

Study shows warm regions of world bear brunt of climate change



A recent study shows that temperate nations closer to the poles will escape the increased temperatures of climate change, compared to countries along the equator.

The study published in the *Geophysical Research Letters* concludes that if average surface temperatures increase to the 1.5°C or 2°C cap set by nations in the Paris agreement, typically poorer nations - those located around the equator - will suffer the most from increased heat compared to the wealthy nations closer to the poles.

"The results are a stark example of the inequalities that come with global warming," said lead author Andrew King from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes at the University of Melbourne in Australia.

"The richest countries that produced the most emissions are the least affected by heat when average temperatures climb to just 2°C, while poorer nations bear the brunt of changing local climates and the consequences that come with them," said King. The same is true even if temperatures reach 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

According to the research, the temperate United Kingdom will come out ahead of all nations, and countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo and countries that wrap the global equator will feel climate change effects the worst.

By comparing a region's change in average temperatures caused by climate change to how much the local's temperature varies throughout the year, scientists gathered that places outside the tropics, where there is greater annual variability, warming will be less noticeable.

At the equator, where temperatures remain relatively high throughout the entire year, climate change will be felt more acutely, says the report.

These climate effects are exacerbated by the fact that nations within the tropics are poorer due to having been colonized and used as excavation grounds by more temperate-climate countries. This leaves warmer climate countries with already fewer resources having to work overtime to stave off increasing temperatures.

"Economically powerful nations, who are most responsible for the emissions that led to global warming, are going to have to pick up the slack if they want to maintain economic growth in developing countries," said co-author Luke Harrington from the University of Oxford.

"It's why we need to invest in limiting the worst impacts of climate change for developing nations today. By assisting developing nations to meet these challenges we help maintain their economic stability and security into the future and by extension, our own as well," added professor Harrington.

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