

Is Chocolate Going Extinct?

by Ken Ham from *Answers in Genesis*

Better start stocking up! According to a new report, cacao trees - the plants that produce the cocoa beans used to make chocolate - will be extinct by 2050. You can probably guess the “why” behind this prediction: climate change.

Cacao trees require very precise conditions under which to grow. They will only grow 20 degrees north or south of the equator and need consistent humidity and rainfall. Due to their predictions about a warming climate, scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration believe the areas in West Africa where over half of our cocoa beans are grown will warm by 3.8 degrees F, changing the conditions and possibly making cacao trees go extinct.

It’s interesting that these scientists (most of whom are evolutionists) note that cacao trees are very picky and fragile plants, yet, according to the evolutionary story, they’ve been around nearly 10 million years. So, in this view, they’ve managed to survive several ice ages and other major ecological changes, but a 3.8-degree change will make them go extinct? This is very inconsistent. (Remember, many of Al Gore’s predictions in his 2006 movie *An Inconvenient Truth* have been proven to be untrue or exaggerations.)

Our cultivated cacao trees aren’t nearly as hardy as wild, uncultivated varieties. In selecting for the traits we like in cocoa beans, we’ve weeded out a tremendous amount of genetic diversity. As *Answers in Genesis*’s Troy Lacey and Avery Foley wrote about in 2015, some researchers believe tapping into this genetic diversity may make a hardier plant and even yield novel chocolate flavours.

So will cacao trees end up extinct? We don’t know, of course. What we do know is that what you believe about the past determines how you interpret the evidence you study in the present. Those who believe in catastrophic, man-made climate change usually start with an evolutionary view of the past. They believe the climate has been relatively stable since the last ice age, supposedly about 12,000 years ago. So even minor climate change, they argue, is alarming and probably man-made. (And I should probably note here that few, if any, of the alarming climate-change predictions have come to be.)

Now climate change is real - it’s good observational science. But whether it’s primarily man-made or natural cycles of climate is an entirely different issue. When we start with God’s Word, we recognise we have a climate that was designed “very good” (Genesis 1:31) by God. Of course, just like everything, our climate is cursed and has changed since creation. The global Flood of Noah’s day about 4,350 years ago led to incredible climate change, including the Ice Age that followed the Flood. Things have been settling down since then, so we expect variations in climate.

Your starting point impacts how you view the world - even when it comes to chocolate!

