

Indonesia's Worst Wildfire Season

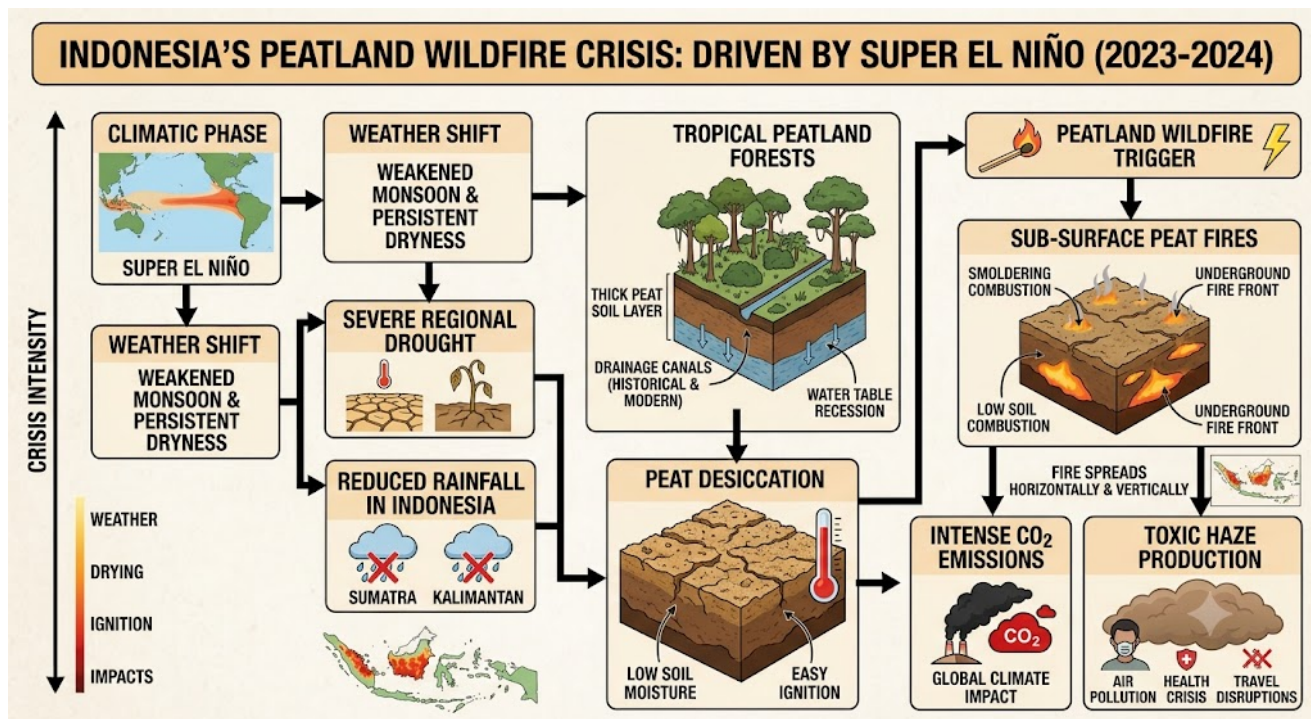
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Why in News?

Recently, reports highlighted that Indonesia is facing its worst wildfire season in a decade, driven by severe drought conditions and prolonged dry spells intensified by a Super El Niño event.

Key Highlights

- **The Phenomenon & Climatic Driver**
 - The resurgence of a **Super El Niño** has suppressed normal monsoon rainfall across Southeast Asia, leading to severe moisture deficits in Indonesia's vast tropical forests and carbon-rich peatlands.
- **Vulnerability of Peatland Ecosystems**
 - Unlike standard forest fires, Indonesian peatland fires burn beneath the surface in organic soil layers accumulated over thousands of years.
 - These underground peat fires are extremely difficult to extinguish and release massive quantities of sequestered carbon dioxide (CO₂), particulate matter, and greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.
- **Transboundary Haze & Air Quality Crisis**
 - The unchecked blazes have generated thick, toxic transboundary haze plumes that have severely degraded air quality across Indonesia, triggering health emergencies and impacting neighboring countries (Malaysia and Singapore), reviving concerns over regional air pollution agreements.
- **Socio-Economic & Ecological Toll**
 - Widespread habitat destruction threatens endangered endemic fauna—including orangutans, Sumatran tigers, and local biodiversity.
 - Agricultural burn-off practices combined with drought conditions exacerbated ignition points across Kalimantan and Sumatra.



Reference

[Down to Earth | Super El Niño fuels fires](#)



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