

Global warming and species extinction

Science-based analyses of America's key environmental issues

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Claim: *CO2-induced global warming will be so fast and furious that many species of plants and animals will not survive.*

A recent, exhaustive study reveals this claim as **demonstrably false**.

**The Specter of Species Extinction
Will Global Warming Decimate Earth's Biosphere?**
[Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change](http://www.co2science.org/reports/extinction/mr1execsum.htm)
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It is said that CO2-induced global warming will be so fast and furious that many species of plants and animals will not be able to migrate towards cooler regions of the planet rapidly enough to avoid extinction. *It is said* that the process has already been set in motion by the global warming of the past hundred and fifty years. *It is said*, that "a significant impact of global warming is already discernible in animal and plant populations," and that, as a result, "we're sitting at the edge of a mass extinction."

Proponents of the CO2-induced global warming extinction hypothesis seem to be totally unaware of the fact that atmospheric CO2 enrichment tends to ameliorate the deleterious effects of rising temperatures on earth's vegetation. They appear not to know that more CO2 in the air enables plants to grow better at nearly all temperatures, but especially at higher temperatures. They feign ignorance of the knowledge (or truly do not know) that elevated CO2 boosts the optimum temperature at which plants grow best, and that it raises the upper-limiting temperature above which they experience death, making them much more resistant to heat stress.

The end result of these facts is that if the atmosphere's temperature and CO2 concentration rise together, plants are able to successfully adapt to the rising temperature, and they experience no ill effects of the warming. Under such conditions, plants living near the heat-limited boundaries of their ranges *do not* experience an impetus to migrate poleward or upward towards cooler regions of the globe. At the other end of the temperature spectrum, however, plants living near the cold-limited boundaries of their ranges are empowered to *extend their ranges* into areas where the temperature was previously too low for them to survive. And as they move into those once-forbidden areas, they actually expand their ranges, overlapping the similarly-expanding ranges of other plants and thereby *increasing local plant biodiversity*, which in turn supports *increased* wildlife diversity.

Amazingly, the vast bulk of the scientific studies that prompted media scare stories actually found just the opposite of what climate alarmists claim. Rather than suggesting earth's biosphere is about to suffer irreparable damage as a result of past natural warming and future predicted warming, they actually substantiate nearly everything scientifically deduced from what is known about the effects of atmospheric CO2 enrichment on plant physiology. Most importantly, they portray a biosphere of *increased species richness almost everywhere on earth* in response to the global warming and increase in atmospheric CO2 concentration of the past century and a half that has promoted a great expansion of species' ranges throughout the entire world.

Finally, the level of predicted future temperature increase alarmists claim will kill off over a million species has already occurred (by their reckoning) in the 20th century. Thus, by the alarmist hypothesis, we should *already* have recorded endless lists of mass climate-induced extinctions. Name just three.