

The Andes mountain range is facing historically low snowfall this year during a decade-long drought that scientists link to global warming, according to Reuters.

Minimal rain and snowfall are leaving many of the mountains between Ecuador and Argentina with thin to no snow cover, leaving dry, brown earth exposed.

As precipitation declines and glaciers retreat across the region, communities who depend on the mountains for water supply are likely to suffer shortages, Ricardo Villalba told the [news source](#).

Principal investigator for the Argentine Institute of Snow, Glacier and Environment Science Studies (IANIGLA), Villalba said: "Here we are seeing a process of a long-term decrease in precipitation, a mega-drought."

"If you look at the precipitation levels right now for the entire Cordillera (Andes range), they show that it has either not snowed at all or has snowed very little."

The Southern Hemisphere is now in its winter season when snowfall should peak.

Satellite images from July 2020 and this year show a marked decrease in snow cover that is mirrored in water level measurements for rivers.

The Andes' glaciers remained the same size or grew between 2000 and 2010 and are now receding, Villalba said.

"The glaciers are in a very dramatic process of retreat that is much more accelerated than we have seen before," he said.

"This is unfortunately happening in all the glaciers of the Cordillera, and is strongly linked to the global warming process that is affecting the entire planet."

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*Image: Copernicus Sentinel-3 Imagery, Processed By DG DEFIS*