Earthweek: Diary of a Changing World

gen variants, according to a

preliminary analysis by the

London-based disease fore-

record 13 million, nearly tri-

pling in Central and South

America, with global fatali-

ties nearing 10,000. Whoop-

ing cough cases rose tenfold

mpox, Oropouche fever and

polio, also saw alarming in-

creases, with Marburg virus

emerging in Rwanda and

a record number of human

cases of H5N1 avian influ-

surge to warmer tempera-

tures that expanded disease

ranges, as well as disruptions

caused by armed conflicts.

enza reported in the U.S. Airfinity attributed the

Other diseases, such as

casting firm Airfinity.

compared to 2023.

Week ending Friday, January 10, 2025

Warming 'Havoc'

The 2024 Global Water Monitor Report concludes that last year's record heat disrupted the world's water cycle, leading to an unprecedented number of water-related disasters.

The international study found that as the planet experienced its hottest year on record, following years of record heat, water systems were hit hardest.

"Rising sea surface temperatures intensified tropical cyclones and droughts in the Amazon Basin and southern Africa," said Australian National University hydrologist Albert van Dijk, who led the study. "Global warming also contributed to heavier downpours and slower-moving storms, as evidenced by deadly flash floods in Europe, Asia and Brazil."

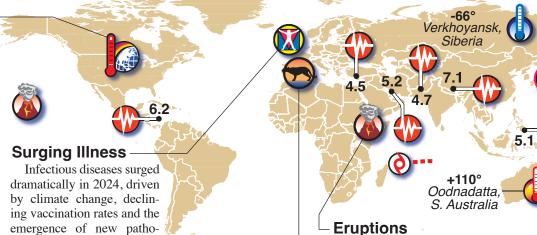
Earthquakes



least people perished thousands of homes were

wrecked when a magnitude 7.1 temblor struck Tibet.

• Tremors were also felt in the far southern Philippines, western Pakistan, southern Iran, southwestern Turkey and El Salvador.



From the Brink

The Iberian lynx, once on the brink of extinction Dengue cases reached a with fewer than 50 mature animals left in the wild two decades ago, has become a global conservation success story, with wild populations now surpassing 2,000 across Spain and Portugal.

> Once decimated by habitat loss, hunting and a sharp decline in the number of rabbits (the lynx's primary prey), it faced near-total extinction by the early 2000s.

> Europe's \$19.3 million LIFE LynxConnect project has been pivotal in the species' recovery by enhancing genetic diversity, increasing population size and expanding the lynx's range.

Smoke and debris began spewing from central Ethiopia's long-dormant Mount Dofen volcano as earthquakes of increasing magnitude jolted the region for a third consecutive month. Additional geothermal activity was also reported across the area. The Ethiopian government said it was working to evacuate more than 80,000 residents after a magnitude 5.8 earthquake struck the Afar region.

• Activity at Hawaii's Kilauea volcano quieted down. but hazardous volcanic fog, or vog, was still producing a health risk in the area.



The Iberian Lynx will be introduced into even more habits in one of the world's most successful conservation efforts. Photo: Manuel Moral Castro

By Steve Newman

Less Than Forever Japanese researchers say they have developed a meth-

od to break down, within hours, human-made PFAS. also known as "forever chemicals" due to their inability to degrade naturally.

These compounds are found in waterproof clothing, fire extinguishing agents and nonstick cookware.

With more than 10,000 types of PFAS known to exist, they accumulate in the environment and the human body, raising health concerns.

Scientists at Ritsumeikan University report that they completely and quickly broke down a type of PFAS by exposing it to light from a purple light-emitting diode.

This method is more practical than the energy-intensive use of ultraviolet radiation combined with very high temperatures and pressure currently available.

Tropical Cyclone



An area of disturbed weather spinning up over the central In-

dian Ocean was predicted to strike the northern tip of Madagascar as a tropical storm over the weekend.

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