

Mysterious lake 'death' in Africa robbed more than 1700 lives in one night

The huge amount of CO₂ produced from this lake has caused one of the most devastating natural disasters in history.

The huge amount of CO₂ produced from this lake has caused one of the most devastating natural disasters in history.

Lake Nyos, located on the crater has been deactivated in the northwest of Cameroon, Africa. The lake has a water surface of more than 1.5 million square meters with a length of 1.2 km. There will be nothing to say about Lake Nyos if it is not the cause of the death of 1,746 people, and more than 3,500 cattle and poultry on August 21, 1986.



On that fateful day, the atmosphere in Nyos village is very busy because this year the whole village gets corn season. Everything was going on normally until 8:30, when they suddenly heard the sound of devotion coming from the lake.

The clouds carry hundreds of thousands of tons of CO₂ moving at a very fast speed, 100km / h has covered many villages around it. Soon afterwards, all humans and cattle collapsed and died slowly in their sleep, the winged species flying in the sky did not escape the "hand of death". In just a few hours, many villages like Nyos, Father and Subum were virtually wiped out, and no one or any animal survived.

According to experts, because CO₂ is heavier than air, it quickly replaces oxygen sinking to a thickness of up to 50m so that no creature can survive.



After the disaster, a geologist found water levels in Lake Nyos dropping by about 1m. From the reduced amount of water, scientists have calculated the amount of CO₂ released at about 1.7 million tons.

Lake Nyos is formed during the cooling of volcanoes and rainwater accumulation. The amount of CO₂ escaping from volcanoes accumulates for hundreds of years in the bottom of the lake, unable to escape. Because the temperature in Lake Nyos and surrounding areas are warm year-round, the surface water layer has a higher temperature than the lake bottom CO₂ and becomes a "button" that keeps CO₂ from escaping. But for some reason the "button" is opened, causing the deadly poison gas to escape.

After the study, geologists have concluded that due to landslides disturbing the warm water layer and the bottom layer of water causing CO₂ to escape in the form of air bubbles floating on the water surface. Those air bubbles attract water up and when they come out of the water they flare up into a giant pillar of water and explode, CO₂ gas escapes like clouds.

After that heartbreaking event, Lake Nyos was dubbed "Killersee, killer lake", villages around the lake had to be relocated.

Since 2001, scientists have measured twice as much CO₂ gas at the bottom of the lake than in 1986, when disaster struck. To avoid a further disaster, experts have threaded the pipes to the bottom of the tank so that CO₂ is released into the air.

But there is another problem, the natural belt around the lake begins to weaken, there is a risk of landslides at any time. As a precaution, scientists have built dams around the lake to protect the lake, but that is not enough to ensure safety. Just a heavy rain, it is likely that the disaster will happen again and if it happens it is even worse than the CO₂ explosion in 1986.

1. Despite the usual laws of physics, these 10 surreal locations are causing headaches for scientists
2. Lake caused by meteorite fell from 52,000 years ago disturbing the compass

You finished reading the article "**Mysterious lake 'death' in Africa robbed more than 1700 lives in one night**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.
