Heat wave characteristics in the eastern Mediterranean

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Studies have shown that in the eastern Mediterranean, the intensity, length and number of heat waves have increased by a factor of six to eight since the 1960s. Not all studies confirm these results of increasing trends, however.

Heat wave characteristics have been assessed for a number of stations in the eastern Mediterranean (including three in Turkey and one in Cyprus) and the Middle East for the period 1973−2010. In this study a heat wave is defined as a period where daily maximum temperature exceeds the 95th percentile of the time series of daily maximum temperature data for the summer season (here taken from the first of June to the first of November). The results showed that the number of heat waves increased during 1973−2010 at all stations. On the other hand, the maximum temperature during these heat waves did not change, implying no change in heat wave intensity. Furthermore, no significant trends in the heat wave duration are observed.

Source: Tanarhte et al., 2015. Climate research 63: 99–113.

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