

Turkey's Mount Cilo and Ararat Glaciers are Melting Rapidly

Turkey's Mount Cilo and Mount Ararat glaciers are melting rapidly, with nearly 50% of ice cover lost in the last 40 years due to climate change, causing dangerous ice block releases, intensified waterfalls, and threats to water resources. This accelerated melting, noted as faster than expected by local experts, is a significant component of the global trend of glacier loss, affecting water supply and increasing natural hazards.

Key Highlights

- **Rapid Ice Loss:** Mount Cilo, the second-largest glacier zone in Turkey, and Mount Ararat have lost almost 50% of their permanent snow and ice cover in the past four decades.
- **Accelerated Melting:** The melting process is occurring faster than anticipated by researchers.
- **Visible Signs:** Evidence of the rapid melting includes ice blocks being carried away by torrents, an increase in lush waterfalls, and dangerous ice releases.
- **Increased Danger:** The melting has made some areas dangerous for hikers, with at least two walkers killed by ice block releases in July 2023.
- **Water Resource Threats:** The melting of these glaciers poses a significant threat to regional water supplies, a broader global concern highlighted by the UN.
- **Regional Context:** Mount Cilo is located in the Hakkâri province, bordering Iraq, and has recently become a focus of potential tourism following a peace process with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), though the melting ice presents new dangers.

Practice Questions:

1. With reference to the environmental impacts of rapid glacier melt in Turkey's Cilo and Ararat regions, consider the following:

- I. Increased freshwater availability in dry months, benefiting local agriculture and communities
- II. Receding ice sheets and glacial lakes forming, altering local hydrology and creating potential hazards
- III. Enhanced erosion and reshaping of glacial valleys and landscapes
- IV. A significant decrease in regional temperatures due to increased reflective ice cover

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) I and II only
- b) II and III only
- c) I, II, and III only
- d) I, II, III, and IV

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Answer: b

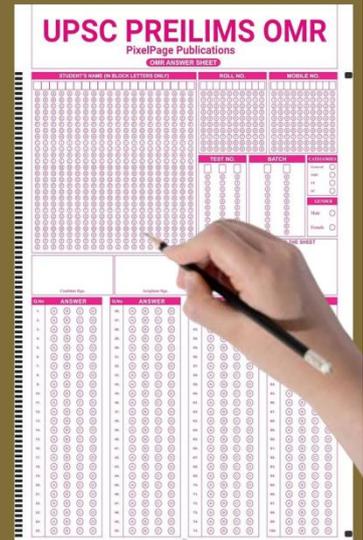
Explanation: Statement I is partially misleading/incorrect: While initially increasing flow, long-term melt leads to water scarcity as glaciers disappear, and the immediate effect is often floods/runoff, not stable availability, making it a negative. **Statement II is correct:** Visual signs include receding ice, flowing ice blocks, and the creation of new water bodies/streams, changing hydrology. **Statement III is correct:** Intense meltwater and glacial activity reshape the rugged topography, forming new features like torrents and altering valleys. **Statement IV is incorrect:** Rising temperatures are the cause of melting, and loss of ice reduces reflectivity (albedo), accelerating warming, not decreasing it.

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