

Putin Signs Decree to Speed Up Flood Cleanup

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin visited the flood-stricken Far East over the weekend and signed a decree making it a top priority to overcome the consequences of the devastating floods.

Authorities in the regions hit by the floods — the Amur and Magadan regions, the Jewish autonomous region, the Khabarovsk and Primorye regions and the Siberian republic of Sakha — have until Sept. 5 to establish commissions for tackling the fallout from the floods, the Kremlin's website reported.

In addition, the government must begin issuing compensation funds to victims of the flood by Sept. 10. Compensation for the flood victims will be similar to that offered after the Krymsk floods last year — more than 100,000 rubles for each victim, Putin said Friday.

A total of 3.2 billion rubles (\$96 million) has been allocated for compensations and cleanup work.

The compensation amounts that were distributed after the Krymsk disaster would be used as the base for determining how to help the more than 50,000 people that have been affected by the record flood in the Far East, Putin said, Interfax reported. Each Krymsk resident received 110,000 rubles and an additional 5,000 rubles for each square meter of their housing that needed repair work.

Putin also promised to extend state payments on the local farmers' loans and interest, though he added that he was not ready to say whether the loans could be fully written off given the beating the farmers have taken in the floods.

Local authorities were also tasked with supplying farmers with seeds and fertilizers to ensure future harvests.

As of Sunday, the water level of the Amur River was 790 centimeters, and more than 1,000 residents had been evacuated from the area since Saturday. Overall, water levels in the Amur River are expected to climb to 8 meters by Sept. 4.

During the visit, Putin also fired his envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, Viktor Ishayev, though he said the dismissal had nothing to do with the flooding. Presidential aide Yury Trutnev was appointed to replace Ishayev, who was also dismissed as Far East development minister.

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