

SOOT Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2

Sept 27, 2026

"Some of Our Tomorrows" - a summary of advances in knowledge of the 2026-7 El Niño events, and of their social, political and economic implications.

Welcome to the 2nd of many (several?) weekly issues of the "Some Of Our Tomorrows" digest. The why should be self-explanatory, but here's a [FAQ](#) anyway. We are still just about in the first of [the three phases of El Niño](#) but not for long... Here's [the database](#) I've begun (but almost certainly will not maintain). It's largely based on two [Google Alerts](#) for "El Niño" and Impacts and "Godzilla". Plus things people send me. There are a lot of good El Niño explainers out there - [this one](#), by Al Jazeera is really good and I will link to it at the top of every digest until someone suggests a better one (ideally with the url written on a £50 note).

Here's my blog from Wednesday - this one's about ["2027 as the \(overdue\) end of 'Permanent Global Summertime'"](#)* (* Joanna Blythman's [excellent concept](#)).

Quote(s) of the Week

"This event is a huge redistribution of energy in the climate system and is dangerous because it is unfolding on top of a much warmer, human-influenced climate system. So, in many places around the world we will see never-before-experienced heat extremes, with all their consequences on health, food security and water stress. El Niño comes and goes, but as long as we continue to burn fossil fuels it occurs on an increasingly hotter baseline, making it much more difficult for communities to deal with the consequences."

[Prof Friederike Otto](#), at Imperial College London, quoted in [Carrington, D. 2026, Sept 21](#)

"It's going to be a very, very strong event occurring against a backdrop of very rapid global warming. I think we're going to, unfortunately, learn a lot this year"

Christopher Callahan, a climate scientist at Indiana University. ([quoted by Garza and Yoder, 2026](#))

Physical impacts

To paraphrase Aristotle *"Anybody can become terrified— that is easy, but to be terrified about the right horrorshow and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way — that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."*

This weekly digest is gonna be worth your time!



<https://futureclimateiq.com/el-nino-global-impact-monitor-week-ending-26-september-2026/>

Air

"Australia: exceptional spring heat and extreme fire danger"

32 degrees in Sydney in September. Oh my.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSkzMhdfnOM>

Water

Jean-Philippe Gibert: *"If it's too cold or too hot, there's no life. El Niño moves huge amounts of heat around the globe, making some places unseasonably hot. That has giant effects on all organisms experiencing those conditions, including in the way they interact with one another."*

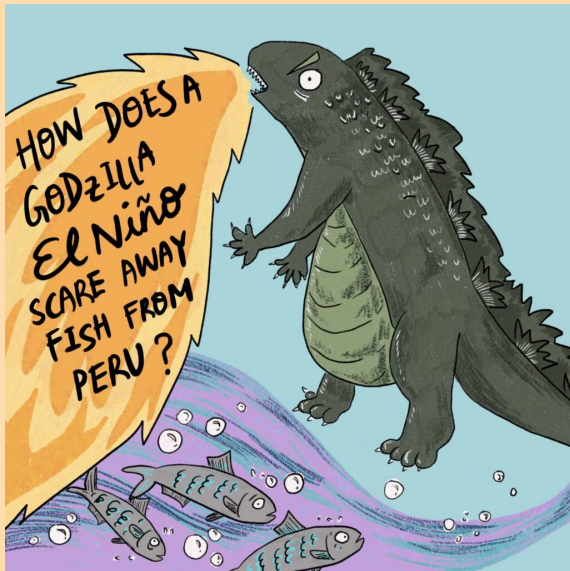
To mention one example: predators have to deal with this new thermal stress, so some prey species are going to experience less predation, while others will experience more of it. Species experiencing less predation can become more abundant and outcompete others. That leads to these cascading, or knock-on, effects of temperature on food webs, and these effects can be quite unpredictable."

[Kossakovski, F. 2026. How will this El Niño affect fisheries and oceans? The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, September 23, 2026](#)

[This is an essential read]

BANGKOK: Bangkok authorities declared a flood disaster across the Thai capital on Saturday after almost 48 hours of heavy rain left homes, shops and roads waterlogged and residents wading through waist-deep water.

[Anon. 2026. Bangkok declares disaster after homes flooded, roads submerged by heavy rain. The International News, Pakistan. September 27](#)



While there might be plenty more fish in the sea (reader, there aren't), those fish aren't where the fishermen can catch them - great cartoon by Elle Wibisino

<https://sciencepolitics.org/2026/09/22/el-nino/>

Earth - nothing leaps out, ymmv.

Fire - nothing leaps out, ymmv.

Money

(always the fifth element, whatever Aristotle had to say)

"At the same time, the wealthy few will continue to enrich themselves from an economic system built on pumping out more emissions. Defenders of the status quo will continue to insist that we cannot afford to clean up our act. It is more than ever evident that we cannot afford not to do so."

[From Guardian's typically hand-wringing editorial of Sept 24](#)

"Scientists have forecast El Niño for [decades](#), but never one this strong. Financial markets are responding rationally, minimizing their exposure in the regions most at risk. But hedging is not the same as adapting. At best, its dollar logic obscures

El Niño's human costs, and at worst, it pulls capital from the very places that need investment most.... El Niño works through ordinary hazards—[droughts](#), [floods](#), [heatwaves](#), [wildfires](#), [landslides](#)—but its economic signature is persistence. Wages rise slower; borrowing, food, and energy cost more; and dollars, public and private, go to cleanup rather than the schools, roads, clinics, and businesses that make economies grow."

<https://www.science.org/eprint/DU6FR9C5MKWWB4IIXBJS/full?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>

"The UN has received just one-fifth of the \$202 million requested to prepare for food crises caused by El Nino in 22 high-risk countries, a top official told AFP on Friday. "

[Anon. 2026. World ignoring UN request for El Nino disaster fund: FAO. The Edition. September 26](#)

Political/Economic "etc" impacts (esp UK).

Africa

"The [Climate Impact Lab](#), a research group based at the University of Chicago, predicts there will be 66,800 extra deaths across the [Sahel](#), the dry belt along the southern edge of the [Sahara](#), between September and February compared with a normal year. [Nigeria](#) alone accounts for 31,400 of these, followed by [Sudan](#) with 17,500, [Niger](#) with 10,000 and [Chad](#) with 8,000."

[Nigeria faces world's highest heat death toll as El Nino bears down on Sahel. AOL. Sept 24](#)

"There are still ample supplies in the silos across the country after a record harvest, but concerns about the effects of El Niño on the season ahead seem to be driving up commodity prices."

[Sihlobo, W. 2026. Looming El Niño threatens to shatter South Africa's summer harvest triumph. The Daily Maverick, September 20](#)

North America and South America

Sep 21 California Governor (and presumably one of the Democrats with his eyes on the White House) Gavin Newsom has declared a "state of emergency" in California ahead of expected El Nino impacts. Unlocks funds, cuts some 'red tape',

makes him look responsible - a triple win! Short video [here](#).

Bethany Tietjen writing mostly but not exclusively about the US - [“As cities prepare for 2026’s super El Niño, some crucial blind spots can’t be ignored”](#)

Asia

“PETALING JAYA: Malaysia’s looming Super El Nino impact could start showing up in corporate earnings next year through higher electricity bills, with retailers, food and beverage (F&B) operators and low-margin manufacturers among the most exposed, says CGS International (CGSI) Research . In a report, the research house said it was “clear” that higher temperatures associated with a Super El Nino would lead to increased electricity consumption.”

[Anon, 2026. El Nino impact to weigh on corporate earnings. The Star \(Malaysia\). Sept 21](#)

In an urgent ‘Call to Action’, the nearly 200 signatories from noted institutions including the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, Wildlife Institute of India (WII), National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF) jointly appealed to policymakers, as well as fellow researchers and field practitioners, to prepare for these potentially destructive effects. <https://www.news18.com/india/el-nino-intensifies-200-indian-ecologists-warn-of-its-cascading-impacts-on-ecosystems-ws-klt-10342040.html>

Europe - nothing leaps out, ymmv.

UK (yes, we’re that parochial)

Be [Prepared](#), that’s the boy scout’s marching creed! The state has a campaign around -Emergencies such as flooding, fires and power cuts can affect us all. There are simple and effective steps you can take to be more prepared.”

Food

“But the impacts of El Niño on weather – or in other words, the teleconnections that form between the warming of the equatorial Pacific and droughts, floods, storms, or heatwaves around the world – are stubbornly hard to forecast.”

[Degroot, D. 2026. "The Coming Global Food Crisis?" SciencePolitics, September 2](#)

This is a must-read, btw.

Transport - nothing leaps out, ymmv.

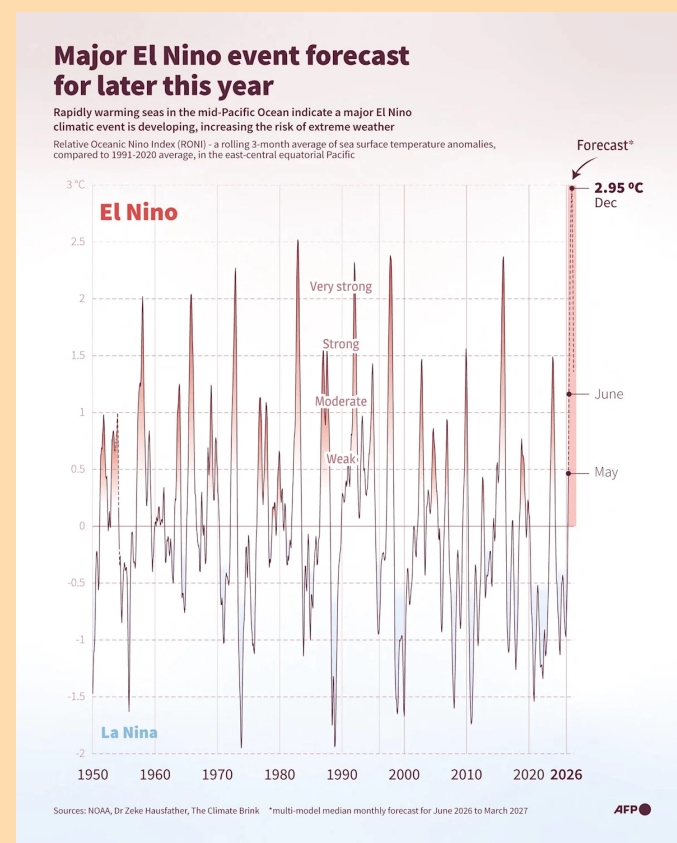
Energy - nothing leaps out, ymmv.

Bowel-loosening factoid/ prediction of the Week

“Despite recent rainfall, the National Drought Group said groundwater storage and reservoir levels are continuing to decline, with England’s reservoir storage now 19.7% below average for the time of year and the majority of reservoirs classed as notably or exceptionally low.”

[Neill, P. 2026. Wildlife will be affected by current drought for years to come. UK government says. The Guardian, September 21](#)

Look at the pretty picture!



If you know you’re history

“El Niño has provided a convenient scapegoat for failures in disaster risk reduction, mismanagement, and government corruption, where hydrometeorological disasters occurred during years with El Niño conditions. During the El Niño conditions of 1997-98, blaming El Niño in the US became something of a hobby. In California, people

started displaying bumper stickers saying: ‘Don’t blame me, blame El Niño’.”

[Adamson, G. 2023. Why El Niño is not to blame for record-breaking temperatures in 2023. KCL blog December 8](#)

OMFG(s) of the week

THE POINTS GUY NEWS CREDIT CARDS POINTS + MILES TRAVEL TOOLS

Australia



The Great Barrier Reef. CAVAN IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

Since a spike in ocean temperatures is a hallmark of El Niño, it's no surprise that this event can lead to mass coral reef die-offs. The historic 1997-98 event triggered the first documented global coral bleaching event, while the super El Niño in 2015-2016 ushered in the longest global coral bleaching event on record.

By spring and summer 2027, areas like the [Great Barrier Reef](#) will likely be feeling the effects of this year's event. It could be a good idea to postpone a visit until the coral has had a chance to (hopefully) recover somewhat — both to ensure better underwater views and to minimize additional strain on an already stressed reef.

Australia's underwater crown jewel isn't the only area at risk. El Niño typically brings

“By spring and summer 2027, areas like the Great Barrier Reef will likely be feeling the effects of this year’s event. It could be a good idea to postpone a visit until the coral has had a chance to (hopefully) recover somewhat - both to ensure better underwater views and to minimize additional strain on an already stressed reef.”

[Craft, R. 2026. How El Nino will impact travel in the coming year. The Points Guy, September 20](#)

Stuff to watch for in the next week

nothing leaps out, ymmv.

Deeper dive resources I encountered this week

[CDC Social Vulnerability Index : a tool to identify socially vulnerable communities](#)

Editorial

So, this week someone with an understanding of how the media works, and how to get some name recognition for their organisation made a solid move (while simultaneously, legitimately, trying to raise the alarm). A report was released with an oddly specific number of lives that could be lost (451,000, since you ask). Several things here

- Until such time as rich white people are more than mildly inconvenienced, the number can be as big as you like - the deaths are priced in. “[NRPI](#)”, an acronym I learned from watching *Succession*.
- Given the numbers threatened by climate change more generally it’s chump change
- This is also a bit of a hostage to fortune - if the direct fatalities are lower, the denialists/lukewarmers will cry “Chicken Little”, “Paul Ehrlich 2.0” etc etc (they will anyway)
- From the Google alert, a screengrab below, you can see it ‘worked’ - headline writers do love a big round number.

Google Alerts

"El Nino" impacts

Daily update · 24 September 2023

NEWS

Super El Niño could cause 450,000 heat deaths by February | CNN

CNN

... impacts will linger into the summer months. ... That would certainly be too late to act for this El Niño cycle," said a Climate Impact Lab spokesperson.

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Scientists warn super El Niño could cause 450,000 deaths: Should we worry? - Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera

... effects of El Niño and should we all be really worried? ... "El Niño is likely to bring higher global temperatures and extreme weather impacts ...

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El Niño-driven heat could cause half a million extra deaths, report says. Here's where - CBC

CBC

Climate change is worsening the impacts of El Niño and leading to extreme weather ... The Climate Impact Lab said global land temperatures during this ...

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El Niño Could Cause More Than 450,000 Deaths Over the Next 6 Months, Researchers Say

People.com

The U.S. is also preparing for the potential impact of a "super El Niño" developing over the Pacific Ocean, which could bring record-breaking storms ...

Researchers warn of deadly El Niño effects - RNC - RNC

Full Coverage

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How will this El Niño affect fisheries and oceans? - UNC College of Arts and Sciences

UNC College of Arts and Sciences · The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

What is the impact of El Niño on marine ecosystems? Jean-Philippe Gibeil: If it's too cold or too hot, there's no life. El Niño moves huge amounts of ...

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Super-strong El Niño could lead to 450K deaths. Map shows the states hit hardest - The Hill

The Hill

In a report released Wednesday, the University of Chicago's Climate Impact Lab estimates that 451,000 deaths may be attributed to El Niño-driven ...

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Act now to limit health risks of El Niño - World Meteorological Organization WMO

World Meteorological Organization WMO

The effects are already visible in climate-sensitive sectors such as health. "This El Niño is a test. We have the science. We have advance warning.

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El Niño could cause 451,000 more heat-related deaths compared to normal year ... - CBS News

CBS News

"That's on top of the impacts from droughts, wildfires and flooding expected from hotter temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns as this El Niño ...

El Niño could amplify the health risks of a changing climate | The UN warns that the current ... - Instagram

Full Coverage

Best example of media coverage I could find.

DAILY STAR NEWS FOOTBALL SHOWBIZ WATCH MORE ▾

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'Godzilla' El Nino forecast to kill 500k people as scientists issue chilling warning

This year's 'Godzilla' El Nino - one of the most powerful on record - could lead to around 450,000 excess deaths, according to boffins tracking the terrifying weather phenomenon

f X ↻ Comments 7

NEWS By **Edward Easton**

10:52, 25 Sep 2026



📷 El Nino is predicted to bring with it dangerously high temperatures
(Image: AFP via Getty Images)

This year's supersized El Nino is predicted to kill more than 450,000 people worldwide, scientists have warned

Links and Disclaimers

For a FAQ see [here](#)

The comedy of El Nino (no, really) it's a [1997 video](#).

El Nino [acronyms](#)

El Nino [quotes](#)

El Nino [videos](#)

El Nino [timeline up to 2025](#)

Disclaimers

I am not a climate scientist. I am mostly collating what other people say, not pushing our own "angle". I will get things wrong - when I do, I'll fess up, no fuss. I will quote from "reputable" sources, but sometimes the truth is an outlandish outlier. Blah blah information provided for lulz only. No responsibility taken for your failure to create broad-based social movements that prevent shit getting even worse and instead leading us into the pit of Sarlac.

Also, the digest's format may well "evolve" over time depending on what's doable, what's useful, what's liked and disliked.

The digest subtitle is inspired by the awe-inspiring and heart-breaking "CO2 Newsletter published by American geologist William Barbat from 1979 to 1982.

