
UN Warns of Irreparable Damage If Urgent Action Not Taken on Climate Change

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Achieving the objective of limiting the rise in temperatures before the end of this century to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over preindustrial levels will require “substantial” and “sustained” cuts in greenhouse gas emissions of as much as 70 percent by 2050 and a reduction to “almost zero” by 2100.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report points to the measured warming of the atmosphere and the oceans, the reduction of the ice caps at the poles and other extreme weather conditions as proof that climate change is under way and is due, in large measure, if not fully, to human influence.

Each of the past three decades has been hotter than the previous ones, with a “probable” rise in average global temperature of 0.85 degrees C (1.5 degrees F) between 1880 and 2012, while the sea level has increased by 19 cm (7.5 in.) between 1901 and 2010 and could rise another 26 to 82 cm (10-32 in.) by 2100.

The IPCC report says that many aspects of climate change and the damage associated with it will continue for centuries, even if man-made emissions of greenhouse gases were completely halted.

The risks of climate change fall unequally on the nations of the world, and it is the least developed countries that are the most vulnerable, the report makes clear.

Given that science has spoken on the matter, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters that “leaders must act” and that action must come soon because “time is not on our side.”
