Did you know that global temperatures have increased by 0.85°C since pre-industrial times, and any future increase must be kept below 2°C to stave off catastrophic climate change? That’s the agreed global consensus - but is the 2°C threshold still too high? The experts of the Intergovernmental Panel on the Climate Change (IPCC), reporting at COP20, indicate yes.

Many negotiators representing ‘at-risk’ nations also demand that future temperature rises need to be kept to 1.5°C. Why?

According to the science, here’s why...

If we keep to an increase of 1.5°C, the changes to the climate are slow enough for *most* terrestrial and freshwater species to migrate to tolerable habitats elsewhere. At 2°C, the temperature increase will be too much for them to move and adapt.

Similarly, at the 1.5°C temperature threshold, *only* 50% of coral reefs disappear, sea-level *rise* will be kept to below 1m, the risk of ocean acidification remains *at moderate*, and the Arctic retains *some* sea ice during the summer.

At a 2°C increase, all coral reefs and summer-time sea ice in the Arctic disappear, sea-level rise exceed 1m, and there is a high risk of ocean acidification.

Where’s the need for debate?

