

Headline: Swiss start measuring latest glacier melts after hot summer

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CRANS MONTANA, Switzerland — Fields of white snow and ice are giving way to grey rocky outcrops in the Swiss Alps as glaciers melt after another hot summer.

Swiss glaciers last year recorded their worst melt rate since records began more than a century ago, losing 6% of that volume during the course of 2022.

And another wave of melting is expected to be confirmed this year, said Matthias Huss from ETH Zurich, who is leading a team from the Swiss Glacier Monitoring Network (GLAMOS) measuring the loss of ice.

“The summer was much too warm,” Huss told Reuters. “The first trends indicate that this year is again characterized by a very strong loss.

“At this position we lost more than two meters of ice and this is a lot, especially considering that we are at the highest point of the glacier, where the glacier actually should accumulate some new mass.”

Glaciers around the world are being measured for evidence of global warming as temperatures around the world surge.

In Switzerland temperatures in August reached an average of 15.5C, 1.2C above normal levels making it one of the 10 warmest Augusts on record.

In the mountains at Montana, government agency MeteoSchweiz recorded a new all-time high of 31.5C on Aug. 24.

The GLAMOS team has now started its summer measurements at the Glacier de la Plaine Morte in Crans-Montana, which lies 3000 meters high among the mountains in southwest Switzerland.

Although the final results are likely to show less extreme melting than in 2022, the situation was still worrying, Huss said.

“After this record year last year, we didn’t expect to see again such a year with very strong losses,” he said. “It’s changing so fast the landscape. New rocks are appearing, everything is becoming gray and dark.”

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