

Understanding the implications of climate change for business

September 5 2014



A new online resource, which summarises the implications of climate change for specific sectors of the economy, has been produced and made freely available by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.

The [series](#) summarises the likely impacts of [climate change](#) on agriculture, buildings, cities, defence, employment, energy, investment, fisheries, primary industries, tourism, and transport. It also looks at the capacity of these sectors to adapt to climate change and to reduce emissions.

The thirteen briefings are based on the Fifth Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the official climate science assessment body of the United Nations. They have been compiled by the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) and Judge Business School, in partnership with the European Climate Foundation and sector-specific organisations.

The publication of the briefings comes ahead of the UN Climate Change summit in New York on September 23rd, hosted by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, which many of the world's business and political leaders will attend.

Scientists, corporate leaders, military strategists, financial analysts, and sustainability and conservation experts have all hailed the series as a vital resource for companies wanting to plan for the future.

"I applaud this initiative," said Rajendra K Pachauri, Chair of the IPCC. "Spelling out the implications of climate change for different sectors, on the basis of the work of the IPCC, will allow businesses to adapt to the challenges they face and understand the role they are able to play in reducing their [climate impact](#)."

Among the findings highlighted and explained in the series are:

- The significant impact of climate change on agriculture, including reduced crop yields, and predicted food price rises of 37% (rice), 55% (maize), and 11% (wheat) by 2050
- The potential for more energy efficient buildings to play a big part in reducing emissions
- The particular impact on cities of climate change, and the urgency of acting to protect people in urban areas (predicted to be 64% of the world's population by 2050)
- The significant potential for the energy sector to reduce

emissions, including by switching to lower-carbon fuels, improving energy efficiency, and introducing carbon capture and storage

- The disruptive impacts climate change will have on the stability of the financial system
- The potential for losses to global fisheries of up to \$40 billion by 2050
- The way climate change acts as a 'threat multiplier', driving involuntary migration and indirectly increasing the risks of violent conflict
- The need for additional energy supply investments of between \$190-900 billion per year from now until 2050, in order to meet the 2°C target

"Science on climate change is key for the business community, particularly concerning climate scenarios that we will face in the medium and long term," said Álvaro Echániz, Chief Executive Officer of Ferrovial FISA. "We cannot understand a long term business strategy without taking into consideration the findings of the IPCC, as a reliable input for identifying the risks and, of course, business opportunities behind those trends."

"Climate change affects us all, and understanding the science is absolutely vital," said Polly Courtice, LVO, Director of CISL "This series does a remarkable job of taking the hugely complex and technical findings of the IPCC report and translating them for business."

Provided by University of Cambridge

Citation: Understanding the implications of climate change for business (2014, September 5) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-09-implications-climate-business.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.