

Scientists: Great Barrier Reef in danger

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Australia's ongoing hot summer season is reportedly inflicting great harm to the Great Barrier Reef.

University of Queensland scientists say they are concerned the entire reef may be at risk of destruction from global warming.

Coral reef expert Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. he is praying for two months of cyclonic stormy weather to stir up colder deeper water -- the only thing that will save the coral.

Hoegh-Guldberg is convinced global warming is to blame for placing the reef in danger.

"No one with any credibility in this field is doubting that we're seeing the first signs of a major change in an ecosystem due to climate change," he told the ABC.

"It simply underscores the absolutely critical importance of getting global greenhouse emissions under control because we could end up with a world where we don't have the Great Barrier Reef -- that would be an absolute tragedy."

The Great Barrier Reef, the largest natural feature on Earth, stretches more than 1,400 miles along the northeastern coast of Australia, covering more than 186,000 square miles. The reef is visited by more than 2 million tourists annually.

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