The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

War in Ukraine: The Environmental Impacts of the War

Eurasian Climate Brief

March 23, 2022

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has changed everything. At the time of writing, there have been more than 900 Ukrainian civilians and 1,300 soldiers killed since the start of the invasion on 24 February. At least 7,000 Russian have died - a greater death toll than that of American troops over 20 years in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. The conflict carries risks for the environment, too. On 4 March, Europe held its breath after Russian forces shelled the continent's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporizhzhia, igniting a fire at a building. In this instance, firefighters succeeded in extinguished the flames and catastrophe was averted. But the conflict also threatens to unleash chemical hazards. On 21 March, shelling caused an ammonia leak at a chemical factory near Novoselytsya, in the west of the country on the border with Romania. Residents scrambled to take shelter. Join us as we discuss the environmental dimensions of the conflict with Wim Zwijnenburg, a project leader for the Dutch peace organisation PAX. A long-time analyst of the nexus between conflict and the environment in the Middle East, Zwijnenburg has been monitoring the environmental impacts of the conflict in Ukraine since 2014.

Nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia. **Ralf1969 (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

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