



The official numbers are in, and they confirm what most already suspected: 2014 was the hottest year on record. Temperature records were shattered in places across the globe, including in much of Europe, parts of South America, as well as in China and portions of Russia and the Far East.

As NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced Friday, average global temperatures on land and sea surfaces collected across the planet were 1.24 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th century average.

"When averaged over the globe, 2014 was the warmest year on record," Michael Freilich, director of the Earth Science Division in NASA's Science Mission Directorate, told reporters during a teleconference on Friday.

Only the United States featured a considerable chunk of real estate with land surface temperatures below average, with much of the South and Midwest having endured an especially cold year. Still, much of the West Coast and Alaska featured record highs.

And the United States was an anomaly, globally speaking.

Surface temperatures collected by NASA and NOAA via a wide array of instruments -- temperature gauges on buoys and ships, weather station thermometers and satellite readings -- showed, in separate complimentary analyses, that 2014 was the hottest on record.

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