

Climate Change, the Just Transition and the Union Movement

Tim Stephens



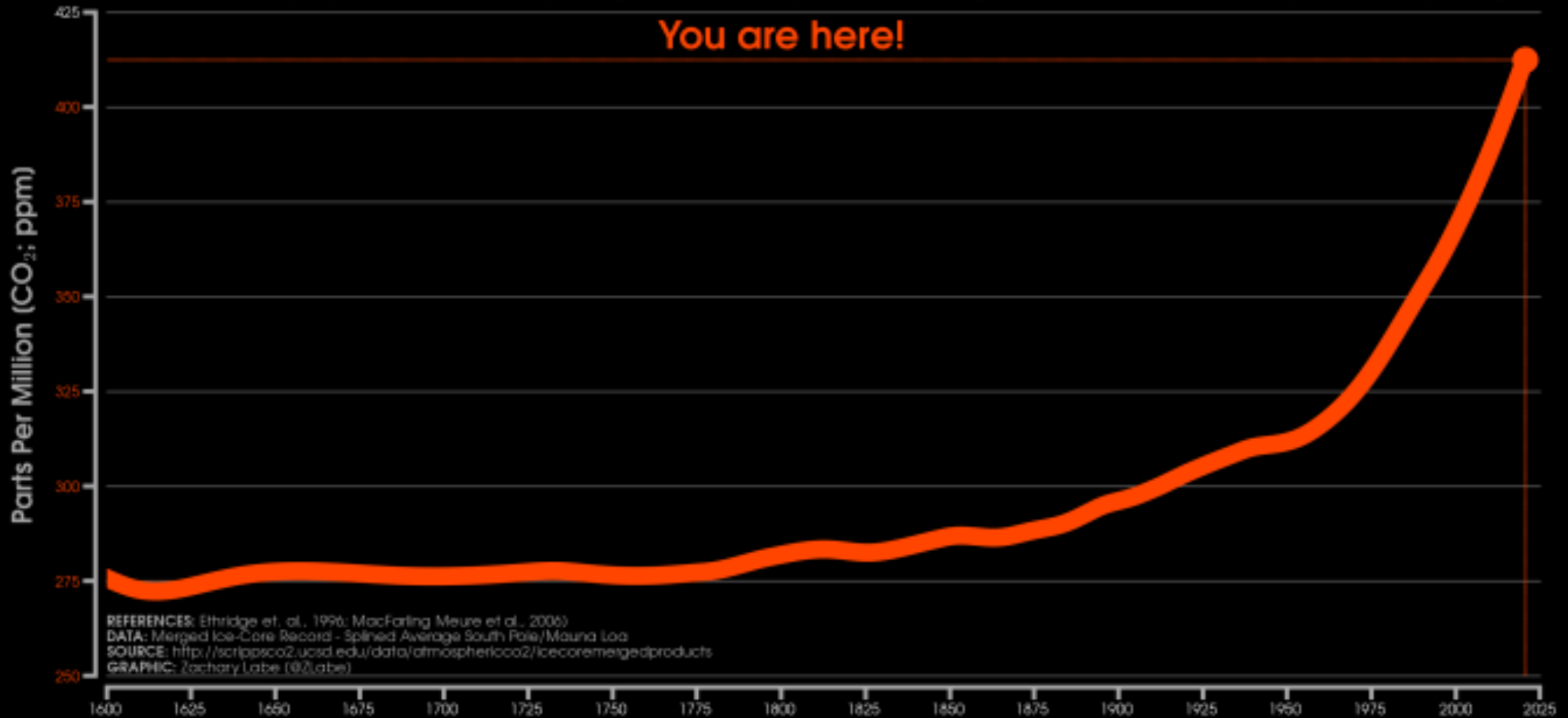
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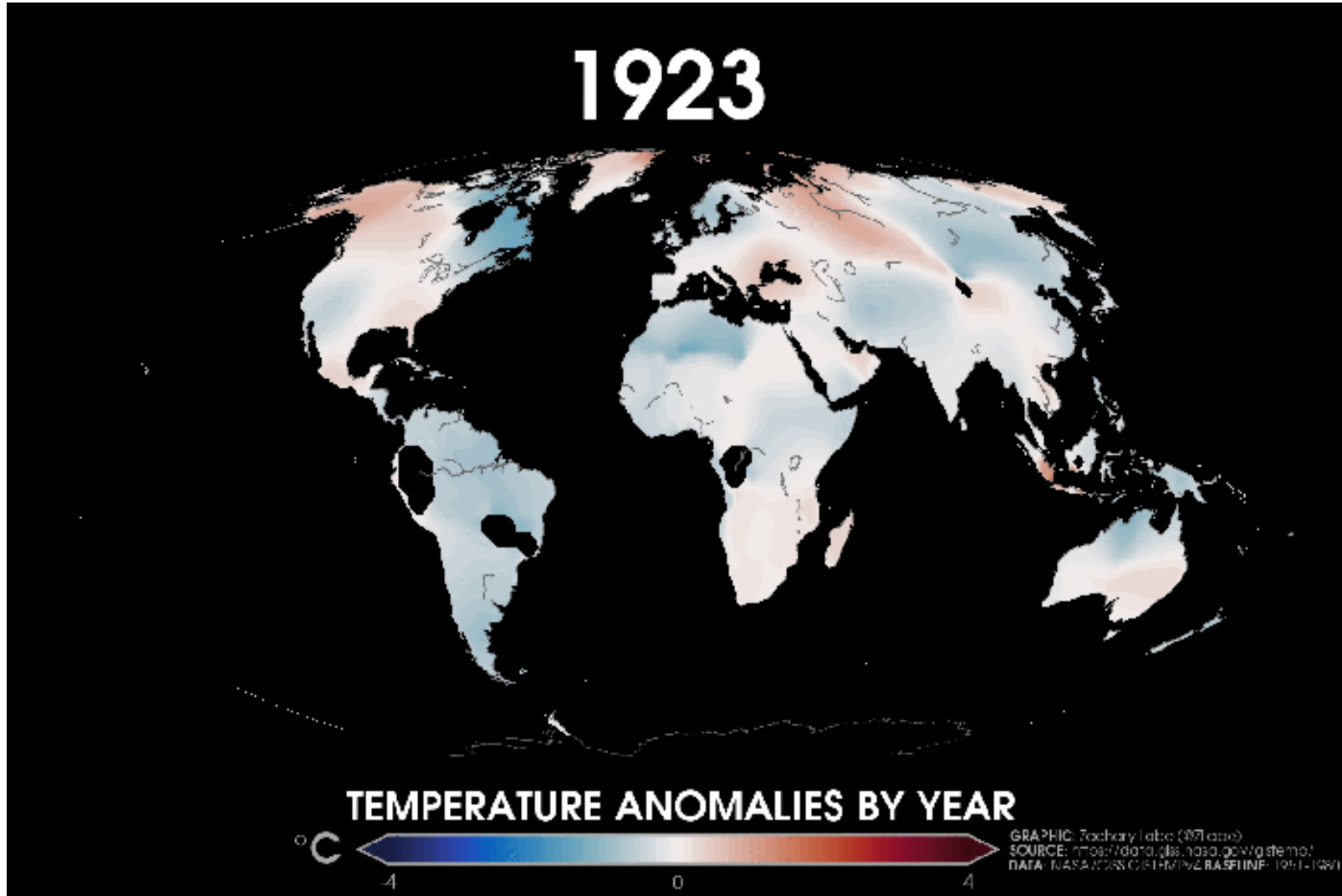
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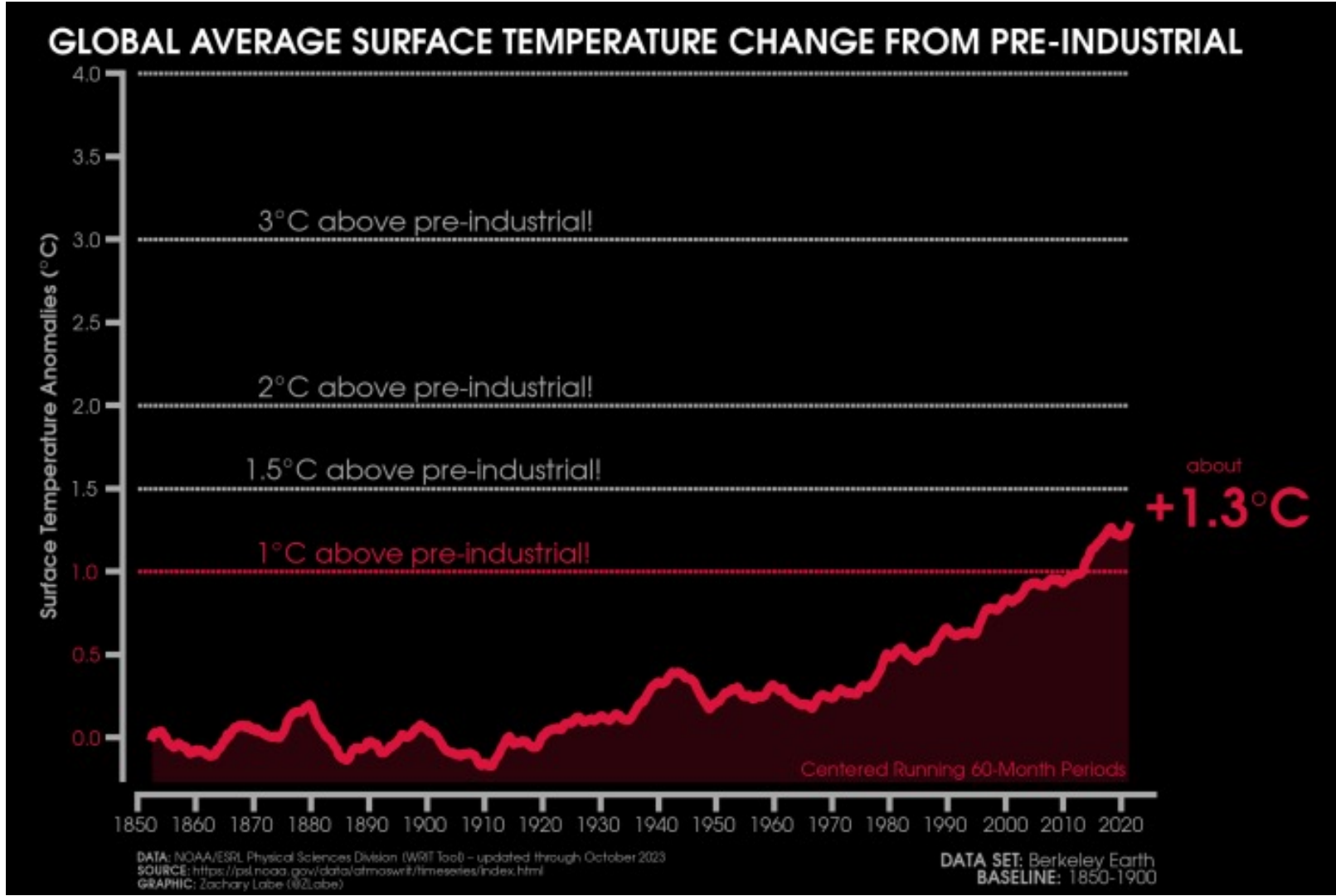


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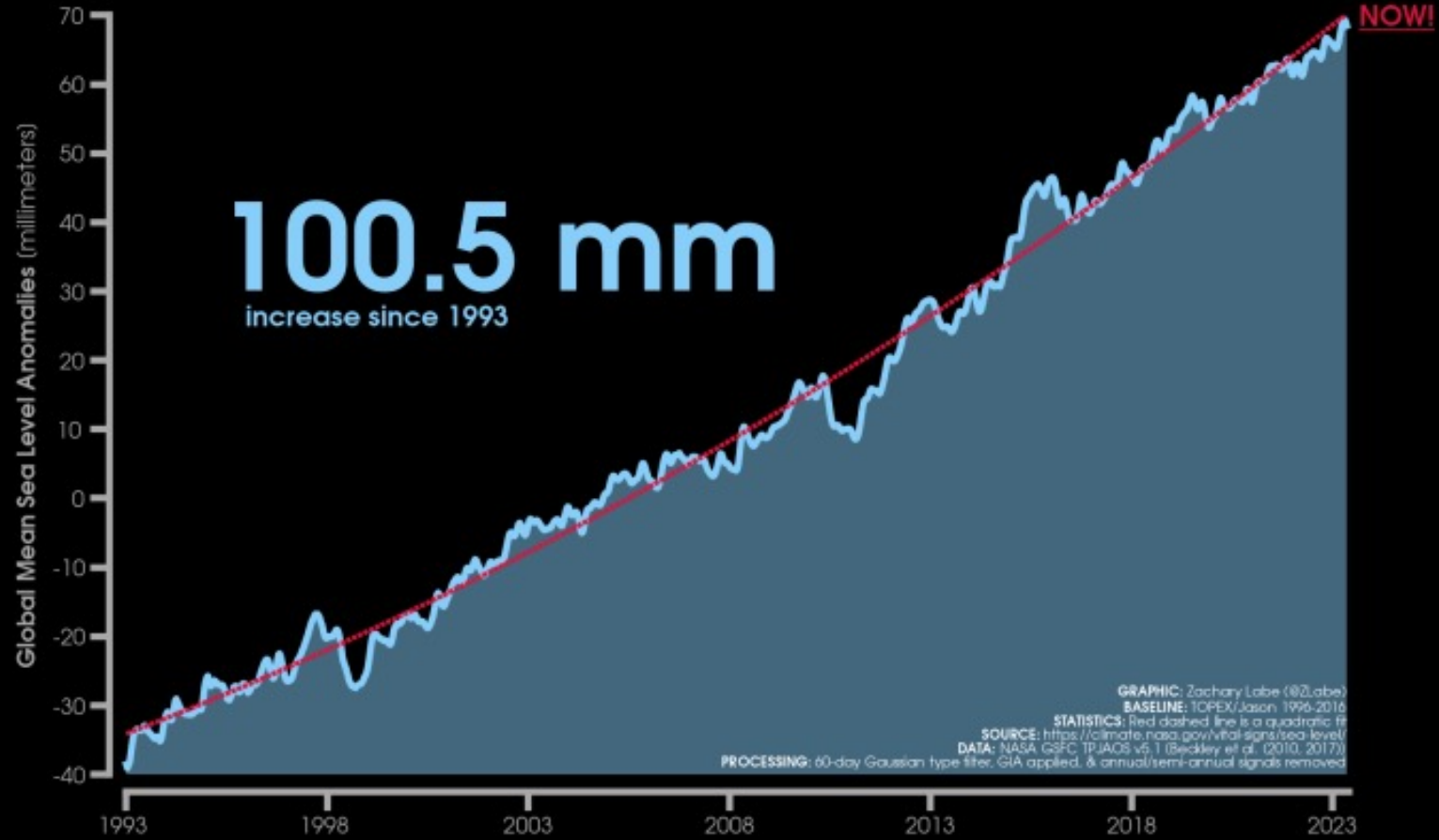
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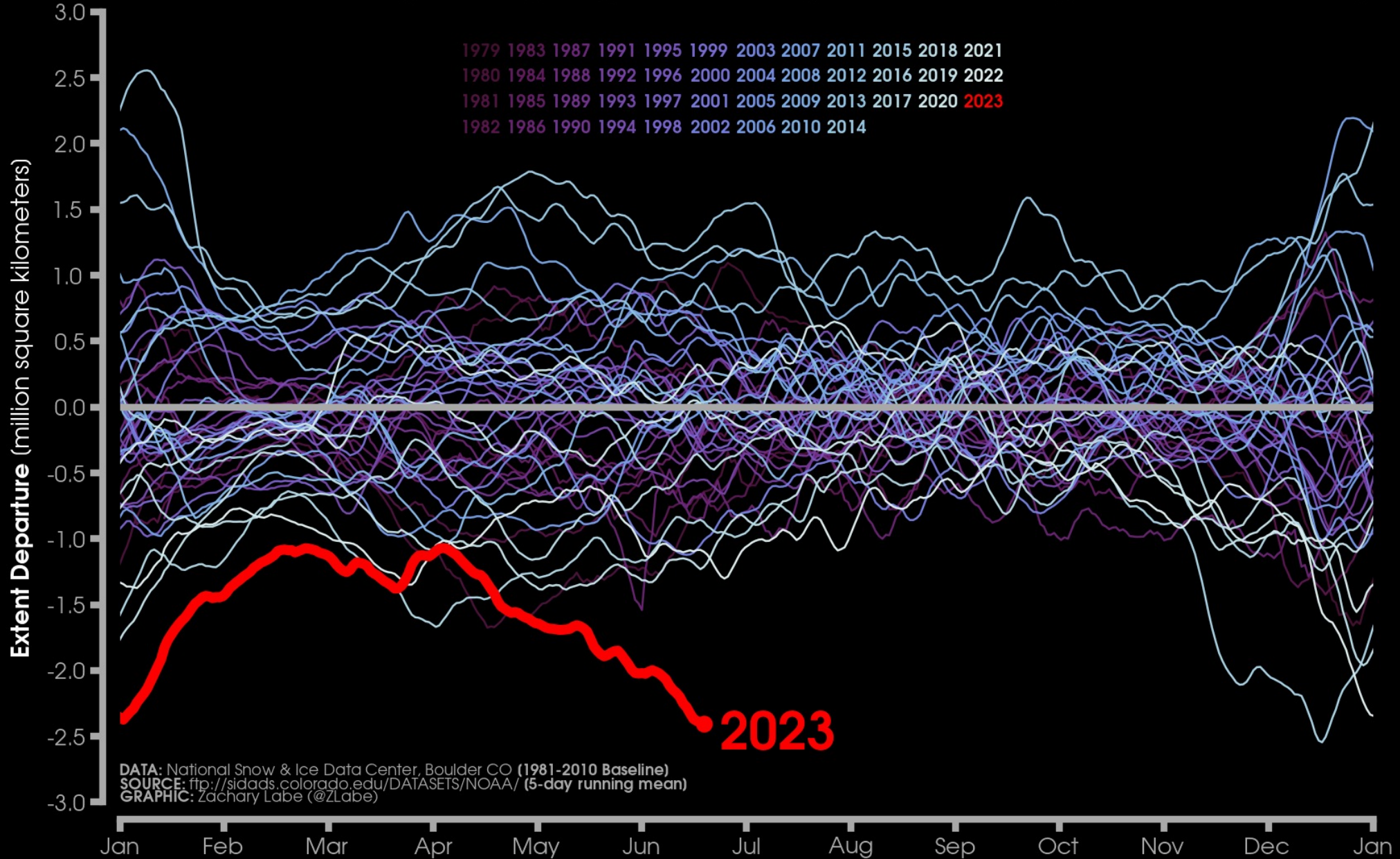




RISING OCEAN WATERS

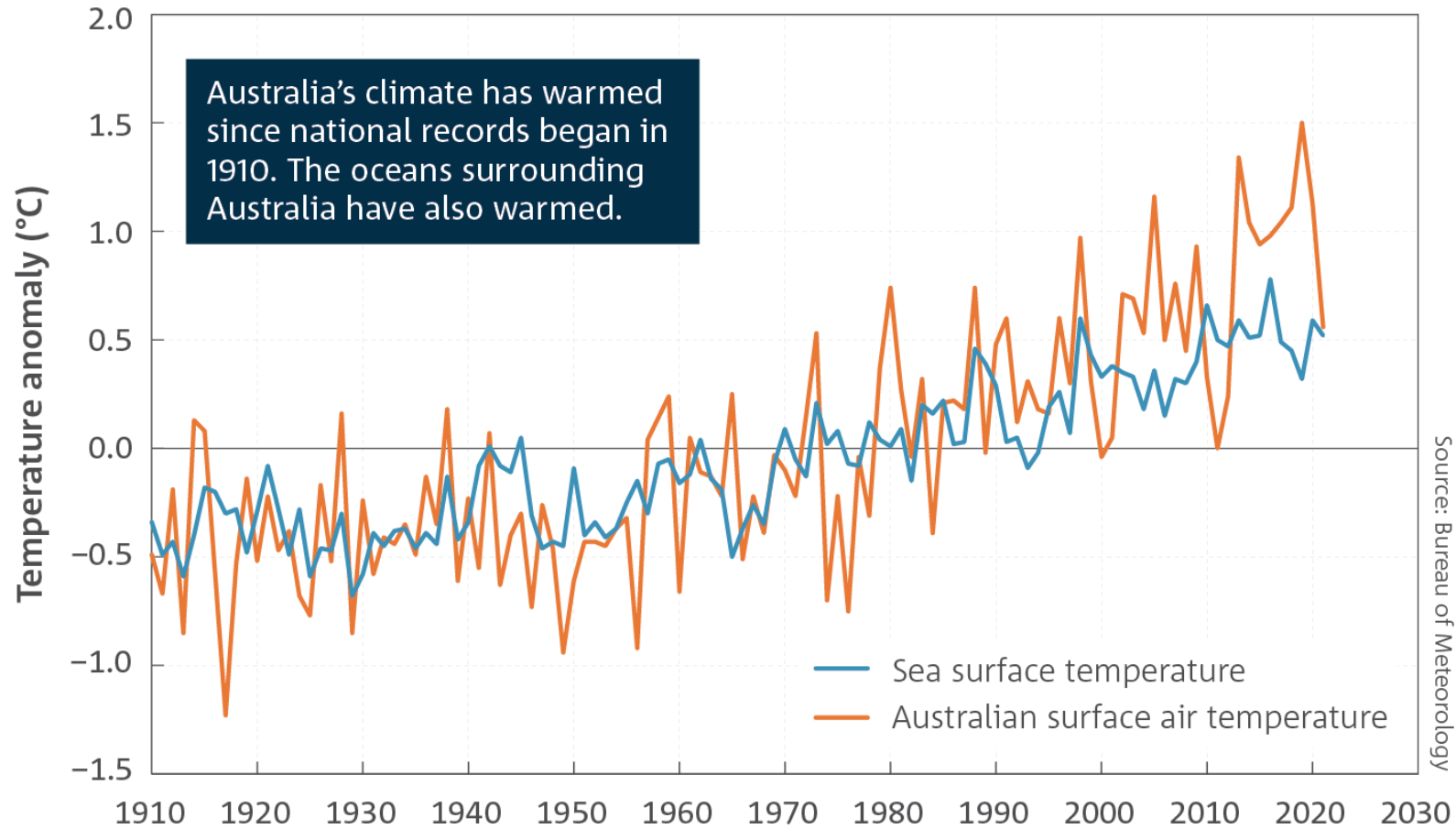


ANTARCTIC SEA ICE ANOMALIES



Australia and the Climate Crisis

- Australia's climate has warmed by an average of 1.47°C since 1910.
- Sea surface temperatures have increased by an average of 1.05°C since 1900. Increase in the frequency of extreme heat events over land and sea.
- Decrease in streamflow at most gauges across Australia since 1975.
- There has been an increase in extreme fire weather, and a longer fire season, across large parts of the country since the 1950s.
- Snow depth, snow cover and number of snow days have decreased in alpine regions since the late 1950s.
- Oceans around Australia are acidifying and have warmed by more than 1 °C since 1900, contributing to longer and more frequent marine heatwaves.
- Sea levels are rising around Australia, including more frequent extremes.



Paris Agreement

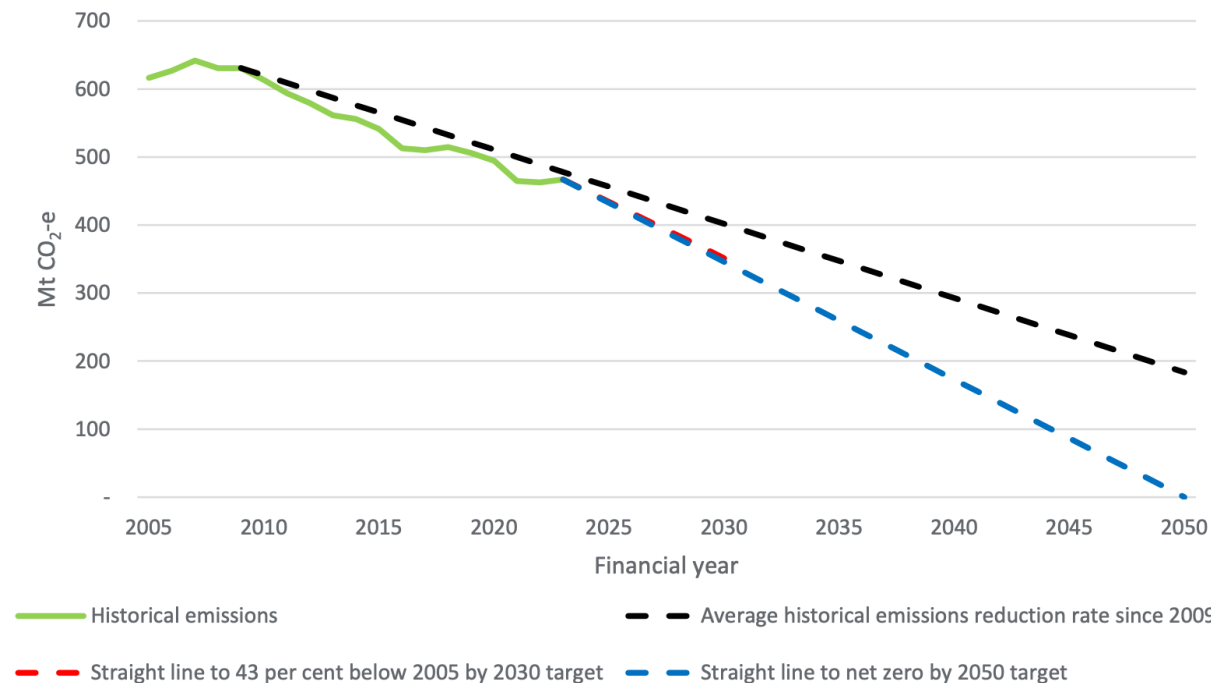
- 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- 1997 Kyoto Protocol
- 2015 Paris Agreement
 - Nationally Determined Contributions
 - Global Stocktake



A Just Transition

- Australia now has a legislated climate target (Climate Change Act 2022) of 43% below 2005 levels by 2030

Figure 1: Progress to Australia's 2030 emissions reduction target



A Just Transition

“As a small, open and emissions-intensive economy, reliant on inflows of foreign capital and export income as engines of growth, **Australia can expect to feel the full force of the global transition to net zero emissions.** Global momentum has never been greater, thanks in large part to the Inflation Reduction Act 2022 in the United States, the European Union’s Green Deal Industrial Plan and progress in implementing its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.”

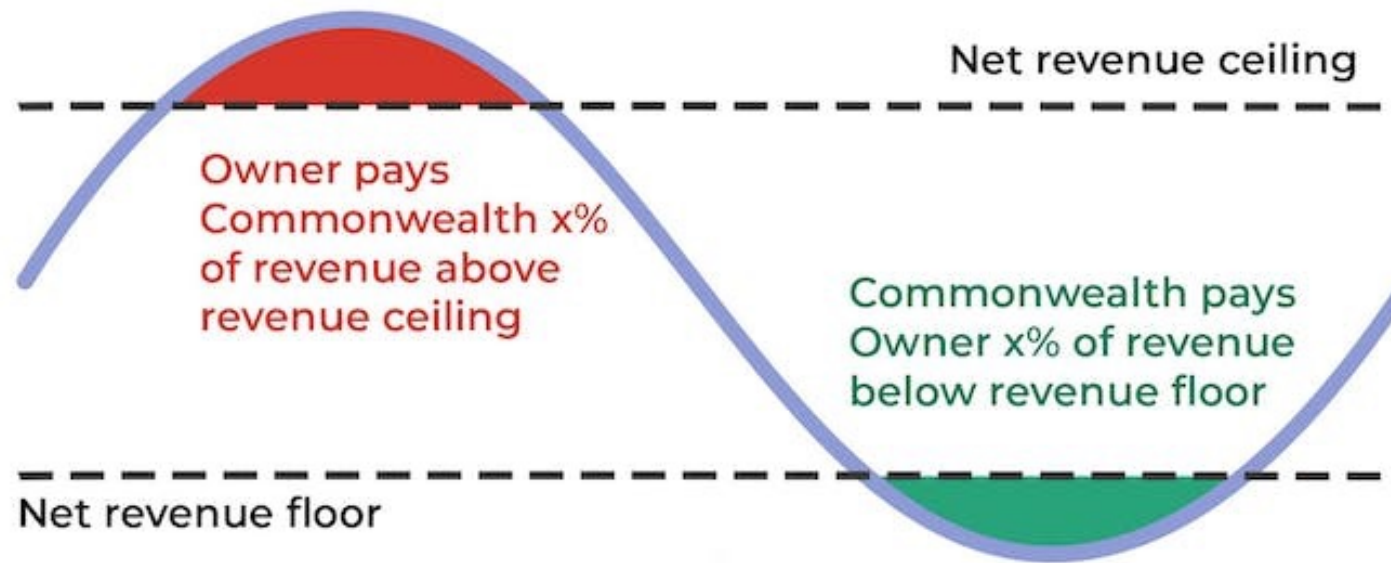
Climate Change Authority 2023

A Just Transition

- Climate Change Act 2022 (Cth)
 - Umbrella legislation to implement Australia's net-zero commitments and codifies Australia's 2030 (43%) and 2050 (0%) GHG emissions reductions targets under the Paris Agreement
- Safeguard mechanism
- Capacity Investment Scheme (to help reach 82% renewables)
- Vehicle emissions standards
- Net Zero Authority
- Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 (NSW)
 - Codifies emissions target of 50% below 2005 baseline by 2030
 - Establishes Net Zero Commission

A Just Transition

How the Capacity Investment Scheme works



What Can We Do?



- As individuals, relatively little; as a collective, a lot!
- Stay active in the union and labour movement
- Join environmental groups (e.g. ACF) and environment action groups within political parties (e.g. LEAN)
- Join Facebook groups (e.g. Good for the Gong)

What Can We Do?

Let's talk about Hunter Offshore Wind



Wind power is a renewable energy source that relies on the kinetic energy of the wind to generate electricity

It's time to think about our future.

The future Hunter region needs more energy, more jobs, & more opportunity. That's why, after careful consideration and extensive consultation, the Federal government declared an area off the coast of Port Stephens as suitable for future offshore wind development.

The public consultation period ran over 65 days from 23 February to 28 April 2023.

Those consulted included:

- Local communities
- First Nations people
- Unions
- Community groups
- Industry & business
- Local & state governments

1900+ submissions were received, showing significant support

Why offshore wind?

- Unlike other energy sources, wind energy produces zero greenhouse gas emissions and is inexhaustible.
- With stringent planning and environmental assessment, offshore wind has less environmental impact than almost any other energy source.
- Offshore wind is superior to land-placed, producing more energy at peak times and reducing the pressure on farms and forests
- Wind power provides far better economic opportunity and jobs for local communities than other proposed energy industries.
- Offshore wind produces electricity far cheaper than other types of power, e.g., nuclear.

Why here?

- The Hunter region is the ideal location for wind power because we are close to necessary energy infrastructure and supporting industry.
- The region is also facing huge economic and industrial change in coming years, making offshore wind a great opportunity to build stronger and more prosperous communities, and create quality, secure jobs.

What's happening now?

The government is taking *feasibility licence applications* for proposed projects until November 14, 2023.

No projects are yet approved.

Before development & construction begins:

- Feasibility licence applications must be approved
- Licence holders must undertake detailed environmental assessments and further stakeholder consultation

Join the conversation and keep up to date

Sign up to hear news and updates about Hunter offshore wind, and be notified about forums, information sessions and more




HUNTER WORKERS
Join Unions

The facts about Offshore wind

Misinformation about wind power exists because some people, like those who make money from other types of energy, spread false information. Some are trying to use disinformation to cause fear and win votes for themselves.

Here are the facts:

Offshore wind is far, far better for ocean wildlife

Scientists and environmental groups like Greenpeace overwhelmingly agree that climate change is the most serious threat to ocean wildlife and reducing carbon emissions is the best way to protect wildlife. Stringent environmental assessment and planning of offshore wind will ensure wildlife are protected and potential risks are mitigated.

Wind turbines do not affect the surf

Offshore wind farms exist off the coast of surf beaches around the world and cause no harm to surf conditions and swell. Wind turbines are placed far out from the shore, widely placed and floating, making no difference to the surf onshore.

Wind power will help save birds

Scientists agree that climate change poses the greatest threat to birds, and that any concerns about collisions with turbines are unfounded: A recent study of bird behaviour near offshore wind turbines found no collisions in two years of monitoring. Establishing wind energy is key in slowing climate change and protecting birds.

Wind turbines will be difficult to see onshore

The proposed zone for wind turbines is well over 20km out from sea. This distance combined with typical air conditions will make the turbines very difficult to see onshore.

Offshore wind is a strong & consistent power source

Offshore wind can reliably provide us with cheap, consistent energy at peak times. The proposed Hunter offshore wind development will have the potential to generate 5GW of renewable energy, enough to power 4.2 million homes.

Fish populations flourish around wind farms

Wind farms improve fish populations by creating rich underwater habitats, improving recreational fishing in the area. People fish in wind farms around the world, and they could here, too.

Watch out for these tricks:

Scare tactics
It is harder to accurately assess the veracity of information when the message targets the fears and anxieties of the reader.
e.g. *Highlighting/exaggerating potential catastrophic outcomes with little basis*

Selective information
Scientific information is easily cherry picked or falsely construed. Always assess the source and its credibility/reputation among experts.
e.g. *Only sharing outdated or non-peer reviewed studies*

"Everybody agrees"
Using various tactics to make an opinion seem more popular than it actually is can make that view appear more reasonable and legitimate.
e.g. *Exaggerating rally attendance numbers*

