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| There is little doubt that climate change threatens Panama. Rising seas will submerge the low-lying Caribbean islands of San Blas, a tourist attraction and home to several thousand Guna, an indigenous group. Warmer temperatures will speed evaporation, and thus reduce water levels in Lake Gatun. But pinning blame for recent droughts on climate change is harder. | 毫无疑问，气候变化威胁着巴拿马。海水上涨将淹没加勒比海低洼岛屿圣布拉斯，这是一个旅游胜地，也是几千个土著人古纳的家园。温度升高会加速蒸发，因此降低加顿湖的水位。但是把最近的干旱归咎于气候变化是很难的。 |
| Panama’s worst droughts have happened during extreme occurrences of El Niño, a natural phenomenon in which warm water moves eastwards across the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Longer cycles like the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, which alternates every 20-30 years between warm phases that make El Niños stronger and more frequent and cooler ones, make the role of climate change harder to discern. | 巴拿马最严重的干旱发生在极端的厄尔尼诺现象期间，这是一种暖水向东穿过赤道太平洋的自然现象。像太平洋十年振荡这样的较长周期，每隔2-30年在使扼尔尼诺现象更强、更频繁和更冷的暖相之间交替出现，使人们更难辨别气候变化的作用。 |
| Residents of the capital do not doubt that changes are afoot. The rainy season once brought daily showers of three to four hours. Now the same amount of rain falls in an hour. Eight of the ten biggest storms in the city, measured by rainfall within 24 hours, have occurred since 2000. Despite those downpours, the canal area has had six straight years of below-average rainfall. The dry season is lengthening. This year it began a month earlier than usual and ended a month late. The current drought is the first severe one to occur in a mild El Niño year. | 首都居民毫不怀疑正在发生变化。雨季曾经带来每天3到4小时的阵雨。现在一小时内也会下同样多的雨。根据24小时内的降雨量计算，该市十大风暴中有八场是2000年以来发生的。尽管暴雨频发，运河地区已经连续六年降雨量低于平均水平。今年比往常早一个月开始，晚一个月结束。目前的干旱是温和的厄尔尼诺年中出现的第一次严重干旱。 |
| This unprecedented concurrence suggests that climate change is directly responsible, the Panama Canal Authority believes. “To be completely sure you’d have to wait a hundred years,” notes Carlos Vargas, the ACP’s vice-president for water and environment. And even if climate change is not the culprit now, it may strengthen future El Niños, which would lengthen droughts and increase their intensity. Some scientists think that if, as expected, the equatorial eastern Pacific warms faster than other regions, extreme El Niños will double in frequency to once a decade by 2100. | 巴拿马运河当局认为，这种前所未有的合作表明气候变化是直接责任。ACP负责水和环境事务的副总裁卡洛斯·瓦加斯指出：“要完全确定这点必须等上一百年。即使气候变化现在不是罪魁祸首，但它可能会加强未来的厄尔尼诺现象，从而延长干旱并增加其强度。一些科学家认为，如果赤道东太平洋变暖的速度超过其他地区，到2100年，极端厄尔尼诺现象出现的频率将翻一番，达到十年一次。 |