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SCIENCE

World Bank President: Climate Change Is Urgent 'Today' Problem

BY CINDY HUANG *April 18, 2013 at 5:58 PM EDT*

“If we have any hope of keeping climate change below two degrees celsius, the peak year of carbon emission has to be 2016,” said Jim Yong Kim, president of the World Bank. “So the challenge is right in front of us.”

Thursday on the NewsHour, Kim speaks with Jeffrey Brown about a new initiative to address extreme poverty around the world. In an extended conversation, Kim also addressed the urgency of climate change and how World Bank is working to combat its effects. He says they must increase financial resources for sustainable energy, use innovative agriculture and partner with major cities to reduce their carbon footprint.

But getting different international powers to agree on things like the price of carbon has been one of the challenges in the effort to curb climate change. Kim said once that is decided, the market forces will kick in and regulate emission.

Kim stressed the importance of investing in sustainable energy, especially for developing countries in Africa where access to power and electricity is not a guarantee. The World Bank president also proposes reclaiming degraded land and growing foods that consume more carbon as innovative ways of reducing carbon emissions.

Kim cites the efforts of New York City as an example of a successful urban clean-up. New York is on track to have reduced its carbon footprint by 30 percent by 2017, reaching their target goal ahead of their 2030 deadline.

“Climate change is not an issue for our grandchildren. It’s an issue today,” said Kim.