

# Global warming and other potential problems

## Farming



The changes in the weather will affect the types of crops grown in different parts of the world. Some crops, such as wheat and rice grow better in higher temperatures, but other plants, such as maize and sugarcane do not. Changes in the amount of rainfall will also affect how many plants grow.

The effect of a change in the weather on plant growth may lead to some countries not having enough food. Brazil, parts of Africa, south-east Asia and China will be affected the most and many people could suffer from hunger.



## Water



Everywhere in the world, there is a big demand for water and in many regions, such as the Sahara in Africa, there is not enough water for the people. Changes in the weather will bring more rain in some countries, but others will have less rain.

In Britain, the Southeast will be at risk from drought.



## Plants & Animals



It has taken million of years for life to become used to the conditions on Earth. As weather and temperature changes, the homes of plants and animals will be affected all over the world.

For example, polar bears and seals, will have to find new land for hunting and living, if the ice in the Arctic melts.





Many animals and plants may not be able to cope with these changes and could die. This could cause the loss of some animal and plant species in certain areas of the world or everywhere on Earth.

(Source: <http://www.clean-air-kids.org.uk/globalwarming.html>)

## **Human Health**

Climate change may affect people's health both directly and indirectly. For example, heat stress and other heat related health problems are caused directly by very warm temperatures and high humidity. Untreated, heat stress can be a very serious medical problem. Scientists suspect that, in many places, climate change will increase the number of very hot days that occur during the year. More hot days increases the possibility of heat related health problems.

Indirectly, ecological disturbances, air pollution, changes in food and water supplies, and coastal flooding are all examples of possible impacts that might affect human health.

How people and nature adapt to climate change will determine how seriously it impacts human health. Some people and places are likely to be affected more than others. Generally, poor people and poor countries are less likely to have the money and resources they need to cope with preventing and treating health problems. Very young children and the elderly adults will run the highest risks.

## **Ecological Systems**

Climate change may alter the world's habitats and ecosystems - all living things are included in and rely on these places. Many of these places depend on a delicate balance of rainfall, temperature, and soil type. A rapid change in climate could upset this balance and seriously endanger many living things. Most past climate changes occurred slowly, allowing plants and animals to adapt to the new environment or move somewhere else. However, if future climate changes occur as rapidly as some scientists predict, plants and animals may not be able to react quickly enough to survive. The ocean's ecosystems also could be affected for the same reasons.

(Source: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/bigdeal.html>)