El Niño Digest Times

Volume 1, Number 8 Nov 8, 2026

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

GODZILLA ARRIVES!



KOMPAS/ADRYAN YOGA PARAMADWYA

What this image is about…

KOMPAS/ADRYAN YOGA PARAMADWYAThe Youth Coalition for Climate Justice held an "Intergenerational Climate Justice Manifesto" rally in front of the United States Embassy in Jakarta, Friday (10/30/2026). The crowd carried various posters criticizing El Nino and paraded the Godzilla Monster from the United States Embassy to the Horse Statue in the Monas area, Jakarta. They emphasized that the lung-choking haze from forest and land fires, flash floods, drought, and ecological disasters occurring in Indonesia are structural crimes.

Anon, 2026. El Nino Overwhelms the World as Death Threats Rise. Kompas, November 1

Quote of the Week

"A storm that might previously have caused serious damage once every ten years could become a much more frequent event," says Pierre. For the UK, an island nation, that means greater pressure on sea defences, ports, homes and transport links near the coast. And the risks are even greater for countries with fewer resources to protect themselves. The Southern Ocean also plays an important role in regulating our climate. It soaks up a large share of the extra heat and carbon dioxide that people add to the air, which slows down global warming.

"If that whole system is pushed out of balance, it's a major concern," says Dr Tom Bracegirdle.

The strongest El Niño on record: what could it mean for Antarctica? - British Antarctic Survey November 3

Welcome to the 8th weekly issue of the El Niño Digest Times (END Times - geddit?). The *why* should be self-explanatory, but here's a FAQ just in case. 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 (like you) 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).

Editorial

Isn't it all getting quite interesting?! The scientists seem to have run out of superlatives and imagery for what all their instruments are telling them. The journalists who follow this stuff have squeezed all the gory quotes outa everyone credible. Now, we're just waiting for the other shoe to properly drop.

Yes, yes, the impacts are already here for other species, people in far off countries of which we know little. But what we're waiting for now, really, is some pictures of people the comfortable in the metropole can properly empathise with - other rich white people whose second homes have been washed away. That's when it becomes "real."

The main news (if you ignore the mid-terms) this week has been the Met Office sticking its neck out and saying that the rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide next year will be about 3.5ppm. (see "Bowel-loosener of the Week" on page 7 for the gory details.) This is extraordinary stuff. We are making the blanket of greenhouse gases thicker and thicker. Long after this El Nino is, if not forgotten, but has joined the great storm known as 'the near past', these rises in ppm will be the thing that we - and the ecosystems - remember. Just as the body keeps the score, so too does the atmosphere, and the cryosphere (what's left of it) and, well, everything.

In other news.

a) I've written a couple of rants about my favourite theory of change, the information deficit model. The first was about the National Emergency Briefing, and the second was around what is the IDM, what are its consequences, if it's so bad how come it persists and then the obligatory 'what is to be done?' Some people I respect have said nice things - please be the first person I respect to say nasty (critical) things!
b) Someone I have ***enormous*** respect for has put the following in an email "I've learned a new phrase this week to use in response to enquiries about how I am - it's "good enough", which both encapsulates the reality and echoes Winnicott."

As ever, let me know what you think, what's missing etc.

The three phases of El Niño

1. **The Antici…pation**

From early this year until late October-ish (ymmv). Scientists saying they've double-checked and triple-checked and they're as sure as they can be. Disaster management folks pleading for money and decent plans. Politicians telling us to stock up, or declaring States of Emergency in advance, with an eye on their 2028 Presidential run… Journalists writing SEO-ed disaster porn speculations. Everyone holding their breath, putting their fingers in their ears to not hear the Doomers gloating *"I told you so."*

2. **"Then someone yelled out 'Contact!'"**

The rolling roiling disasters, especially salient when (rich) White People in Peril can be filmed. The shark in the shopping mall meme resurfaces. The re-insurers point to their fine print, and some insurers go belly-up. The rich libertarians squeal for state bail-outs. Food prices through the roof. Hard-to-replace infrastructure washed away.

3. **Back to the perfect paradise**

The wreckage is quietly swept away, the global machine reboots, and the important (rich white) people continue their merry way. The End. (Actual outcomes may vary; always read the label).

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"This El Niño probably could have more impact, I think, on any weather event around the globe than I've ever seen in my lifetime," Flynn said.

Vawter, H. 2026. How does El Niño effect the world's economy? Here's what to know | Fox Weather, November 3

"I am both very concerned and very excited about this El Niño. This is essentially a unique opportunity to test a lot of hypotheses and assumptions that we have about El Niño."" Yassir Eddebbar, an assistant research scientist at the University of California, San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, told Gizmodo.

"In the past, we've mostly had satellite observations of temperature and chlorophyll and Argo floats that measure the temperature and salinity of the ocean," he said. The global Argo ocean-monitoring network is made up of about 4,000 floats that supply data to scientists around the world. In recent years, a network of biogeochemical (BGC) Argo floats has scaled significantly, and Eddebbar is eager to see what data they gather during this El Niño.

"These are essentially autonomous instruments that go all the way down about 2,000 meters [6,600 feet], and they measure temperature, chlorophyll—which is a pigment that's created by phytoplankton photosynthesis—as well as nitrate and oxygen," Eddebbar explained. *"So, for the very first time during a major El Niño event, we have really good coverage of some of the ecosystem variables, the drivers of ecosystems, and how they're going to change with this event."*

Lapoint, E. 2026. This Super El Niño Might Be a Global Disaster. It Will Also Be an Incredible Scientific Opportunity. Gizmodo, November 3

The 2026–27 El Niño threatens to erode years of EU investment in global stability. Its impacts will drive food and energy insecurity as well as supply chain disruptions, heightening risks of economic disruptions and fragility beyond the EU's borders. The EU's external response should anticipate rather than react, back partners early, and put climate security and resilience at the heart of its external action. As El Niño provides a glimpse into the geopolitics of climate instability, Europe can show strategic leadership, build trust and strengthen partnerships at COP 31 and beyond; done well, this would reduce the security and economic risks that come back to Europe

Jaekel, A. 2026. The EU and El Niño – a strategic external response. E3G, November 5

Met Office scientist Emily Wright, who worked on the forecast, said: *"We're expecting a particularly large rise in CO_2 for 2027, and the strong El Niño is playing an important role in that. Human emissions are still driving the long-term increase, but plants, soils and oceans normally absorb some of the CO_2 we release. El Niño events reduce how much they absorb overall, leaving more CO_2 in the atmosphere."*

Strong El Niño drives 2027 CO_2 rise towards record levels - Met Office

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"It's a triple whammy of high fertilizer costs, high energy costs, and now massive droughts across the tropics.... It's not a great story."

"2027 is going to be the record-shattering year/" Berkeley Earth climatologist Zeke Hausfather

Jones, N. 2026. How This Year's Super El Niño Will Worsen Global Hunger. Yale Environment, November 5.

ROUND THE WORLD

Drought is affecting 78,000 families, and has led to the loss of more than 75,000 cattle, as El Nino is due to peak in late 2026.
Al Jazeera, 2026. Bolivia declares state of emergency over El Nino weather pattern

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MANILA, Philippines – A very strong El Niño is now present in the tropical Pacific Ocean, the Philippine weather bureau announced in a statement posted on Thursday, November 5. Also informally called Super El Niño, this current episode of the weather phenomenon might reach its peak by the end of 2026, but persist until the first half of 2027.
In the Philippines, El Niño leads to less rainfall, causing dry spells and drought.
Arceo, A. 2026. El Niño now very strong, impacts to be felt until 2027 November 5

A wave of **intense and, at times, unpredictable storms** exacerbated by the El Niño weather pattern has killed dozens, shuttered major airports and wiped out crops and infrastructure across a swathe of East Asia.
In October, nearly all of Taiwan shut down as a monster storm big enough to engulf the island of 23 million roared towards its north-eastern coast. Equivalent to a category five hurricane, Typhoon Champi's 295km/h (193mph) winds had the power to flatten homes and whip up destructive waves.
Thankfully it did not make landfall in Taiwan, skirting past the island while dousing it in rain. But it had **far-reaching impacts**: hundreds of flights were cancelled in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. In the Philippines' Batanes archipelago, seaside highways shut as huge waves crashed onto the shore, and in southern Japan's Okinawa islands, power was cut to 15,000 homes.

AND

To get a better picture of how rising temperatures could amplify the risks, Manila-based climatologist Rafaela Jane Delfino and colleagues simulated the effects of warmer conditions on the Philippines' most recent monster storms, including 2013's Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) which killed more than 6,000 people.
They arrived at what she describes as "very, very scary findings": higher temperatures increased total accumulated rainfall by 26%. It's a devastating prospect in a country where flooding from monsoon rains and some 20 tropical storms per year has emerged as one of the main disaster risks.

Joel Guinto, , **Kurumi Mori**, and **Darren Bett**, 2026. Typhoons batter East Asia as El Niño makes Pacific 'burn with fever'. BBC, November 4

Money Money Money

A strong El Nino weather pattern could push US inflation up by as much as 1 percentage point in 2027, even as it potentially boosts employment, according to a new study by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. The study, published on November 2, 2026, said the current El Nino episode may have already increased US price levels by around 0.3 percentage point between April and July 2026. The initial increase is expected to fade by the end of the year, the weather pattern could create fresh inflationary pressures in 2027.
PV, A. Strong El Nino could fuel US inflation in 2027 even as jobs get a boost, warns Fed. Financial Express, November 4.

REPORTING ON EL NIÑO ON A HOTTER PLANET

RMetS

What this media briefing is for

This media briefing exists to establish clear messaging on the exceptional El Niño happening in the Pacific in 2026/27. It is occurring on a planet already warmed by nearly 1.5°C, primarily through the burning of fossil fuels: coal, oil and gas. This briefing sets out evidence-based messages that reflect scientific understanding around the impacts of El Niño in the context of human-caused climate change. It is designed for journalists, media organisations and institutes reporting or briefing on El Niño.

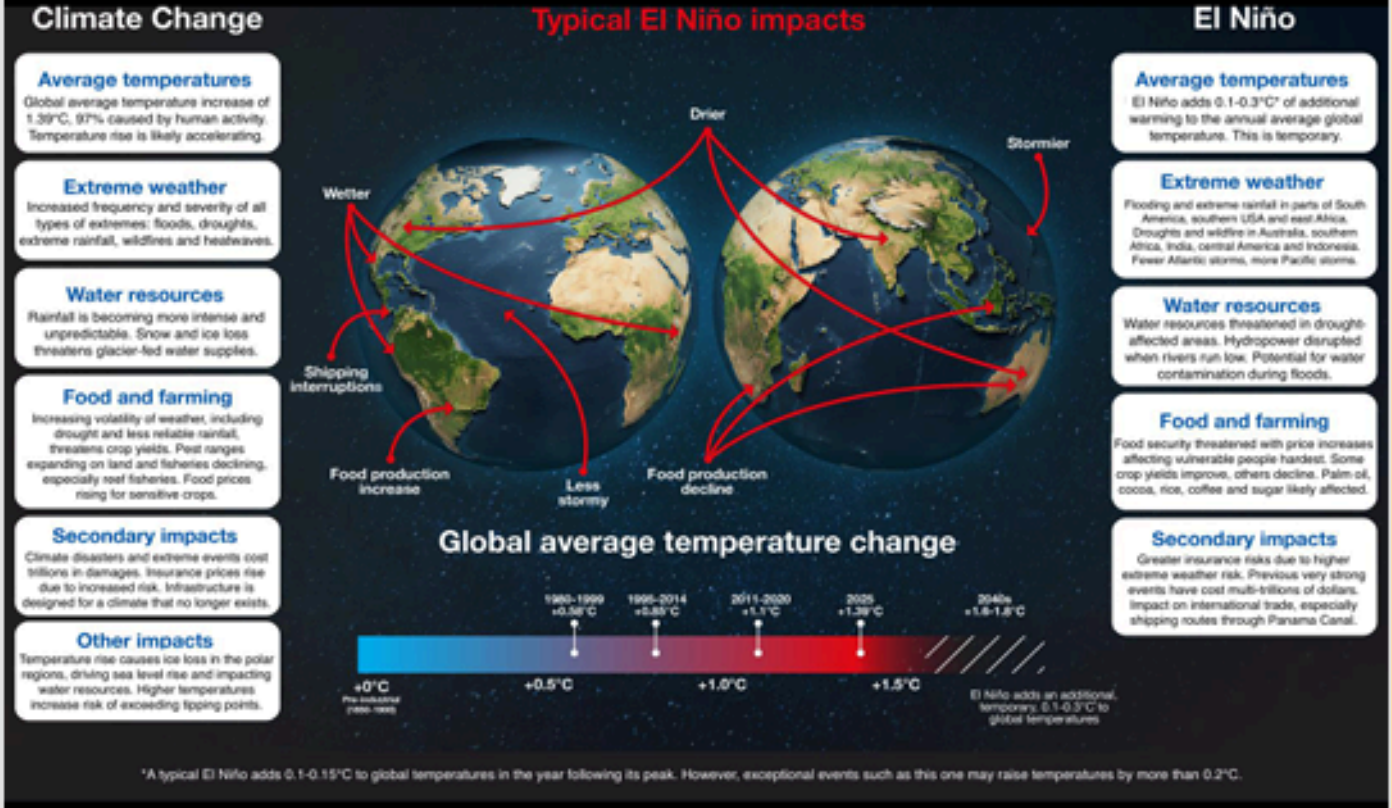


Figure 1 | El Niño is occurring on a hotter planet. While some of El Niño's impacts are similar to those driven by climate change, they are not the same. Impacts associated with climate change are shown on the left, while impacts of El Niño are shown on the right. Arrows highlight some of the common regional impacts of El Niño. Decadal average temperature estimates are from IPCC (2021)[1] and 2025 estimate is from Forster et al. (2026)[2].

Key messages

- **A powerful El Niño on a hotter planet means greater risks.** The current El Niño is the strongest in the modern observational record. It will influence weather around the world, but its impacts are unfolding against a background of unprecedented human-induced warming, meaning extreme weather can now have more damaging consequences.
- **El Niño may push global temperatures towards new records, but fossil fuels are driving the long-term warming.** The impact of climate change on global temperatures is more than ten times the short-term boost associated with a typical El Niño event. Climate change is already affecting extreme weather risk, the cost of living, and food systems and supply chains in the UK. This year's El Niño could temporarily push temperatures to 1.6 -1.8°C, a long-term level of heating we will reach within 10-15 years at current emission rates.
- **A warmer world can amplify El Niño's disruption.** El Niño shifts rainfall and atmospheric circulation, increasing heatwaves and droughts in some regions, and extreme rainfall and floods in others. The warmer atmosphere from climate change intensifies heat and rainfall extremes, worsening the consequences for people, agriculture, water supplies, and infrastructure. However, impacts vary considerably between regions and individual events.
- **The UK is not insulated from the consequences.** El Niño can influence North Atlantic weather patterns, potentially affecting winter storms and rainfall, although its effects on UK weather are less predictable than in the tropics. The UK is also exposed through global food production, commodity prices, supply chains and economic disruption. Climate change is already increasing the UK's exposure to extreme heat and intense rainfall.
- **We cannot stop El Niño, but we can limit the warming that makes its impacts more dangerous.** There is growing evidence that climate change increases the severity of El Niño events and amplifies its impacts, and there is high confidence that continued warming will intensify extreme heat and rainfall. Rapidly cutting fossil fuel emissions and investing in climate resilience are essential to limiting future risks.

How will we know?

Understanding the development of El Niño requires continuous observations of the ocean and atmosphere, from space to the ocean surface and down into the ocean interior.The earliest signs of an emerging El Niño are not always visible at the surface. Changes in subsurface heat content, temperature and salinity structure, sea level and ocean circulation can reveal how heat is being redistributed within the Pacific and provide important clues about the event's potential development before its full signature appears at the surface.
Sustained observing systems are essential. The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) provides the broader framework for sustained ocean observations, bringing together 17 global ocean observing networks that collectively monitor the ocean. Ten of these networks directly contribute to ENSO monitoring, supporting the detection, understanding and prediction of El Niño and other changes in the climate system (Figure 3).

Diouf et al. 2026. How Ocean Observations Help Us Understand and Forecast El Niño. WMO Bulletin, November 6

Food glorious food…

The world is now in the grip of a super El Niño: a Godzilla-sized version of a natural climate phenomenon that has already shriveled rivers, upended aquaculture, and flattened crops with drought. But the global organizations that keep an eye on food security are warning of even tougher times ahead.
The impacts of an El Niño can be far reaching and catastrophic. In the late 19th century, one of the strongest El Niños on record helped to fuel multiyear droughts across Asia, Brazil, and Africa that spurred a global famine: Some 50 million people, or 3 percent of the global population, died. Thankfully, the ways we plan for bad weather and move food around the planet have improved massively since then, with organizations working hard to provide relief where it's needed. But the impacts of bad weather on crops are still hard to avoid. After a strong El Niño hit in 2015, cereal yields across Southern Africa were 20 percent below normal; crop yields in parts of Ethiopia dropped by 90 percent.

…. When the U.S. and Israel launched an attack on Iran at the end of February, marine traffic through the Strait of Hormuz ground to a near halt for months. The transport of oil was choked, energy prices spiked, and the supply of fertilizer, which is most often made with hydrogen sourced from cheap natural gas, was severely pinched: The Middle East usually produces a quarter of the world's fertilizer. Meanwhile, the ongoing war in Ukraine continues to play havoc with the cost of fuel and restrict the transport of wheat from a major hub on the Black Sea.

…In Indonesia, palm oil mills stopped buying fruit from farmers because an ongoing drought shriveled the area's main transportation artery, the Kapuas River. In Cambodia, a delayed rainy season is drying out rice fields.

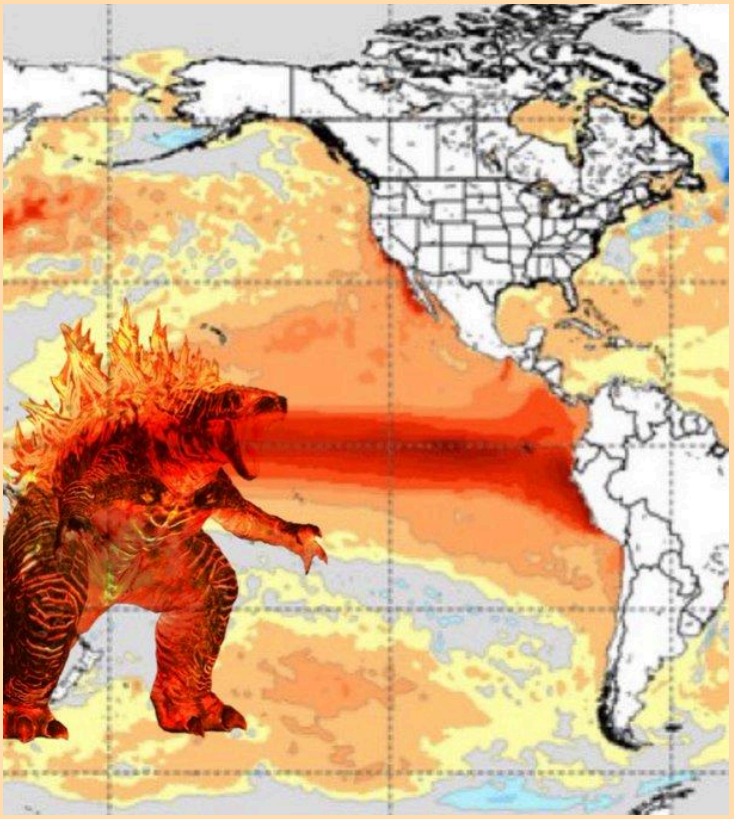
Jones, N. 2026. How This Year's Super El Niño Will Worsen Global Hunger. Yale Environment, November 5.

Putting the God back in Godzilla…

It's being called a "Godzilla" of extreme weather—a potentially record-breaking Super El Niño threatening severe drought, heat waves, and water shortages well into 2027. Preparing for this crisis requires more than short-term fixes, according to prominent Filipino environmental scientist Dr. Rodel D. Lasco. A pioneer in climate change research, he stresses the urgent need to pair nature-based solutions with individual responsibility in our daily consumption. Beyond his scientific work, Dr. Lasco is also a church pastor with a master's degree in theology. From this rare intersection of faith and science, he joins Howie Severino to discuss how the principles of order in both disciplines help him find harmony in his lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship.
The Godzilla El Niño—A Scientist-Pastor's Guide to Climate, Faith, and Survival | The Howie Severino Podcast | Videos | GMA News Online
45mins 45s long. Haven't watched, because, as per Alistair Campbell "we don't do God."

UK (yes, we're that parochial)

A GLOBAL climate phenomenon is expected to bring heavy and intense rain to York this winter which will impact local rivers, according to a council official.
Steve Wragg, City of York Council's highways lead, said this year's winter was expected to be wetter locally due to the El Niño forecast for later this year.
The council official, whose brief includes responding to floods, added York's defences were good but they could not eliminate risks entirely and residents would be kept informed of any issues.
Gerrard, J. 2026. Floods warning - El Niño effects could include heavier rain | York Press



Bowel-loosener of the week

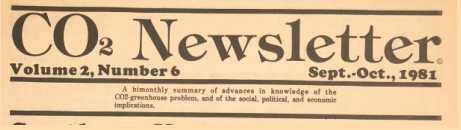
The Met Office forecasts an unusually large rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO_2) for 2027, diverging further from 1.5°C-compatible pathways as strong El Niño amplifies the human-driven rise by weakening natural carbon sinks.
The annual average CO_2 concentration at the Mauna Loa Observatory, in Hawaii, is projected to rise by 3.51 ± 0.52 parts per million (ppm) in 2027 compared with the estimated 2026 level*, reaching a new high of 432.2 ± 0.5 ppm. The rise is the largest annual increase ever forecast by the Met Office and is comparable to the record increase of 3.57 ppm observed in 2024, which was boosted by exceptional wildfire emissions.
Strong El Niño drives 2027 CO_2 rise towards record levels November 6

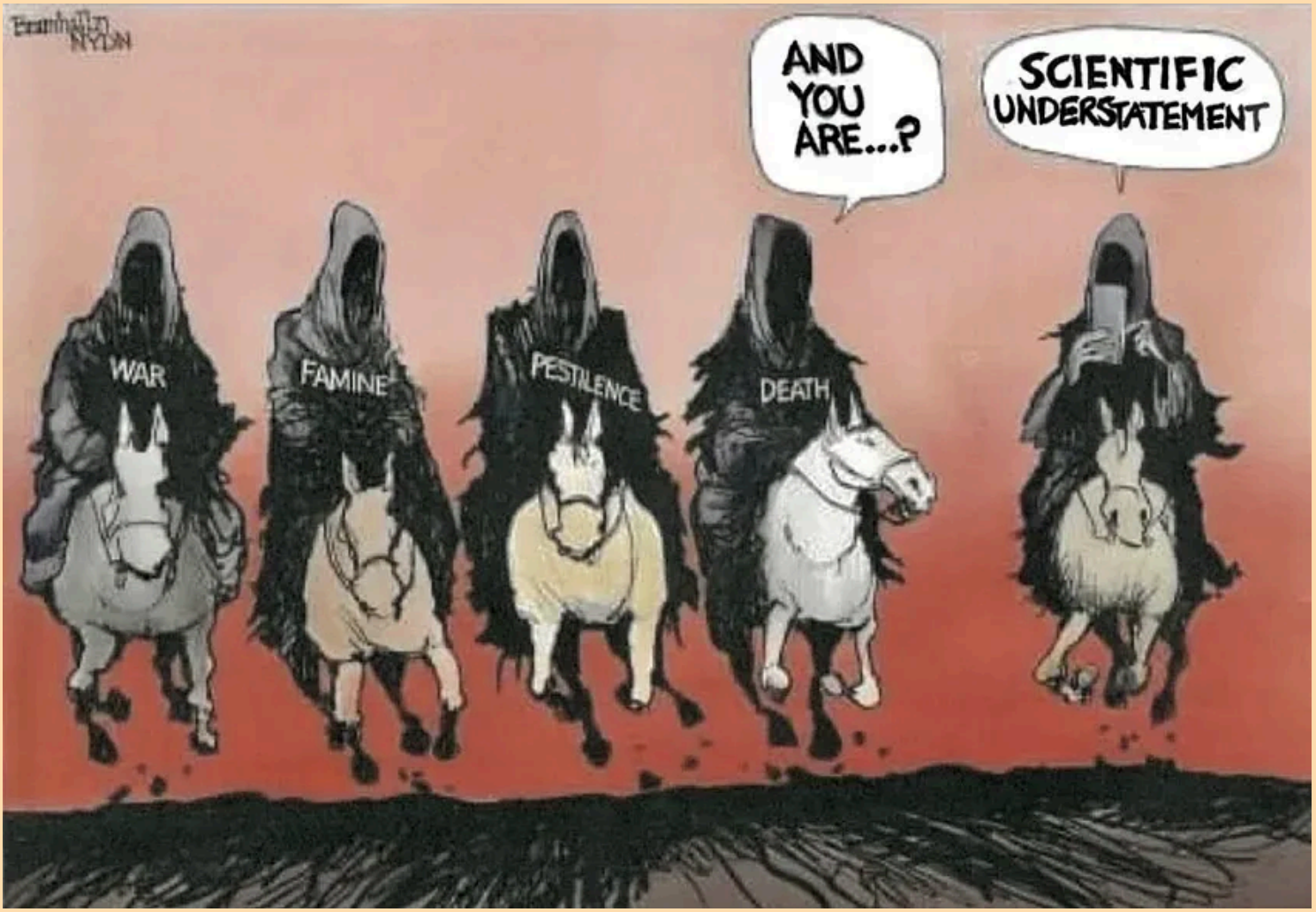
LINKS

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


CO2 Newsletter
Volume 2, Number 6 Sept.-Oct., 1981
A bimonthly summary of advances in knowledge of the CO2-greenhouse problem, and of the social, political, and economic implications.



You will not get the grants
If you are too “doomy.”
You must dance the dance
And say the future’s ‘roomy,’

If you write of limits
Eyebrows will be raised.
Do not be so dim - it’s
Tech that must be praised!

So take the secret oath
And join the “smarty” gang;
NEVER question growth
And let the future hang!