

At least 40 killed in severe northern Turkey floods

August 14 2021, by Zeynep Bilginsoy



A man checks his car buried in the mud after floods and mudslides killed about three dozens of people, in Bozkurt town of Kastamonu province, Turkey, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. The death toll from devastating floods and mudslides in northern Turkey rose to at least 31 on Friday, officials said, as emergency services searched for survivors in collapsed buildings or swamped homes, shops and basements. An opposition politician said more than 300 people may be unaccounted-for. Credit: AP Photo

The death toll from severe floods and mudslides in coastal Turkey has climbed to at least 40, the country's emergency and disaster agency said Saturday.

Torrential rains that pounded the Black Sea provinces of Bartın, Kastamonu and Sinop on Wednesday caused flooding that demolished homes, severed at least five bridges, swept away cars and rendered numerous roads unpassable. Turkish [disaster agency](#) AFAD said 34 people were killed in Kastamonu and six in Sinop.

Nine people remained hospitalized in Sinop and one person was missing in Bartın province, according to the agency. But some residents said on [social media](#) that there are hundreds more missing, a statement also made by an opposition lawmaker.

About 2,250 people were evacuated across the region, some lifted from rooftops by helicopters, and many were being temporarily housed in student dormitories, authorities said.

Climate scientists unequivocally say that [climate change](#) is leading to extreme weather events as the world warms because of the burning of coal, oil and natural gas. Such calamities are expected to happen more frequently as the planet warms.

Experts in Turkey, however, say interference with rivers and improper construction also were contributors to the massive damage in Turkey's floods.



A man watches the destruction after floods and mudslides killed about three dozens of people, in Bozkurt town of Kastamonu province, Turkey, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. The death toll from devastating floods and mudslides in northern Turkey rose to at least 31 on Friday, officials said, as emergency services searched for survivors in collapsed buildings or swamped homes, shops and basements. An opposition politician said more than 300 people may be unaccounted-for. Credit: AP Photo



A man tries to reach his mud-filled home after floods and mudslides killed about three dozens of people, in Bozkurt town of Kastamonu province, Turkey, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. The death toll from devastating floods and mudslides in northern Turkey rose to at least 31 on Friday, officials said, as emergency services searched for survivors in collapsed buildings or swamped homes, shops and basements. An opposition politician said more than 300 people may be unaccounted-for. Credit: AP Photo



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People walk on a mud-covered road after floods and mudslides killed about three dozens of people, in Bozkurt town of Kastamonu province, Turkey, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. The death toll from devastating floods and mudslides in northern Turkey rose to at least 31 on Friday, officials said, as emergency services searched for survivors in collapsed buildings or swamped homes, shops and basements. An opposition politician said more than 300 people may be unaccounted-for. Credit: AP Photo



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Geologists have said that construction narrowed the river bed and the surrounding alluvial flood plain of the Ezine stream in Kastamonu's Bozkurt district, where the damage was most severe, from 400 meters (1,312 feet) to 15 meters (49 feet). Residential buildings were built along the waterfront.

During severe rains, the contracted stream has limited area in which to

move and can overflow. Videos posted by residents showed water rushing downstream in Bozkurt as the surrounding buildings and roads flooded.

One geologist, Ramazan Demirtas, explained the [river bed](#) narrowing on Twitter and said that humans were to blame for this week's disaster.

The floods struck on the heels of wildfires in southern Turkey that devastated forestlands in the seaside provinces of Mugla and Antalya, which are popular with tourists. At least eight people died and thousands of residents were forced to flee.

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