

Putin says climate change not caused by emissions

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Russian President Vladimir Putin and Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu visit an ice cavern in the remote Arctic archipelago of Franz Josef Land

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday said climate change was unstoppable and not caused by human activity and urged countries to adapt to global warming.

One day after he visited the Franz Josef Land [archipelago](#) in the Arctic, Putin claimed that icebergs had been melting for decades and suggested that global [warming](#) was not mankind's fault.

"The warming, it had already started by the 1930s," Putin said in comments broadcast from an Arctic forum held in the northern Russian city of Arkhangelsk.

"That's when there were no such anthropological factors, such emissions, and the warming had already started."

The Kremlin strongman added: "The issue is not stopping it... because that's impossible, since it could be tied to some global cycles on Earth or even of planetary significance. The issue is to somehow adapt to it."

Putin supported his argument by saying that an Austrian explorer who had a "photographic memory" visited the Franz Josef Land archipelago "in the 1930s."

Twenty years later the explorer was shown photographs from another expedition there "by the future king of Italy" and concluded that "there were fewer icebergs there," Putin said.

It wasn't immediately clear which explorers Putin was referring to and Italy did not have a king in the 1950s.

Austrian explorer Julius von Payer discovered and mapped the archipelago during a 1872-1874 expedition.

The only Italian expedition to the area was organised in 1899 by Prince Luigi Amedeo, who was also an explorer.

The archipelago was declared Soviet territory in 1926.

Putin had previously hailed [global warming](#) for exposing natural resources and transport routes which had long been too expensive to exploit.

He had also once speculated that warming by "two or three degrees" could be a good thing for Russians who would no longer need fur coats.

On Thursday, while his Finnish counterpart Sauli Niinisto called [climate change](#) a "serious threat" for the Arctic, Putin said that it brings "more propitious conditions for using this region for economic ends."

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