

ATOLLS TO BE FLOODED IN THE NEAR FUTURE DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



Atoll islands may be flooded sooner than expected, a new study reveals. The effect of the sea level rise combined with wave-driven floods caused by storms may also actually be worse than predicted, according to this report. If this turns out to be true, more than half a million people may lose their home in the Pacific and Indian Oceans in the near future.

According to the new study, the interaction between waves and the rise of the sea level is still strong, causing the forecast land to be flooded to be double of what is currently expected, showing that the exclusion of this relation from current studies might have resulted in an inaccurate prediction.

The main culprit for the rise of the sea level is, as observations led scientists to conclude, the climate change. This situation is true for the whole planet, but especially for the tropical Pacific region, where most low-level atolls are located. These islands, which are lined with coral reef, are already quite precarious for humans to live on, given the lack of land and water as well as food sources, and the situation is only bound to get worse, as the fragile ecosystems of these islands are very vulnerable to inundation, making the situation critical for these populations if the study turns out to be correct.

The study, which was conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey along with the Deltares Institute and the University of Hawaii presents a daunting scenario, as flooding will contaminate the already limited water supply populations have access to, meaning that these people will need to leave their homes much sooner than expected - in the next decades instead of the distant future - as the flooding advances at an annual rate.

The study was based on the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, but unlike others before, it can be applied to any similar region in the world, adding weight and accuracy to these daunting predictions.

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