

## **Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability** IPCC Report Summary – April 2007

Recognizing the problem of global warming, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988. The role of the IPCC is to use comprehensive, objective and transparent science in understanding the risk of human-induced

**The latest report from the IPCC has concluded that climate change will have a significant impact on the environment.** The report identifies changes that have already taken place and predicts the effects of global warming if gone unchecked in different regions of the planet.

**The report points to major changes happening across the planet because of global warming. Some examples are:**

- An increase in number and extension of glacial lakes.
- Avalanches caused in unstable permafrost regions.
- Warming of lakes and rivers in many regions affecting the ecosystems.
- Warmer weather causing early plant and flowers blooming.
- Earlier springs causing untimely bird migration and egg laying.
- Shifts in algal and plankton populations in some oceans.
- Earlier migration of fish into rivers.

**The report concludes that global warming, if not regulated, could cause:**

- Between 75 and 250 million people in Africa to face increased water stress by 2020.
- Dry areas could see a decrease of up to 30 percent in water and wet areas can see an increase of up to 40 percent in water. Causing more droughts and floods.
- Approximately 20-30 percent of plant and animal species to be at increased risk of extinction.
- The overall ecosystem to lose some of its ability to take up carbon, thus amplifying the effect of climate change.
- Crop yields to increase slightly in higher latitudes, but to decrease in lower latitudes, particularly in seasonally dry and tropical regions.
- Millions of people could be flooded every year due to raising sea levels by 2080.
- Climate change could increase deaths and disease due to heat waves, storms, droughts, and fires.
- Pests, disease, and fires are projected to increase in forests.

The report goes on to state that the data collected by the IPCC shows that the warming of the planet is not caused by natural occurrences, such as solar activity or volcanoes, but is most likely a result of human behavior. The changes in global temperatures will affect ecosystems in all regions of the world and past emissions will cause unavoidable changes in the world climate.

While this report shows us what can be expected if global warming continues at its current rate, there is still time to reduce and stop these affects. By passing comprehensive global warming legislation, **Congress can make the U.S. a leader in the world in the fight against climate change.**