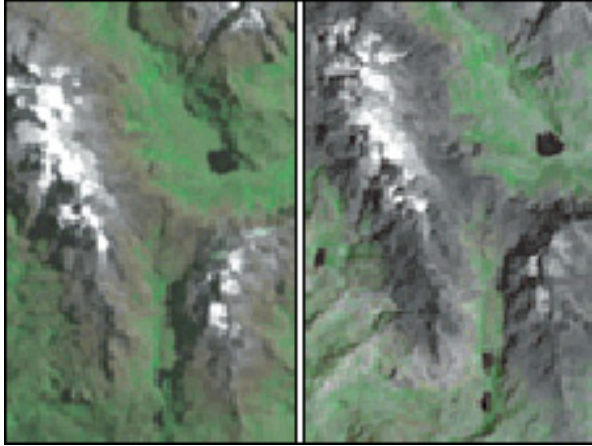


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Uganda's highest ice cap splits on Mt Margherita



Uganda's Rwenzori Mountains in 1987 on the left and in 2005 on the right

The ice cap on Uganda's highest peak has split because of global warming, Uganda's Wildlife Authority (UWA) says.

The glacier is located at an altitude of 5,109m (16,763ft) in the Rwenzori mountain range, near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The authorities say a crevasse has blocked access to the Margherita summit - the third-highest peak in Africa, and a popular destination with climbers.

Scientists say glaciers in the Rwenzori range could disappear within 20 years.

UWA officials said a team had been sent to the mountain to assess the extent of damage on the route to Margherita.

According to researchers, the ice cap covered 6 sq km (2 sq miles) 50 years ago. It is now less than 1 sq km.

The mountain range, which is one of the few places near the equator to have glaciers, was declared a Unesco World Heritage site in 1994.