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Putin Says Russia Fulfilling Obligations to Fight Climate Change

By AFP

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Vladimir Putin pledged to reduce Russia's emissions to below EU levels earlier this week. **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that Russia, the world's fourth-highest producer of carbon emissions, was committed to fulfilling its international obligations to combat climate change.

Russia has set numerous heat records in recent years, with the first half of 2020 seeing the warmest temperatures since the country began weather observations.

"Russia is approaching with complete responsibility its fulfillment of international obligations in this area," Putin told a summit hosted by U.S. President Joe Biden.

He added that Russia had set out to "significantly limit" net emissions by 2050.

"Despite Russia's size, its geography, climate and the structure of its economy, I am sure this

task is achievable," Putin added.

He concluded by saying that Russia was interested in "stepping up international cooperation" on climate change.

Rising temperatures are contributing to increasingly regular and devastating floods and forest fires in Siberia.

Putin said earlier this week that Russia would set an emissions target "lower than in the European Union."

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In March last year, Russia released a draft of its long-term strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

It envisions a 33 percent cut by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

High temperatures also account for melting permafrost — which covers about two-thirds of Russia — posing a hazard for the infrastructure built there, including the vast network of gas and oil pipelines.

This also releases carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere that further triggers global warming.

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Weather monitors have recorded a historic decline in the summer ice cover of Russia's Arctic maritime shipping route, called the Northern Sea Route.

Transit of the eastern Arctic usually ends in November but Russia hopes climate change means the commercial benefit of the route will increase.

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