



Climate change is likely to be a factor in the extreme weather that has hit much of the UK in recent months, the Met Office's chief scientist has said.

Dame Julia Slingo said the variable UK climate meant there was "no definitive answer" to what caused the storms. "But all the evidence suggests there is a link to climate change," she added.

"There is no evidence to counter the basic premise that a warmer world will lead to more intense daily and hourly rain events."

More than 130 severe flood warnings - indicating a threat to life - have been issued since December. In contrast, there were only nine in the whole of 2012.

More than 5,000 properties have been flooded over this period, although the Environment Agency says investment in flood defences over the past decade has protected a further 1.3 million properties.

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