The story

Water levels in the Amazon River are at their lowest levels since records began 121 years ago.

It's because of a shortage of rain caused by the natural El Niño effect. But Brazilian scientists say climate change is also to blame.

A state of emergency has been declared in Manaus and 20 other cities.

Key words and phrases

drought
period of time with no rain
- Drought can cause dangerous wildfires to start.
- The country had to import food after a drought made crops fail.

overwhelm
cover something completely and quickly
- The city was overwhelmed by water after the river burst its banks.
- Tourists overwhelm city centres during the summer holiday.

taints
makes something good turn bad
- The lake was tainted by industrial waste.
- His reputation was tainted after he was caught stealing money from his company.