Impacts of Climate Change: Europe and the Mediterranean

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Every part of the world will be affected by climate change in the years to come, and Europe is no exception. Rising temperatures, especially in the summer months, will lead to longer and more common heatwaves, fewer catches in the Mediterranean, flooding and displacement of citizens and the spread of disease.

Due to the summer heatwaves, crops, especially grains, have suffered yield losses of 25-30% in affected areas. Crop diseases such as the blight will increase in range as the warming continues. Some plants may benefit from increased carbon dioxide and warmer temperatures, but this trend will eventually be offset by yield losses. (5)

These disasters, flooding, land erosion, and heat waves, will also affect the human population. Increased flooding will result in displaced household and land erosion will result in coastal retreat in low-lying areas. In addition, heat waves will affect building values from chronic damage to materials. (5)

Changes on land, including erosion, produce pollution accumulation in the Western Mediterranean Basin. As a result, an Accumulation Mode (AM) cycle occurs, leading to intense rainfall and flooding, especially in Central Europe. It also increases the salinity and temperature of the seas. Weather systems are thus altered. (3)

Species distribution among fish populations in the Mediterranean will change drastically as a result of warming and saltier waters. By the end of the 21st century, the temperature of the Mediterranean is expected to increase by 2.8 degrees C, and 54 fish species will lose their habitats. Coupled with pressure from fishing, the economy and ecosystems of the area will be badly affected. (4)

Bibliography:


