

Britain ducks CO₂-reduction promise

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Steam rises from cooling towers at the Sellafield nuclear plant in northern England

A British government report says the nation is unlikely to attain its previously announced goal of a 20-percent reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2010.

The report from the Climate Change Program projects Britain will achieve a 15-percent to 18-percent cut in carbon dioxide emissions, the BBC reported Tuesday. But Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett said the government was not giving up on meeting the 20-percent goal, although more had to be done to reach it.

The current government set the goal of reducing CO₂ emissions by 20 percent from 1990 levels by 2010 when it came to power in 1997. That target went beyond the 12.5 percent reduction mandated in the Kyoto Protocol, which Britain is expected to meet.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, said he supports the government's call for people to reduce personal CO₂ emissions. Williams told the BBC people have a moral responsibility to change lifestyles to help stop global warming.

The consequences if they do not heed the government's plea, he added, would be the deaths of billions of people worldwide from the effects of extreme climate change.

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