

Coronavirus and climate: how much impact is the current lockdown really having on our environment?



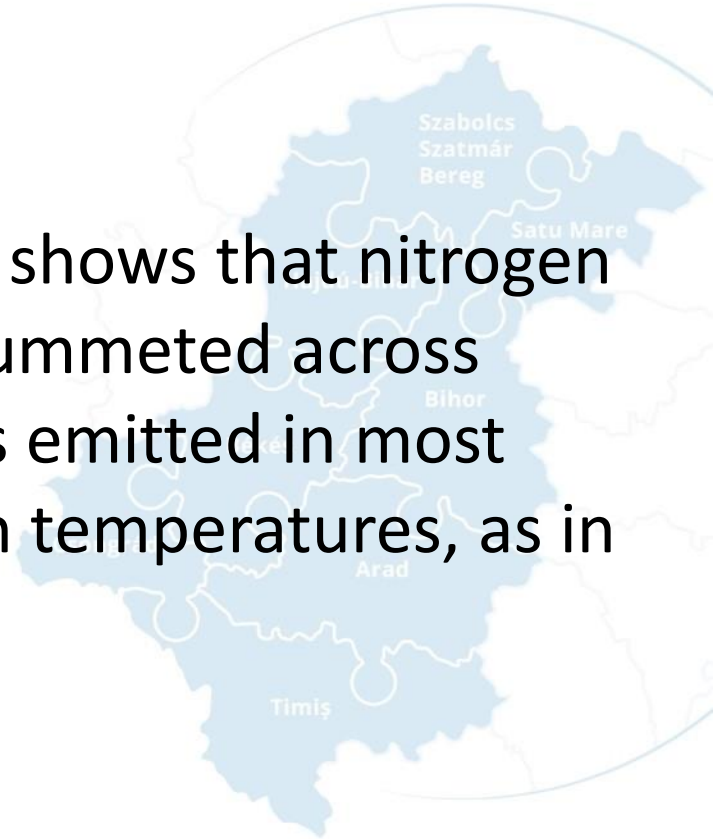
Covid-19 vs. the environment

- Europe has come to a virtual standstill, with the majority of countries in some kind of lockdown. Many assume that this is good for the environment



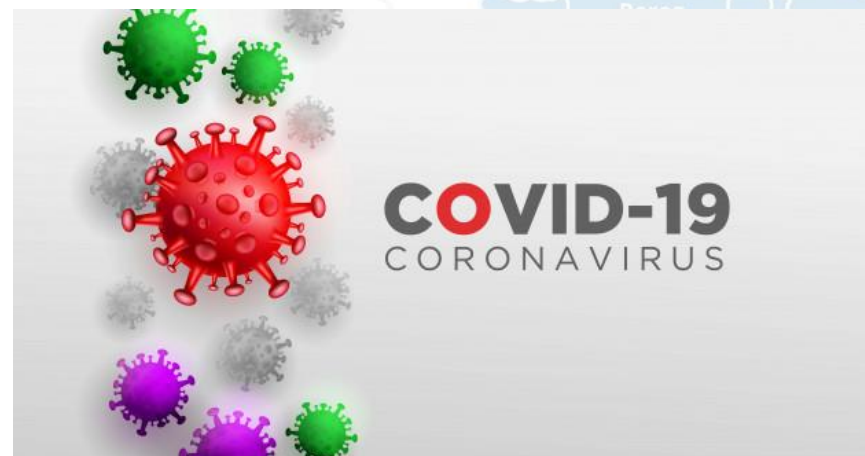
Covid-19 vs. the environment

- Data from the [Sentinel-5P satellite](#) shows that nitrogen dioxide air pollution levels have plummeted across Europe since the pandemic. NO₂ is emitted in most cases by burning fossil fuels at high temperatures, as in internal combustion engines.



Air-borne virus?

- There could also be another potential benefit of today's lower air pollution; there's a chance that Covid-19 may be transported and remain viable on particles of pollution.



Record CO2 levels

- Short-term air pollution, which lasts for a few hours or a few days in the atmosphere, has dropped, and that is considered positive news.
- However, despite the economic slowdown, greenhouse gases are still being emitted. Indeed, Oksana Tarasova, Head of Atmospheric Environment Research Division at the [World Meteorological Organization](#), says carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are still at record high.



Will summer weather stop the pandemic?

- There have been a lot of questions about whether the virus will disappear once the summer weather comes in the northern hemisphere. The answer isn't clear, we don't have enough information yet, and there are so many variables, including how we all behave in our daily lives.



- However, the idea that temperatures above a certain level can destroy or prevent coronavirus are very much among the myths circling around the virus - and one that Oksana Tarasova's colleagues at the World Meteorological Organization are doing their best to counter:

You can catch COVID-19, no matter how sunny or hot the weather is. Countries with hot weather have reported cases of COVID-19. To protect yourself, make sure you clean your hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

FACT:

Exposing yourself to the sun or to temperatures higher than 25C degrees DOES NOT prevent the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)



Europe's temperatures in March two degrees above average

- Here in Europe in March, average temperatures were almost two degrees Celsius above the 1981-2010 average



March 2020 average temperatures compared to 1981-2010 reference period
Source: Copernicus Climate Change Service implemented by ECMWF / Euronews



Temperatures in April

- The latest data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service showed it was 1.3 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average, making it the joint warmest April on record, together with April 2016.



April 2020 +1.3C compared to pre-industrial average Euronews Copernicus Climate Change Service



Conclusion

- Climate change is not responsible for the emergence of [COVID-19](#), but global warming can increase the risk of other diseases in Europe.



Sources:

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