

《哥伦比亚遭受史上最强干旱》

Colombia is experiencing its worst drought in recorded history. The drought is fueled in part by the El Nino weather phenomenon, which brings channels of warm waters across the Pacific. Much of the country is now under an official "red alert" - threatened by water shortages and wildfires. While citizens brace for the worst, the government has earmarked 4.2 million US dollars to combat the extreme conditions.

Since February, Diosme Munoz has been working for the Colombian government, supplying water to 90 neighborhoods in Santa Marta. Fifteen of these trucks -- filled with five thousand to 10 thousand liters of water each -- make four to five rounds a day. The El Nino weather phenomenon is drying up rivers and aqueducts throughout Colombia.

"It really has been extremely hot in Santa Marta, it gets worse each day. The heat is strong and there is less water. The water wells are not producing enough water... and that has made it so I haven't left Santa Marta.. bringing water every day.. weekends and even holidays," Government worker Diosme Munoz said.

Government officials say Santa Marta is experiencing its worst drought in 100 years. But conditions could get worse for Colombia as a whole. According to the country's meteorological institute, this year's El Nino will hit its maximum strength between October and January and contribute to the continued evaporation of Colombia's water resources-through the first months of 2016.

The National Unit for Risk Management has been working to mitigate the effects of the drought -- with 4.2 million dollars the government has earmarked to combat the extreme weather. More than half goes to delivering potable water to communities where sources have dried up. The rest goes towards controlling forest fires.

"There are solutions for the medium term, where we will bring water from rivers located 30-40 kilometers from Santa Marta, and in the long run we will bring water from the Magdalena River which is 70 to 90 kilometers away and can help us in the next 50 years," Armando Pinera, coordinator of National Unit for Risk Management, said.

Santa Marta's close-in rivers are quickly drying up.. as evidenced in the marshlands just 20 kilometers away from the city. Local fisherman tell us their livelihoods are at risk - with rivers feeding the Cienaga Grande of Santa Marta no longer bringing enough fresh water.

"We have less oxygen in the water, and the fish die of asphyxiation, when that happens productions lowers," Fishman Jose Luis Manjarez said.

As the sun sets in this region, some fisherman are just setting out to fish for shrimp that only come out at night to feed. But the drought will leave most of their nets empty Where they once routinely brought in 100 to 200 pounds of shrimp each night, they expect only about 10 pounds tonight if they are lucky.