

Global warming threatens Tibetan plateau

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(China Daily) The environmental condition of the Tibetan Plateau is worsening due in large part to global warming, according to a Chinese geological team. A survey conducted by the Remote Sensing Department of the China Aero Geophysical Survey, shows that the plateau has shrinking glaciers, a rising snow line, dwindling wetlands, and more serious desertification than 30 years ago. *"As the 'thermometer' of the global environment, any slight environmental change in the plateau is a reflection for the globe"*, said Zhang Hongtao, deputy director of the China Geological Survey. The survey is intended to provide an overview of the plateau's geological conditions and help its future economic development, Zhang said. *"The direct harm is the threat of the loss of the country's fresh water resources"*, said Fang Hongbin, senior engineer at the Remote Sensing Department. *"Furthermore, we won't have any shield to protect ourselves from the sand blowing from the plateau if the desertification trend is not checked"*. Fang suggested speeding up a project called *"Return the land to green"*, as well as strictly controlling the raising of livestock and mining activity on the plateau. Even if the world's global climate does not continue to get warmer, researchers estimate the plateau's glacial areas will shrink to 72 per cent of the current area by 2050 and 50 per cent by 2090, Fang said.

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Website: www.tibetinfonet.net
Phone: +44 (0) 20 300 206 33
Fax: +49 (0) 2238 9494466
Email: tin@tibetinfonet.net