

Dire Warning by United Nations on Climate Change



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Recently, United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a dire warning to the world on Climate Change. Every five to seven years, thousands of experts from around the globe synthesize the most recent developments in climate science, adaptation, vulnerability and mitigation. The report finds that global climate outlook is far worse than previously thought; and it calls for immediate and sweeping change to prevent catastrophe. It can be summarized in five sentences as follows:

- 1) The average global temperature is 1.0^o C. above pre-industrial levels now.
- 2) This increase, as we have seen, is already causing more extreme weather, diminishing arctic ice, rising sea levels and is damaging countless land and sea ecosystems.
- 3) By 2040, a likely 1.5^o C. increase will make things worse.
- 4) A 2.0^o C. increase will be far worse than that.
- 5) Only drastically radical change can stop this looming catastrophe.

According to the report, human activities are estimated to have caused about 1.0 degree C. of global warming above pre-industrial levels. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5^o C. between 2030 and 2052 if it continues at current rate.

This anthropogenic (man-made) global warming is caused by us humans, our life style using vast amount of fossil fuels. Unless we drastically reduce carbon emissions, humanity along with

all the other creatures and vegetation will suffer dire consequences with extinction of thousands of living species around the planet. Today, close to 200 species are going extinct every day. According to a major scientific study, global biodiversity collapse is imminent unless we take urgent action to reverse species loss in the tropics.

According to the report, 1.5^o C. increase will be bad enough with rising sea levels and extinction of species and destruction of ecosystems around the globe but 2.0^o C. increase will be worst and catastrophic.

As per Guardian of UK, world's leading climate scientists have warned there is only a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5^o C., beyond which even half a degree will drastically worsen the risk of floods, drought, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people.

In reality, UN report on climate change carries a life or death warning. Limiting warming to 0.9^o C. from now means the world can maintain 'a semblance' of the ecosystems we now have. Increasing further to another 0.9^o C.--looser global goal—essentially means a different and more challenging Earth for people and species.

Washington Post lamented that to avoid racing past warming of 1.5 degree Celsius (2.7 degree Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial levels would require a 'rapid and far-reaching' transformation of human civilization at a magnitude that has never happened before. While New York Times reacted that avoiding the most serious damage requires transforming the world economy within just a few years, with estimated damage at a cost of \$54 trillion.

According to the scientists convened by the United Nations, the world must invest \$2.4 trillion in clean energy every year through 2035 and cut the use of coal-fired power to almost nothing by 2050 to avoid catastrophic damage from climate change.

Due to deeply entrenched capitalist wasted interests and foolish policies by some developed nations, limiting global warming to 1.5^o C. above pre-industrial levels would be a herculean task, involving dramatic changes in the way governments, industries and societies function.

According to James Hanson--the famous NASA scientist who told the world for the first time in 1988 that global warming is taking place—there is strong evidence that the Earth now is within 1^o C. of its highest temperature in the past million years. He says further that the earth there is strong evidence that the Earth now is within 1^o C. of its highest temperature in the past million years. The Earth was last 2^o to 3^o C. warmer around 3 million years ago with CO2 levels around 350 to 450 parts per million. It was a different world then. The sea level then was 25 metres higher, give or take 10 metres. Few months back, our planet passed the 400 PPM mark already. According to him, if global warming reaches a level such that ice sheets begin to disintegrate in a rapid, non-linear fashion on West Antarctica and Greenland or both, and once on the way, such a collapse might be impossible to stop, because there are multiple positive feedbacks. In that event, a sea level rise of 5 metres or more is possible by 2095.

Hanson warns, "With business as usual, global warming would almost surely send the planet beyond a tipping point, guaranteeing a disastrous degree of sea level rise.

To avoid the looming global catastrophe, the global emissions need to be reduced by 40 to 70 percent by 2050 from current levels and to near zero or below by 2100, according to the 2014 UN report.

The dire warning from this recent IPCC report is that the humanity has only twelve years to drastically reduce greenhouse gases emissions. Failing that, global warming will have its own momentum; it will be irreversible and unstoppable then. Then this planet will be hurtling towards a catastrophe unimaginable and all the living species and us humans' very survival on this beautiful planet will be at stake.

Millions of people and countless living creatures will suffer from flooding due to rising oceans, stronger, bigger and more frequent storms, hurricanes, cyclones, massive flooding and major droughts. Hundreds of millions of people living on coastlines will become homeless, becoming 'eco-refugees'.

Higher temperature will cause crop failure in many parts of the world, causing mass starvations around the globe. Especially hundreds of millions of farmers and people who depend on growing food in the Gangetic and Brahmaputra River Delta (India and Bangladesh), Yellow and Yangtze River Delta (China), Indus River Delta (Pakistan), and Mekong River Delta (Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos) will see major crop failure due to glacier fed rivers running dry in Summer. Thus hundreds of millions of farmers and other people will have no food to eat. Africa and parts of Latin America and Middle East will face similar fate. As a result millions will perish if major nations don't start taking drastic steps to mitigate climate change, the greatest threat facing humanity.