

## Global Conflicts to Heat Up as Climate Warms: Study

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Hot-headed passions are likely to create more human conflict in the decades ahead as the world's climate warms, according to a new study by economists at Princeton and the University of California, Berkeley.

By looking at the historical impact of sudden surges in temperature or changes in rainfall, they found that warming and extremes in rainfall, from both drought and deluges, seem to be linked to spikes in violence.

They found this was true for conflicts between groups more than acts of violence between individuals.

The researchers crunched the numbers of 60 studies from disciplines like archaeology, criminology, economics and psychology, for periods from 10,000 B.C. to the present, in coming to their conclusion.

They examined personal violence and crime, intergroup violence and political instability as well as institutional breakdowns.

The report, published in the journal *Science*, says extreme climate shifts amplified violence in all of the categories, regardless of geography, the wealth of societies or the historical periods in which they occurred.

Critics of the study say the study looked at the consequences of relatively brief shifts in climate rather than what might be experienced in the sustained warming expected in the coming decades.

But lead author Solomon Hsiang says that establishing a link between violence and climate change will help policymakers and researchers examine what causes the upswing in conflict, and possibly find ways to avert it.



While climate shifts were found to be not the sole or main causes of violence throughout history, the study determined that they clearly worsened existing tensions in all societies, regardless of wealth or stability.