

# ASIA MOST VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

---



Populations living in low-lying, coastal Asian cities are at most risk from the effects of climate change, according to a report titled “Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability,” presented last March at the climate talks in Yokohama Japan. The report warns that Asia’s coastline is the region of the globe most vulnerable to future flooding, famine and rising sea levels. These threats — associated with rising temperatures accelerated by human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels — will put hundreds of millions of people in peril.

Other threats in the region associated with climate change include exacerbated food security, hunger, poverty and economic stagnation.

Since March’s climate summit, further research has highlighted Asia’s vulnerability to climate change. A new report published by the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, “Explaining Extreme Events of 2013 from a Climate Perspective”, found that while all extreme weather events cannot be linked to human activity, the 2013 heat waves in Australia and Asia were made more severe by human-caused climate change. Research compiled in the report linked both the likelihood and seriousness of the Asia-Pacific region’s extreme temperatures to

climate change, but had more difficulty measuring human influence on droughts, storms and heavy rains. However, the study examined four extreme weather events of last year in Asia and found that while natural variability was the prime cause of each event, human activity had influenced its strength or increased its likelihood. This included increased stronger rains in northern India along with extreme hot spells in Japan, Korea and Eastern China.

Another recent report warns that climate change may affect Asian rice yields. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fifth Assessment Report, which came out earlier this month, names western Japan, eastern China, south Indochina and northern South Asia as the regions with rice yields most vulnerable to climate change. On the other hand, wheat and maize farmers in the mountainous parts of Pakistan may experience bumper crops from changing climactic patterns. The report furthermore stated that Asia was the region with the largest amount of weather- and climate-related disasters during the years of 2000-2008, with high levels of economic loss and flood-related mortality.

Finally, research from the University of Tokyo found that the decline of Arctic sea ice had doubled the risk of harsh winters in both Asia and Europe over the past 10 years. The findings, published in the journal Nature Geoscience and led by researcher Masato Mori, may lead some to believe that global warming has stopped because it seems counter intuitive to link cold winters with warming temperatures, but scientists warn against this kind of overly simplistic assumption. While the rise in average surface temperatures has slowed since 2000, Arctic temperatures have continued to warm rapidly.

Source : <http://chimalaya.org/2014/10/28/research-asia-most-vulnerable-to-climate-change/>