

Study: Next decade 'crucial' on warming

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Climate effects from global warming will be irreversible in 10 years with "serious reductions in carbon emissions," British researchers have concluded.

Britain's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will publish a report this week -- based on the work of thousands of the world's top scientists -- warning that humanity has 10 years to avoid massive climate change, The Sunday Times of London reported.

"The next 10 years are crucial," said Richard Betts, the head of a British climate research team. "In that decade we have to achieve serious reductions in carbon emissions. After that time the task becomes very much harder."

Such an unstoppable climate change could occur if greenhouse gases continue to grow and temperatures increase in kind, researchers warn, causing the planet's once stable natural systems to lose their equilibrium permanently.

The researchers maintain that if specific changes do not occur soon, Earth's once stable environment could become increasingly inhospitable and potentially disastrous during the 2040s, the newspaper said.

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