



America has some of the wildest weather on the planet, and it turns out those extremes – which run from heat waves and tornadoes to floods, hurricanes and droughts – carry a heavy price tag.

Climate studies have associated more frequent and intense weather events – such as heavy storms and heat waves – with climate change. The wild swings in weather across the midwest over the last few years – including heat waves, floods, and drought – have been cited as an example of what lies ahead with future climate change.

A report from the environmental research organisation World Watch Institute on Wednesday provided further evidence of the costs of those extreme shifts – known as "weather whiplash".

The report found that the United States alone accounted for more than two-thirds of the \$170bn in losses caused by natural disasters around the world last year.

Hurricane Sandy, the drought that spread across the corn belt last summer, and a spate of tornadoes and other extreme storms together accounted for \$100bn of those global losses, the report said.

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