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Description

In arctic Greenland, scientists study the icy landscape, which they believe could all be lost due to the rise of global temperatures. According to a leaked 2013 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the main cause of long term warming is carbon dioxide emissions from humans.

Keywords


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Never Before Seen Changes in Greenland's Iceberg Alley

LESTER HOLT, anchor:
Tonight a leaked report from one of the world’s most prestigious groups of scientists, winners of the Nobel Prize, has a lot of people taking notice because of the alarming conclusions about climate change. NBC’s Ann Curry recently traveled to one of the most breathtaking places on Earth where folks are seeing their way of life disappear before their eyes. She joins us now in the studio. Ann, nice to see you.

ANN CURRY reporting:
Nice to see you, too, Lester. Well, the key finding in this leaked draft report is that it’s, quote, "Extremely likely," as in greater than ninety-five percent that human activity is the main cause of the planet’s temperature rise in the last sixty years. Well, recently our news team went looking for answers in a place where the ice melt is unprecedented.

At the top of the world in Arctic, Greenland, scientists like Doctor Jason Box study the icy landscape. He says all this might be lost to climate change mostly caused by humans burning fossil fuels.

DR. JASON BOX: There’s no debate, this-- it’s really quite simple, you know, we’ve overloaded the atmosphere with heat trapping gas and-- and the rest are just details.

CURRY: The new report from the intergovernmental panel on climate change seems to confirm what Box and other scientists had been warning long before the draft was leaked. Among the findings, the main cause of long-term warming is carbon dioxide emissions, that sea levels could rise about three feet by the end of the century; and that even if we stop producing carbon emissions now, climate change will persist for hundreds of years. Hearing what’s known as Iceberg Alley, Box who’s been studying the Arctic for twenty years says the ice is now melting at a pace never seen before, affecting weather systems. So in ways that people don’t fully yet realize, climate change has affected us in America and Across the world?

DR. BOX: Yeah. There-- there’re manifold ways that climate change is-- is having impact. The Arctic is a very useful bellwether of change, and-- and it’s-- it's ringing.

CURRY: But Greenland’s Inuits, once called Eskimos, don’t need a scientist to tell them about climate
change.

AUKLAK LINGE: The sea ice are disappearing.
CURRY: Inuit leader Auklak Linge says melting ice means his people struggle to reach traditional hunting grounds. Some have even fallen through the thinning ice and died.
You’re saying that a way of life is so threatened, it could die? It could be lost forever?
LINGE: The only humans around the North Pole in the Arctic are us. We have been here for thousands of years. And we tell you, things are changing and you will feel it maybe tomorrow.
CURRY: His message essentially is that we, in the industrialized world, are using more than other fair share and that our children and our grandchildren will pay the price. Lester.
HOLT: Very sobering. Ann, thank you.