

Assam to see higher temps, lesser rainfall by 2040: Study

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Times Of India

February 14, 2025



Guwahati: Climate of Assam is projected to undergo significant changes by 2040, posing substantial challenges to the state's economy, ecosystem and public health.

This projection has been provided by the School of Climate Change and Sustainability, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. According to the forecast, the climate of Assam will change significantly by 2040 due to the current conditions of the medium emission of the shared socio-economic pathway (SSP) 2-4.5 scenario. SSP 2-4.5 refers to a climate change model scenario with a measure of the warming effect.

Faculty of the university, Santonu Goswami, addressing the media said, "For the first time in India, we released climate data projections quite openly, making them freely available to the public. Anyone can directly download the data for any district in India. We are interested in the scenario in the northeast. That is why we have decided to come here and introduce the data set to everyone."

Several districts in Assam are projected to see less rainfall over the next 15 to 20 years. The higher temperature increase is quite alarmingly in several Assam districts, including Majuli and Jorhat. These districts are projected to see a very high increase in wet bulb temperature, which will create a challenge for the farming sector.

"Climate Change has to be part of day-to-day conversation. We are collating the data, and I hope that our data will be useful to state departments like disaster management. We are quite open to discussions on this," Goswami added.

High wet bulb temperatures (a measure of heat and humidity) are projected for several districts, with Jorhat and Majuli likely to experience the highest levels, exceeding 31 degree Celsius. These conditions present a significant health risk, particularly during heat waves. Nagaon is projected to see a 1.95 degree Celsius rise in annual wet bulb temperature, indicating increased heat-related health challenges.

Changing climate would impact agriculture and water resources. Extended dry spells and varying rainfall intensity are likely to exacerbate water shortages, impacting irrigation and

drinking water availability. Changes in rainfall patterns could also affect the timing and productivity of agricultural cycles, posing challenges to Assam's agrarian economy.