

How warm was 2009? - January 18, 2010

Although it might not seem like it to those in the northern hemisphere who still haven't warmed up following [the recent cold snap](#), 2009 was a pretty warm year according to the latest figures.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [recently announced](#) that global land and ocean temperatures for last year tied with 2006 as the fifth warmest year on record. NOAA puts the year at 0.56°C above the 20th century average.

Meanwhile, James Hansen and colleagues have put out their draft assessment of surface temperatures from the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, under the title *If It's That Warm, How Come It's So Damned Cold?*

Global Top 10 Warm Years (Jan-Dec)	Anomaly °C	Anomaly °F
2005	0.62	1.11
1998	0.60	1.08
2003	0.58	1.04
2002	0.57	1.03
2009	0.56	1.01
2006	0.56	1.01
2007	0.55	0.99
2004	0.54	0.97
2001	0.52	0.94
2008	0.48	0.86
1997	0.48	0.86

“There is a contradiction between the observed continued warming trend and popular perceptions about climate trends. Frequent statements include: ‘There has been global cooling over the past decade’, ‘Global warming stopped in 1998’, ‘1998 is the warmest year in the record’,” [write the team](#).

“Such statements have been repeated so often that most of the public seems to accept them as being true. However, based on our data, such statements are not correct.”

That analysis puts 2009 as the joint second warmest year “in the 130 years of global instrumental temperature records”. The preliminary GISS data puts the past year at 0.57°C warmer than the 1951–1980 base period.

Differences between the two groups are likely down to how they extrapolate to cover areas with little data and how they compensate for local anthropogenic “urban warming”.

Image: NOAA top ten warm years

From: http://blogs.nature.com/news/thegreatbeyond/2010/01/how_warm_was_2009.html