

# *Barcelona is thirsty*

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By Guillermo Alvarado

The government of Catalonia declared an emergency phase in the city of Barcelona and its surroundings due to an unprecedented drought in that area, where water reserves are at a critical point and everything indicates that the situation will worsen in the immediate future.

The measure implies a drastic reduction in the availability of the vital liquid in agriculture, livestock and construction, three key sectors in the Catalan economy.

The president of the regional government, Pere Aragonés, said that in total some six million people are affected by the worst drought in the last century, which brought reservoirs to levels below 16 percent.

The periods without rain are relatively usual in this area of the Mediterranean, for the current one it has already lasted a long time and if it lasts one more year the situation will be dramatic, said some specialists.

In short, this is a new example of how climate change is evolving, a phenomenon that is already underway, although some politicians, such as Donald Trump and his Argentinean counterpart Javier Milei, among others, insist on denying it.

Cases are multiplying on all four sides of the world in the most dissimilar ways, such as the drought in Catalonia, major floods in Africa and Asia or the severe forest fires that are devastating Colombia these days.

In Chile, for example, the austral summer has been characterized by heat waves never seen before, such as the one suffered this week in the central-southern area of the territory, with temperatures of more than 37 degrees Celsius in the city of Santiago, the capital.

The newspapers and television newscasts are full of recommendations to avoid the so-called "heat strokes" that can be fatal for children, the elderly or people with chronic pathologies. The fact is that from the climatic point of view, the world is changing in an accelerated and profound way and there is no doubt that human action is decisive in this regard, particularly due to the irrational production and consumption model implemented in the last two centuries.

I have said it on other occasions, but it is worth repeating the opinion of the French geneticist and writer Albert Jacquard: If humanity were to disappear suddenly it would be a tragedy from the point of view of biology, but the next day the birds, animals and plants in the forest would be much happier.

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