

Scientists: Only man can stop climate disaster

By Charles Clover, Environment Editor, in Paris

Last Updated: 12:34am GMT 04/02/2007

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World leaders were under mounting pressure last night to take radical steps to cut fossil fuel emissions after a panel of UN scientists delivered the most conclusive evidence to date that mankind is responsible for accelerating global warming.

The world faces an average temperature rise of around 3C this century if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise at their current pace, according the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). That is enough to start the melting of the Greenland ice sheet and to begin killing off tropical rainforests.

The new UN Secretary, General Ban Ki-moon, is considering a summit of world leaders to discuss how the potentially catastrophic effects of global warming should be tackled.

The highest possible temperature rise this century, the scientists said, was 6.4C. This would be reached if rainforests began to die and gave off more carbon into the atmosphere.



Yvo de Boer says all governments agree that the IPCC document is the best scientific picture

The grimmest scenario yet about the environment came after the drawing together of six years of research by 2,500 scientists from more than 130 countries.

advertisement Yvo de Boer, the executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said that all the governments involved, including the United States, had agreed the IPCC document as the latest and best scientific picture of climate change.

Mr de Boer said: "The findings, which governments have agreed upon, leave no doubt as to the dangers mankind is facing and must be acted upon without delay."

Yesterday's report is likely to step up pressure for agreement on the shape of a successor to the Kyoto treaty which could include both the United States and major developing countries such as China, India and Brazil at the next G8 meeting.

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