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Moscow Winters Are Becoming Warmer Due to Climate Change, Top Meteorologist Says

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

Climate change is making winters in Moscow warmer and more cloudy, a meteorologist at Russia's official weather agency has said.

Studies expect Russia to benefit economically from a modest rise in global temperatures, but environmental authorities fear Russia could still suffer hunger and epidemics as a result of climate change. Moscow temperatures average between highs of minus 1.8 degrees Celsius and minus 7.2 degrees in winter, which lasts from early November until late March.

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“Recorded history in the capital shows a clear warming. There used to be more sun and more

intense winters, but now winters have become more gray, warm, and cloudy," Dmitry Kiktyov, deputy director of the Rosgidromet federal weather service, said in an interview with the state-run RIA Novosti news agency Friday.

"This is due to the fact that global warming accelerates the water cycle, cloud formation and sediment formation," Kiktyov said.

The three-decade period between 1981 and 2010 had significantly warmer winter periods in Moscow than in 1961-1990, Kiktyov was cited as saying, adding that February has overtaken January as the coldest month of the year.

The month of January in Moscow grew warmer by more than 2 degrees Celsius over the time period, far outpacing the 0.6 to 0.7 degrees of warming observed in central European Russia.

"Warming was even faster in the north of the country and the Russian Arctic," Kiktyov said.

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