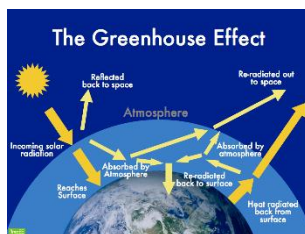


Climate Change in two different Ecosystems

By Shahadat Ullah

In the last century, enhanced climate change has been a huge environmental challenge. We have burnt enormous amounts of fossil fuels, including coal, gas and oils, bred large amounts of livestock cutting down huge areas of forest, which the trees would absorb the carbon dioxide from the air, and it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that traps and absorbs radiation from the sun into the atmosphere.

Climate change affects the Earth in many ways.



Many people know the importance of forests – they absorb carbon dioxide, which is the main greenhouse gas responsible for global warming, and they help regulate the climate of the Earth. Forests are also home to over half the population of all known plant and animal species on the planet.

In different ecosystems and forests, the effects of climate change vary. For instance, in tropical forests such as the Amazon, moderate levels of climate change are fatal for wildlife.

In the polar and mountainous regions, melting glaciers from global warming impact on islands that could have an increase in flood levels, and could impact on freshwater ecosystems. The glaciers in the Himalayas feed Asian rivers such as Ganges and Yangtze. Over a billion people depend on Himalayan glaciers for clean water, sanitation and farming and agriculture.



Due to increasing water temperatures and lack of oxygen, coral reefs are at risk. According to WWF, if global warming carries on like this, only 5% of the Great Barrier Reef, the largest coral reef in the world, will remain.

This causes problems for wildlife, because coral reefs are homes to many fish, and it also causes problems for half a billion people, whose main source of protein is fish from coral reefs.

Climate change is also a cause of extinction to wildlife. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says a 1.5°C average rise may put 20-30% of species at risk of extinction. Many species that are already threatened is very vulnerable to extinction. This includes tigers. Snow leopards, Asian rhinos, orangutans, African elephants, polar bears and adélie penguins.

