

Russia Loses 468 Square Kilometers Annually to Erosion

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia loses 468 square kilometers every year to erosion and the melting of permafrost areas, the TASS news agency reported, citing a scientist from the Siberian department of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

"Every year due to melting of the permafrost along coasts of northern seas we are losing a territory, comparable with the territory of Andorra," said the scientist, whose name was not given, TASS reported Monday.

The southern coasts are not immune to erosion, but the rate is much quicker in the north where storms and the sea can eat up to 10 meters into the coastline.

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The melting of the permafrost border could raise temperatures and lead to water shortages, particularly in Russia's fertile southern regions of Stavropol and Krasnodar, TASS reported.

In 2003, Russian President Vladimir Putin told an international climate conference that warmer temperatures would mean Russians "spend less on fur coats" and "agricultural specialists say our grain production will increase, and thank God for that."

Putin now acknowledges that global warming may exist, but he remains skeptical that the changes are a result of human activity.

Ahead of the December UN climate change summit in Paris, Putin has pledged only modest emission cuts, the Reuters news agency reported last month.

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