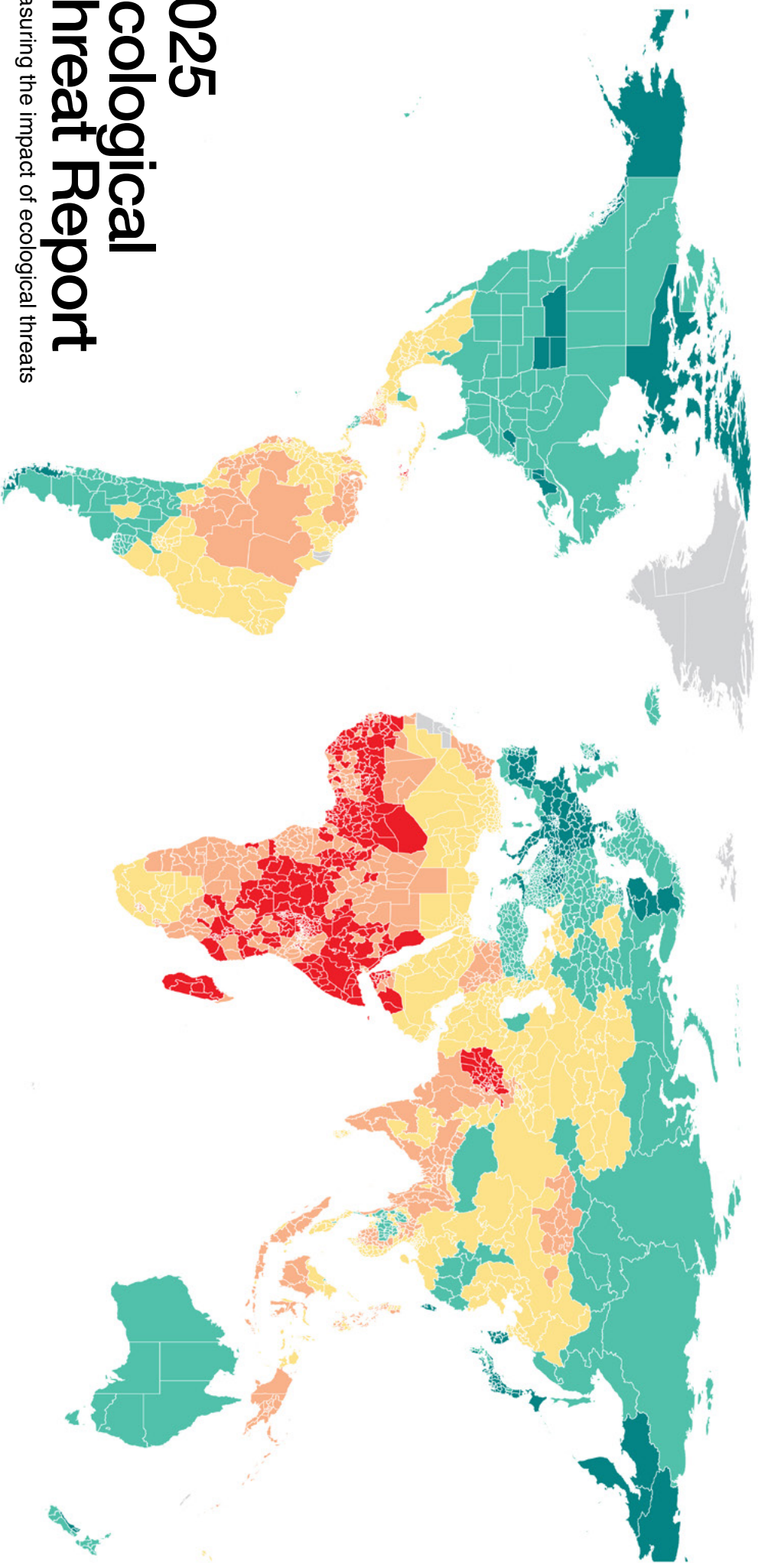
In many places around the world, net annual rainfall has changed comparatively little in recent years, but wet seasons are becoming wetter and dry seasons are becoming drier.

SHARED WATER SYSTEMS: COOPERATION, CO-EXISTENCE AND CONFLICT

300

 transboundary rivers

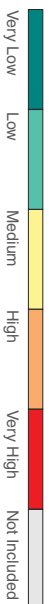
There are over 300 transboundary river basins, and 151 countries are part of at least one such system. Increasing dependencies on river systems like the Nile and the Mekong for energy and agriculture are potential drivers of conflict between system-sharing countries.



2025 Ecological Threat Report

Measuring the impact of ecological threats

ETR Score



Source: IEP

The ETR is developed by the Institute for Economics & Peace, an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to shifting the world's focus to peace as a positive, achievable and tangible measure of human wellbeing and progress.

IEP is headquartered in Sydney, with offices in New York, Brussels, The Hague, Nairobi and Manila. It works with a wide range of partners internationally and collaborates with intergovernmental organisations on measuring and communicating the economic value of peace.



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