

SWITZERLAND: CLIMATE STUDY SHOWS MORE SUMMER AND LESS SNOW



Recent report by MeteoSwiss suggests that in near future Switzerland may expect more summer days with the season getting longer. Climatologists await more frequent heat waves and prolonged periods of drought. The climate change is likely to influence summer and winter tourism.

A new study shows how the climate change is going to impact Switzerland by the year 2060. The technical report 'Climate Scenarios - Switzerland: A Regional Overview' by the Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology (MeteoSwiss) was commissioned by the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN). The evaluations are based on the Swiss Climate Change Scenarios CH2011.

The regional climate models by MeteoSwiss show that, depending on the emissions scenario, a temperature increase of 0.5 to 3.6 °C is predicted by the year 2060. **The report suggests a stronger warming in the Alps.**

Further calculations show that in the summer, precipitation is expected to decrease. The reduction in summer rains averages about 20% in western Switzerland and 5 - 10% in the eastern parts of the country.

More Summer...

The number of summer days will also increase. In the Central Plateau, it is expected that the average number of summer days in 2060 will be about 40 - 80, which is almost double. Ticino, the Rhone Valley and Lake Geneva may have more than 100 days of summer.

By comparison, today it is normal in the Common Plateau to have between 20 - 40 days of summer. In Ticino, there are about 80 summer days in the deepest parts of the valleys. In the range 1500 meters above sea level, currently hardly any summer days are registered at all. By 2060 this is likely to change.

Less Frost...

At the same time, the number of frosty days in the west midlands and in Ticino, by 2060, will be reduced to less than 50 days a year. This corresponds to a decrease of approximately 30 days compared to today. The largest decrease in frost days, with sometimes more than 50 days, should be found in the high mountain regions.

The study thus confirms that the prospects are bleak for winter tourism in the country. **According to climatologists, within the next fifty years the number of snow days is expected to decrease by at least 30.** In the Central Plateau, the number of days with snow will be decreased considerably to less than 10 days, and in the depths of Ticino this is expected to be as low as less than a single day.

Extreme Events Are Increasing

According to the models up to the year 2060, there will also be heat waves which will "increase

significantly to high and very high probability." At the same time, cold spells will be rare. Heavy precipitation and droughts will occur more frequently and there will also be less occurrences of heavy snowfall at lower altitudes.

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