



A recent international study has concluded that the 8 recent drought in the Panama Canal was driven by below-normal rainfall associated with the natural climate cycle El Niño, and 8 not by global warming.

## **Impact of Low Rainfall**

The drought caused low reservoir levels that slowed cargo traffic 8 in the canal for most of the past year, leading to expensive headaches for shipping companies worldwide. However, only in 8 recent months have crossings started to pick up again.

## **Future Water Scarcity**

As Panama's population grows and seaborne 8 trade expands, water demand is expected to be a much larger share of available supply by 2050, according to the 8 government. That means future El Niño years could bring even wider disruptions, not just to global shipping, but also to 8 water supplies for local residents.

## **Research Findings**

The research team found that scant rain, not high temperatures, was 8 the main reason for low water in the canal's reservoirs. The scientists couldn't find a solid link between human-induced climate 8 change and the minor drying trend or future trends. They did, however, find a clear link between El Niño and 8 below-average rainfall in the area.

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