

## **Will global warming cause the extinction of many animal species?**

Scientists say that polar bears and seals face real threats of extinction in only a few decades because of global warming that the earth has been driven to. The fish that live in the icy waters of the Arctic are rapidly dying, and this situation changes the entire food chain of this region. These animals are literally starving to death because the earth is withering. The Glaciers are disappearing at an alarming speed, they are melting on six continents and things are only destined to get worse. At the rate this horrifying warming trend is going, all glaciers in Glacier National Park could be gone by 2030 as the Grinnell Glacier is already 90% gone. The largest Glacier in North America, known as The Bering Glacier, has lost 7 miles of its mass. All of the rivers in the Himalayas, that are originated by the normal amount of melting ice, and its inhabitants will cease to exist; there will be no more ice to be melt, thus creating a devastating land of death.

Melting sea ice is another problem that Global Warming is directly responsible for; it has shrunk by 250 acres. In the 1960's and 1970's the average thickness was ten feet of ice, and then when it was checked in the 1990's in was reduced to an average of six feet. This simply means that there has been a loss of 40% of the Arctic sea ice in a matter of approximately 30 years. This melting will raise the sea level and completely destroy all marine life indigenous to the Arctic, thus adding more extinct species to list.

As the oceans are warming rapidly, this causes already another problematic issue. In October 2000 at the Ninth International Coral Reef Symposium, it was announced that more than 25% of the world's coral reefs have been completely destroyed by global warming through coral bleaching; this is a result of higher water temperatures heating the coral. The coral reefs in the Indian Ocean have been 90% destroyed over the last two years.

March 2007, scientific journal BioScience had an article by Daniel B. Botkin and colleagues titled "Forecasting Effects of Global Warming on Biodiversity".

The news, release from the American Institute of Biological Sciences, writes that "current mathematical models indicate that many species could be at risk from global warming, surprisingly few species became extinct during the past 2.5 million years, a period encompassing several ice ages". They suggest that this 'Quaternary conundrum' has arised because the models fail to take adequate account of the mechanisms by which species persist in adverse conditions. Consequently, the researchers believe that current projections of extinction rates are overestimates.

There are 19 authors of this paper, from Australia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, and the United States; they include some of the world's top scientists concerning ecological forecasting and the history, ecology, and genetics of extinction.

One of the paper's coauthors, Matthew J. Sobel of Case Western Reserve University, said, regarding this paper, that "The simultaneous widespread and justified alarm over global warming and changes in biodiversity has induced both outstanding scientific research and deplorable pseudoscientific work but we still must be concerned about global warming and threats to the diversity of life on the Earth".

There is not just one threat coming from human activities to the diversity of life; there are several major ones, including disruption of habitats, introduction of non-native species into new habitats, and many effects of technology. According to this reserch, species appear more resilient to rapid climate change than previously thought.

The implication is that various factors that might impact biodiversity, from climate change to pressures from humans on the native habitat of a species, must be considered in order to develop better methods to stop the extinction of animal species.

### ***Bibliography***

- ✓ BOTKIN D.B., Forecasting Effects of Global Warming on Biodiversity, in << BioScience >>, vol. 53, n° 3 (March 2007), p.227-236.  
<http://www.aibs.org/bioscience-press-releases/resources/03-07.pdf>
- ✓ Global warming. (2008, May 10). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 10:00, May 11, 2008, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Global\\_warming&oldid=211419956](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Global_warming&oldid=211419956)
- ✓ Animal extinction. (2008, May 8). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 09:58, May 11, 2008, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Extinction&oldid=210997067>