Indonesia – 3rd Highest Fire Emissions in 2026

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Why in news?

Indonesia's wildfires released nearly 200 million tonnes of carbon by 15 November 2026, making this year's fire emissions the third-highest annual total since records began in 2003, according to the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) of the European Union.

- **Monitoring agency** – Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS), implemented by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).
- CAMS uses satellite observations and its Global Fire Assimilation System (GFAS) to estimate fire emissions.

Key findings

- **Most affected region** – Major fire activity has affected Indonesian regions including Kalimantan, Sumatra and Papua. Smoke and haze can travel across national borders, affecting air quality in neighbouring parts of Southeast Asia.
- **Worst wildfire** – Indonesia has suffered its worst wildfire season in years.
- **Driven by** – Excessively dry super-El Niño weather conditions & warmer temperatures, extensive land clearing, poor land management and the excessive draining of peatland.
- Total fire emissions fell short of the record of nearly 400 million tons in 2015 and were also slightly lower than in 2006, another strong El Niño year.
- **Carbon footprint** – This year's fire emissions were the equivalent of more than a fifth of Indonesia's total carbon footprint in 2025, with the country's energy consumption and industry responsible for an estimated 960 million tons of CO2 last year, according to the Statistical Review of World Energy.
- **Comparison with Pakistan** – Emissions generated by Indonesia's fires were also around the same as the entire energy and industrial carbon footprint of Pakistan last year.
- **Extent of fire-affected land** – CAMS data showed that nearly 8.9 million hectares (22 million acres) of land could have been damaged by fire in Indonesia this year, 4.7% of its total area, significantly higher than the 2012 to 2025 average of 1.9%.
- Though El Niño-driven drought was a decisive factor in this year's fires, experts have also emphasised the role played by climate change in driving up temperatures

- Poor land management and the excessive draining of peatland to make way for palm oil or pulpwood concessions have also made Indonesia more vulnerable to fire.

Reference

Reuters | Indonesian fire emissions third highest on record this year, EU's Copernicus says

