

Expected changes in agroclimatic conditions in Central Europe

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Projected changes in climatic conditions for the Czech Republic and the northern parts of Austria show that by 2020, the combination of increased air temperature and changes in the amount and distribution of precipitation will lead to a prolonged growing season and significant shifts in the agroclimatic zones in Central Europe. In particular, the areas that are currently most productive will be reduced and replaced by warmer but drier conditions. In the same time the higher elevations will most likely experience improvement in their agroclimatic conditions.

This positive effect might be short-lived, as by 2050, even these areas might experience much drier conditions than observed currently. Both the rate and the scale of the shift are amazing as by 2020 (assuming upper range of the climate change projections) only 20–38% of agriculture land in the evaluated region will remain in the same agroclimatic zone and by 2050 it might be less than 2%.

Source: Trnka et al., 2011. Climatic Change 108: 261–289.

Photo: Adam Jones (www.flickr.com)