

40% of EU agricultural imports will be 'highly vulnerable' to drought by 2050

June 17 2021, by Bob Yirka



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A trio of researchers has found that approximately 40% of agricultural products imported into the European Union will be "highly vulnerable" to drought by 2050. In their paper published in the journal *Nature*

Communications, Ertug Ercin, Ted Veldkamp and Johannes Hunink, from R2Water Research and Consultancy, the Amsterdam University of Applied Science and FutureWater, respectively, suggest the droughts impacting agricultural products will be due to global warming.

As the planet warms with the accumulation of greenhouse gas emissions, researchers around the globe attempt to predict what might happen to the planet and its plants and animals. Some research efforts have suggested that as the planet grows warmer, some areas might experience drier conditions; parts of Vietnam, Brazil, India, Turkey and Indonesia are likely to see less rainfall, for instance. Dryness or droughts in these places, the researchers note, could have a profound impact on their economies—and they could also impact other places such as the EU, which rely on agricultural imports from such countries.

To learn more about the prospects of both places, the researchers looked to previous studies that mapped out likely impacts for regions around the world. They then looked at the likely changes in countries that grow agricultural products sold in the EU. In their work, the researchers looked at likely changes due to [drought](#) for the years 2030, 2050 and 2085 under medium- and low-emission scenarios. They found that due to droughts in other countries, more than 44% of agricultural products imported into the EU would likely be vulnerable by 2050. By that year, they found, drought severity in these areas would increase by 35%. They note also that crops such as coffee, cocoa, sugar, palm oil and soybeans would be most impacted. The researchers note that just a few at-risk countries currently supply large amounts of certain [agricultural products](#)—Vietnam and Brazil together, for example, supply approximately a third of the world's demand for coffee. Droughts in either or both countries could dramatically reduce supply.

More information: Ertug Ercin et al, Cross-border climate vulnerabilities of the European Union to drought, *Nature*

Communications (2021). [DOI: 10.1038/s41467-021-23584-0](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-23584-0)

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Citation: 40% of EU agricultural imports will be 'highly vulnerable' to drought by 2050 (2021, June 17) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-06-eu-agricultural-imports-highly-vulnerable.html>

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