

Russian Ministry Warns of Coming Environmental Apocalypse Fueled by Climate Change

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Russia's environmental ministry has published a report that paints an apocalyptic future for the country due to climate change, with consequences including epidemics, drought, mass flooding and hunger.

While Russia has been [slated](#) to reap economic benefits from a modest rise in global temperatures — which are expected to open navigation in the Arctic and allow for more economic activity in the winter — the country has [allocated](#) an estimated 1.55 trillion rubles (\$22 billion) on a new environmental program to promote air pollution reduction, reforestation and recycling.

Related article: [Russia to Reap Benefits from Climate Change](#)

At 900 pages, the draft report [published](#) by the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry on Monday breaks down the past and future consequences of climate change in the country.

Here are the key findings:

- Deaths from environmental disasters in Russia have increased 11-fold between 2016 and 2017.
- Temperatures in Russia increased at more than double the rate of the world's average of 0.18 degrees Celsius per decade.
- The concentration of greenhouse gases, driven by economic and population growth in the past two centuries, reached record levels last year.
- “This has led to unprecedented, at least in the last 800,000 years, levels of atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide.”
- At 4.5 percent, Russia contributed the world's fourth-most greenhouse gas emissions behind China, the United States and India.
- The ministry report says it is 95 percent confident that human activity contributed to global warming observed since the middle of the 20th century.

Future dangers

- Moscow and other big cities are at risk of warmer weather and increasing pollution, while the elderly in central and southern Russia face the danger of heatwaves. Other regions can become hotbeds of disease due to contaminated drinking water and insects, the draft report warns.
- Southern Russia is at risk of “more accidents linked to the deformation of railways in extremely high temperatures.”
- “Overheating of buildings during heat waves causes increased energy consumption and contributes to energy and water supply emergencies in the urban population” in central Russia.
- Melting permafrost in and around the Russian Arctic could lead to “dangerous chemical, biological and radioactive substances entering the human habitat.”
- Forest fires in Siberia and other territories risk becoming a more common occurrence, causing more emissions and threatening lives. The Far East will be prone to flash floods and monsoons.

The ministry's role

An anonymous government source said this year's unexpected focus on the aftereffects of climate change “probably mean the ministry intends to become the chief climate policy developer and coordinator.”

That role is currently shared between the Natural Resources Ministry, the Economic Development Ministry, the Energy Ministry and the Industry and Trade Ministry, according to the *Kommersant* business daily.

“That’s why they’re laying the groundwork, so that they could cite their report when needed,” the unnamed official [told](#) the outlet Thursday.

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