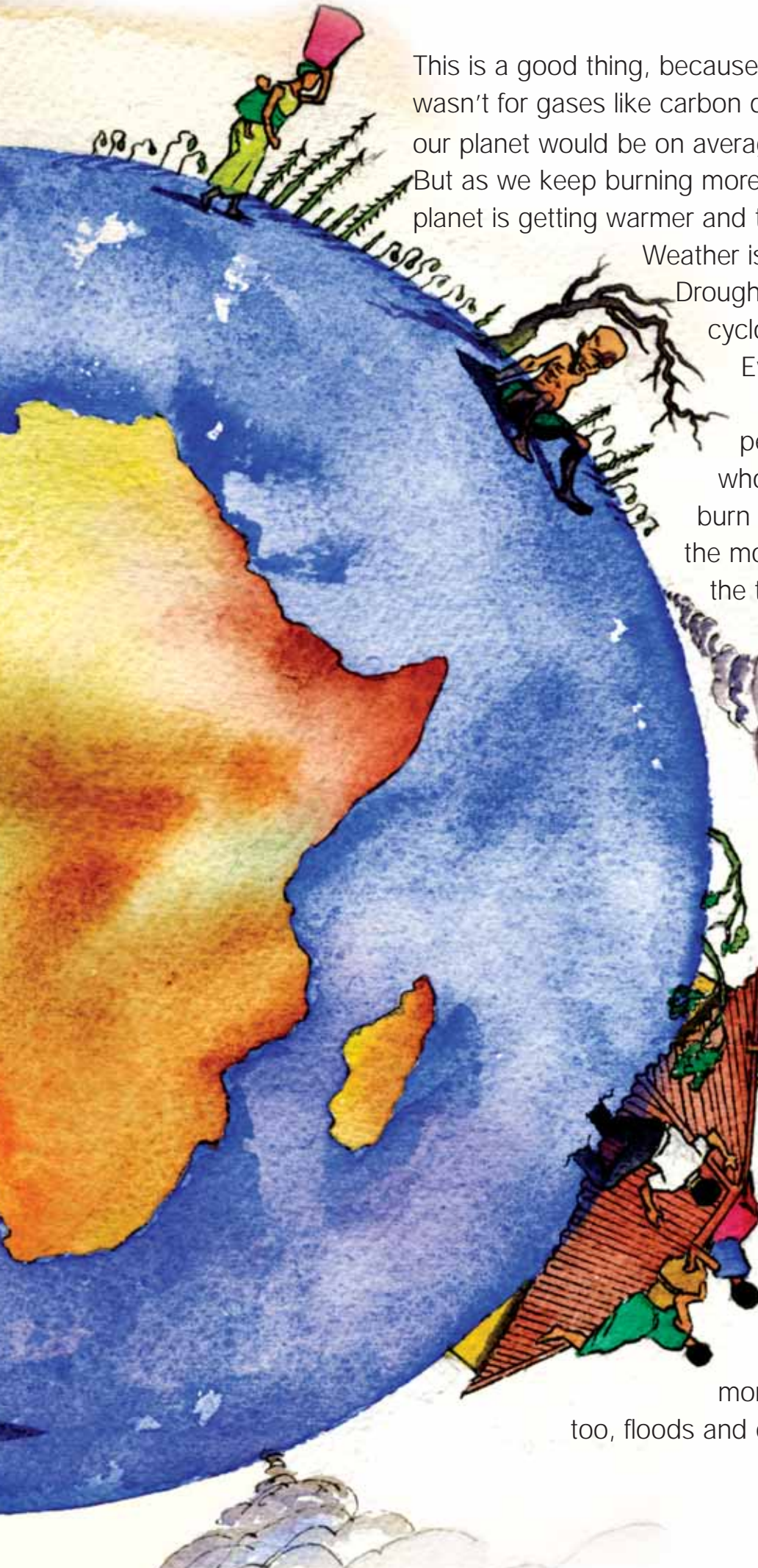


The atmosphere, the air we breath, is made up of several gases, including carbon dioxide, oxygen and nitrogen. Burning carbon creates carbon dioxide and other carbon gases. These collect in the atmosphere, high in the sky. There they act like glass in a window, creating a 'glasshouse effect' over the whole world.





This is a good thing, because it keeps the heat in. If it wasn't for gases like carbon dioxide, the temperature of our planet would be on average minus 18°C – very cold! But as we keep burning more and more fossil fuels, the planet is getting warmer and the climate is changing.

Weather is becoming unpredictable. Droughts, heatwaves, floods and cyclones will be more frequent.

Even more of Africa may become desert. Unjustly, people in the poorest countries, who have only just started to burn fossil fuels, will probably suffer the most. Wildlife will suffer too as the temperature and the seasons change too quickly for trees to adapt or move. The insects and animals that depend on them may simply die.

The combustion of fossil fuels to drive engines is perhaps one of the most brilliant of all human inventions. Sadly, it could destroy our own planet. In 2050, sub-Saharan Africa is predicted to be warmer by 0.5 – 2 °C, with 10% less rainfall. Already in Lehurutshe, South Africa, people are experiencing more droughts. In Mozambique too, floods and droughts are increasing.