

Is this Global Warming?

By Joanne Edwards

While we complain about the lack of snow in Salzburg and Carinthia is sinking in it, England is fighting against the wettest weather for 250 years.

When the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, cancels his planned trip to Israel: When a Sunday newspaper dedicates 20 pages to the topic: When England starts to resemble Venice more and more each day - you know we have a problem. The floods in England have really gone from bad to worse and people are using canoes and small boats to get along the High Street, instead of their cars.

It has been raining cats and dogs for four months now, and the weather is still lousy. Flood victims have been told to brace themselves for another four weeks of rain. Like in a horror film, sinkholes measuring 7 metres have started to appear all over the country, swallowing gardens, trees and cars. Many people have had to be evacuated from their homes as the River Thames broke its banks, when it reached the highest levels since the disastrous floods in 1997, and flooded the streets of London. Waves measuring 10 metres are destroying the beautiful South Coast as locals are forced to move inland.

The scenes resemble something from biblical times. Gales from the Atlantic Sea are really causing havoc and winds of up to 100 km per hour are raging through the country. My sister's garden looks terrible and all that is left of the 100-year-old weeping willow, is a branch. Many people

are looking for someone to blame for this catastrophe, as some insurance companies refuse to pay for the damage, claiming that it is an "act of God". Some believe it really is the wrath of God and one stupid politician went as far as to say that it is God's punishment for allowing same-sex marriages. As usual, most people blame the politicians, saying that they should have reacted earlier and dredged the rivers. However, others are certain that it is a result of global warming, even though scientists disagree. So what can be done to make sure that it doesn't happen again? In medieval times, they would drown a witch, but these days we must look for a more practical solution.



It is all very tragic, but I have to smile when I see the way the British Nation unites in tragedy. Thousands of volunteers have rallied round to help the victims. Dozens of businesses have pledged assistance worth millions of pounds, supermarkets are

offering food and clothing for the homeless and DIY stores have delivered 100 tonnes of sand to households beside the river. Neighbours are taking the children to school in kayaks, and blankets, food and torches are being transported to the worst hit areas. The armed forces have been sent in to pile up the sand bags and some prisoners, who have committed petty crimes, have been released for the day to help stack the sandbags. Prince William and Prince Harry were also seen, wading around in their wellies and tossing sandbags to each other, to give a helping hand. Tractors are being used as a makeshift "Noah's Arks" to take the sheep and cows to higher ground and the Queen has sent animal food from the royal farms in Windsor. (She has always preferred animals).

But every cloud has a silver lining. Travel agents are reporting a 30 percent increase on people booking holidays abroad, to get away from the rain. They may regret this as forecasters warn Britain to get ready for the hottest summer on record. Then people will complain about the heat and search for places in the shade. The government will introduce the usual hosepipe bans due to the lack of water and even though it is difficult to imagine now, the people of Britain will long for rain.

Vocabulary

to complain – sich beschweren
to dedicate – widmen
topic – Thema
to resemble – ähneln
it is raining cats and dogs – es schüttet
lousy – saumäßig
flood victims – Flutopfer
to brace oneself – sich wappnen
sinkhole – Erdloch
to swallow – verschlucken
banks – Ufer
disastrous – verheerend
locals – Einheimische
gales – Sturmwinde
to cause havoc – schwere Zerstörungen anrichten
to rage – wüten
weeping willow – Trauerweide
branch – Ast
to blame someone – jemanden beschuldigen
insurance companies – Versicherungen
to refuse – sich weigern
an "act of God" – höhere Gewalt
wrath – Zorn
to dredge – ausbaggern
result – Ergebnis
to drown somebody – jemanden ertränken
solution – Lösung
volunteers – Freiwillige
to rally round – sich zusammentun
to pledge – zusagen
DIY (Do-It-Yourself) store – Baumarkt
blankets – Decken
torches – Taschenlampen
armed forces – Streitkräfte
to pile up – aufeinander stapeln
petty crimes – Kleinkriminalität
to release – entlassen
to wade – waten
wellies (Wellington boots) – Gummistiefel
to toss – werfen
makeshift – provisorisch
to prefer – vorziehen, bevorzugen
every cloud has a silver lining – jedes Unglück hat auch sein Gutes
travel agents – Reisebüro
increase – Steigerung
holidays abroad – Urlaub im Ausland
to regret – bedauern
forecasters – Meteorologen
hosepipe ban – Bewässerungsverbot