



# Climate change warning

Lesson code: U1F6-P1U8-ZAVK

UPPER-INTERMEDIATE

 British English

## 1 Warm-up

What recent news have you heard about climate change?

## 2 Key words

Match the terms on the left to the definitions on the right.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. catastrophic ( <i>adj.</i> ) | a. able to be seriously considered                  |
| 2. extensive ( <i>adj.</i> )    | b. affecting a lot of things                        |
| 3. rapid ( <i>adj.</i> )        | c. causing a lot of damage                          |
| 4. far-reaching ( <i>adj.</i> ) | d. happening fast or suddenly                       |
| 5. plausible ( <i>adj.</i> )    | e. needing a lot of effort to be successful         |
| 6. ambitious ( <i>adj.</i> )    | f. to give information about something              |
| 7. detail ( <i>verb</i> )       | g. wide in range and including a lot of information |

## 3 Find the information

You are going to read an article about a new report into global warming. Before you read, guess the answers to the questions below, then scan the text on the next page to confirm or correct your answers.

- What do scientists say is the maximum temperature rise above pre-industrial levels\* before there are catastrophic consequences?  
a. 1°C                      b. 1.5°C                      c. 2°C
- What temperature rise above pre-industrial levels do scientists think is likely?  
a. 2°C                      b. 2.5°C                      c. 3°C
- If the temperature rise gets above 2°C, what could disappear?  
a. coral reefs              b. fish                      c. arctic animals
- How much money will need to be invested to help limit rising global temperatures?  
a. 1% of global GDP    b. 2.5% of global GDP    c. 4% of global GDP

\*Temperature levels before the Industrial Revolution - rises are measured from this point.



# Final call to save the world from 'climate catastrophe'

8th of October 2018

- 1 The world's leading scientists say it's the final call, the most extensive warning yet on the catastrophic consequences of global warming above 1.5°C.
- 2 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have issued a special report on their findings after three years of research.
- 3 Their dramatic document says that going past a rise of 1.5°C is dicing with the planet's liveability, and this "guard rail" could be exceeded in just 12 years, in 2030. The report also suggests the world is already completely off track, and is heading for a rise of 3°C.
- 4 To keep to the preferred target of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels will mean "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society". It will be hugely expensive - but there is still a window of opportunity to achieve it.
- 5 The researchers say that if we fail to keep temperature rises below 1.5°C, there will be some significant and dangerous changes to our world. We can kiss goodbye to coral reefs, as the report says they would be essentially 100% wiped out at 2°C of warming. Ocean temperatures and acidity will also be affected, as well as the ability to grow crops such as rice, maize and wheat.
- 6 Despite some inevitable compromises in the report between climate researchers who want to stick to what the study shows and political representatives that have the economy and living standards in the front of their minds, there are some key messages that come through loud and clear.
- 7 The report urges rapid and significant changes in four big global systems: energy, land use, cities and industry.
- 8 It adds that the world cannot meet its target without changes by individuals, advising people to:
  - buy less meat, milk, cheese and butter and more locally sourced seasonal food - and throw less of it away
  - drive electric cars but walk or cycle short distances
  - take trains and buses instead of planes
  - use videoconferencing instead of business travel
  - use a washing line instead of a tumble dryer
  - insulate homes
  - demand low carbon in every consumer product
- 9 It will also take investment of 2.5% of global gross domestic product (GDP), the value of all goods and services produced, for two decades.
- 10 Machines, trees and plants will also be needed to capture carbon from the air that we can then store deep underground - forever.
- 11 So is any of it plausible? On the one hand, the global economy is heavily reliant on carbon and key activities depend on it. On the other hand, wind turbines and solar panels have come down significantly in price and more and more countries are setting ambitious green targets.
- 12 Ultimately, politicians will be faced with a difficult choice: persuade voters that the revolutionary change detailed in the report is urgently needed, or ignore it and say scientists have got it wrong.
- 13 Prof Jim Skea, co-chair of the IPCC said: "They really need to start work immediately. The report is clear that if governments just fulfil the pledges they made in the Paris agreement for 2030, it is not good enough."
- 14 Sources: *BBC News, The Guardian, Market Watch*



## 4 Checking understanding

What do you remember? Answer the questions below according to the article.

1. What worldwide systems need to change to help limit temperature rises? .....
2. What transport changes can people make? .....
3. What shopping habits can people make changes to? .....
4. What changes to work habits can people make? .....
5. What about renewable energy technologies means they are now more attractive to use? .....
6. What difficult choice do politicians have to make about the findings in the report? .....

## 5 Find the words

Find a word or phrase in the text which means ...

1. doing something very dangerous (*verb - ing, P.3*): \_\_\_\_\_
2. suitability for living in (*noun, P.3*): \_\_\_\_\_
3. going in the wrong direction (*phrase, P.3*): \_\_\_\_\_
4. the possibility to do something that only lasts for a short time (*three word noun, P.4*): \_\_\_\_\_
5. accept that you will lose something (*phrase - informal, P.5*): \_\_\_\_\_
6. agreements made that were unavoidable (*collocation, P.6*): \_\_\_\_\_
7. in a way that can be understood easily (*phrase, P.6*): \_\_\_\_\_
8. very dependent on (something) (*phrase, P.11*): \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Talking point

Discuss any of the questions below in pairs or groups.

1. Do you think that keeping to the target of 1.5°C of warming is achievable? Why or why not?
2. Do you think that governments will take action after this report? Why or why not?
3. Does reading this article make you want to change your habits to help limit global warming? Why or why not?

