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# Global events mark magic number on climate change

(AP) - 4 days ago

NEW YORK — Activists held events around the world Saturday to mark the number they say the world needs to reach to prevent disastrous climate change: 350.

The number represents 350 parts per million of carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere that some scientists say is the safe upper limit. The atmosphere currently reaches about 390 parts per million, according to research by NASA climate scientist James Hansen cited by 350.org.

Hundreds of events highlighted the number in different ways.

In what 350.org founder Bill McKibben called a global game of Scrabble, groups in Australia, Ecuador, India, the United Kingdom, the U.S. and Denmark each spelled out one of the numbers in 350. Hundreds gathered in New York City's Times Square and watched slideshows of the other events on giant screens.

McKibben, an environmentalist and author of "The End of Nature," said the day was unique because it emphasized the science behind a politically complicated topic.

"It was ordinary people rallying around a scientific data point," McKibben said. "Nothing like that has ever happened before."

In Venezuela, volunteers formed a human chain marking the number zero on the beach at Catia La Mar north of Caracas to mark the spot where they said the ocean would reach if global warming is not stopped.

McKibben said volunteers also sent in photos of separate groups forming the numbers 350 around the Dead Sea, in Jordan, Israel and Palestinian territory.

Many of the events referred to the Copenhagen conference scheduled in December that will seek to reach a new global climate change treaty to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on carbon dioxide emissions. It has been billed as a last chance to avoid the impact of catastrophic global that could be felt for generations.

McKibben said there are lessons to be learned from the Kyoto Protocol, which the U.S. did not join.

"We saw what happened," he said. "Everybody walked away once it was done, and there was no real progress. We need to pick up the pace."

350.org: <http://www.350.org>

UN Conference on Climate Change: <http://unfccc.int/>

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Protesters hang signs on a fence outside of 24 Sussex Dr. following a call for climate change protest on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009. The events are organized by www.350.org, a group dedicated to reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in air to 350 parts per million. (AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Pawel Dwulit)



## Map



