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None

# Recent Panama Canal Drought Caused by El Niño, Not Global Warming

A recent international study has concluded that the recent drought in the Panama Canal was driven by below-normal rainfall associated with the natural climate cycle El Niño, and not by global warming.

#### Impact of Low Rainfall

The drought caused low reservoir levels that slowed cargo traffic in the canal for most of the past year, leading to expensive headaches for shipping companies worldwide. However, only in recent months have crossings started to pick up again.

#### **Future Water Scarcity**

As Panama's population grows and seaborne trade expands, water demand is expected to be a much larger share of available supply by 2050, according to the government. That means future El Niño years could bring even wider disruptions, not just to global shipping, but also to water supplies for local residents.

### **Research Findings**

The research team found that scant rain, not high temperatures, was the main reason for low water in the canal's reservoirs. The scientists couldn't find a solid link between human-induced climate change and the minor drying trend or future trends. They did, however, find a clear link between El Niño and below-average rainfall in the area.

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