

IPCC releases report warning of consequences of climate change

November 3, 2014

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report on November 3 that synthesizes its published findings on climate change over the last 13 months. The report summarizes observed and predicted changes to the climate, the risks and impacts of these changes, and strategies for adaptation and mitigation for policy makers. The IPCC is a scientific organization set up by the U.N. that produces reports summarizing the most current science on climate change and its socioeconomic impacts. The authors warn of “severe, pervasive, and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems” if greenhouse gas emissions continue at present rates. However, they also suggest that these risks may be mitigated if emissions can be reduced by 40 to 70 percent by 2050 compared to 2010 levels, and if we can cease emitting carbon dioxide from electricity, transportation, industry, and residential and commercial sectors by 2100.

Recent international climate negotiations have stalled over disagreements on whether to emphasize emissions reductions or adaptation strategies, but the IPCC report issues a strong statement that both are necessary: “Adaptation can reduce the risks of climate change impacts, but there are limits to its effectiveness, particularly if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced.”

Sources: E&E News, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
