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## Climate Change Leads to Increase in Violence, Says Study

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(Photo: Reuters/Ivan Alvarado)

A view of the Runge reservoir in the town of Runge, some 60 km (37 miles) north of Santiago February 3, 2012. Heavy droughts, a result of the La Nina weather front, have hit farms and put reservoirs and underground waters at record low levels, according to government sources and local media.

By [Myles Collier](#), Christian Post Contributor  
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Increases in global temperature are closely tied to an increase in violence and human conflict according to a new study released Thursday by the University of California, Berkeley and Princeton University.

The study's findings were published in the journal Science and included the results of 60 previous studies that covered regions around the globe.

The findings indicated that environmental changes, such as drought, and changes in weather patterns, such as floods, had a positive correlation in relation to increased temperatures and an uptick in violence.

Researchers highlighted the previous studies findings which identified the relationship between disruptive climate incidents to increased domestic violence in India and Australia, assaults and murders in the United States and Tanzania and ethnic violence in Europe and South Asia.



The previous findings also highlighted the relationship between such climate changes and tribal land invasions in Brazil, police violence in the Netherlands and civil conflicts throughout tropical regions.

"What was lacking was a clear picture of what this body of research as a whole was telling us," said Solomon Hsiang, the study's lead author and postdoctoral fellow in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy at Princeton during the research project. Hsiang is currently an assistant professor of public policy at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy. "We collected 60 existing

studies containing 45 different data sets and we re-analyzed their data and findings using a common statistical framework. The results were striking."

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The framework used within the study was developed in order to compare results around the world, given that environmental and climatic events vary depending on location. The researcher's implementation of such frameworks was used so that they would be able to convert changes in climate into location-specific units, referred to by statisticians as standard deviations.

"We found that a 1 standard deviation shift towards hotter conditions causes the likelihood of personal violence to rise 4 percent and intergroup conflict to rise 14 percent," Marshall Burke, the study's co-lead author and a doctoral candidate at UC Berkeley's Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, said of the study.

"Our results shed new light on how the future climate will shape human societies," said Burke. The findings of the study suggest that a global temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius could lead to an increase in the rate of intergroup conflicts by over 50 percent.

While the results are interesting researchers stress that the cause of violent conflict is complicated with numerous factors needing to be considered; however, the relationship between conflict and environment is such that it cannot continue to be overlooked.

"We often think of modern society as largely independent of the environment, due to technological advances, but our findings challenge that notion," said study coauthor Edward Miguel, UC Berkeley's Oxfam Professor of Environmental and Resource Economics and director of the Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) based at UC Berkeley.