融化的冰盖：为时已晚了吗？ Melting ice sheet: Is it too late?

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

大家好。这里是 BBC 学习英语栏目的六分钟英语。我是内尔。

And I'm Georgina.

我是乔治娜。

With no end in sight to the coronavirus pandemic, many people can't wait for the year 2020 to end.

目前新冠疫情还看不到尽头，很多人已经等不及要结束2020年了。

But with the coronavirus dominating the newspaper headlines, attention has moved away from an equally serious global issue which has quietly been getting worse-climate change.

但是随着新冠病毒占据着新闻的头条，人们的关注点已经从一个同样严重的全球性问题上移开了，这个问题一直在悄悄恶化——气候变化。

August 2020 saw the hottest temperature recorded anywhere in modern times-54.4 degrees Celsius in California's Death Valley.

2020年的8月见证了现代社会的最高温度——加利福利亚州死亡谷的54.4摄氏度。

The same month also saw record amounts of ice melting into the oceans around Greenland and the Arctic-huge icebergs breaking away from the edge of the ice sheet-a thick layer of ice which has covered a large area for a long time.

同月还见证了格林兰岛和北极的冰川融化到大海中的量达到历史最高点——大型冰川从冰盖——长久以来覆盖了大面积的厚冰层——的边缘脱离。

Greenland's ice sheet is three times the size of Texas and almost 2 kilometres thick.

格林兰岛的冰盖面积是得克萨斯州的三倍，并且有差不多2公里厚。

Locked inside is enough water to raise sea levels by 6 metres.

其中的水足够让海平面上升6米。

But global heating and melting polar ice has many scientists asking whether it's now too late to stop.

但是全球的热浪和融化的两极冰川让很多科学家发问现在阻止是不是为时已晚

Have we reached the point of no return?

我们是否已经到了不可挽回的地步?

In this programme we'll be looking at the effects of climate change on the Arctic and asking if it's too late to change.

在本期节目中，我们要了解气候变化对北极的影响，并且探寻是否已经为时已晚。

And learning some of the related vocabulary too.

添加的词汇

并且还要学习一些相关词汇。

Now, Georgina, you mentioned record levels of ice melt in the North Pole but the scale is hard to take in.

那么，乔治娜，你刚才提到了北极冰川融化的历史最高水平，但是规模太大了，以至于难以想象理解。

The amounts are so big they're measured in gigatonnes-that's a billion metric tonnes.

数量过大以至于它们是用兆吨计量的——它相当于100万立方吨。

Imagine a giant ice cube 1 kilometre by 1 kilometre by 1 kilometre.

想象一个一公里见方的巨大冰块。

So my quiz question is this: how many gigatonnes of ice are now melting into the ocean every year?

所以我的问题如下：现在每年有多少兆吨的冰正融化到海洋里?

Is it a) 450 gigatonnes, b) 500 gigatonnes, or c) 550 gigatonnes?

是 A. 450 千兆吨，B.500 千兆吨，还是 C. 550 千兆吨?

I'll take a guess at b) 500 gigatonnes.

我要猜 B. 500 兆吨。

OK, Georgina, we'll find out later.

好的，乔治娜，我们稍后会揭晓答案。

Now, glaciologist Michalea King has been monitoring the melting of Arctic ice by satellite.

冰山学家米凯勒·金一直在通过卫星监控北极的冰川融化。

Here she is answering a question from BBC World Service programme, Science in Action, on whether the destruction of the ice sheet is now unavoidable.

以下是她回答 BBC 世界服务节目《Science in Action》冰盖的毁灭是否是无法避免的。

If we were to say...define a tipping point as a shift from one stable dynamic state to another, this certainly meets that criteria, because we're seeing now that the ice sheet was more or less in balance prior to 2000 where the amount of ice being drained from the glaciers was approximately equal to what we are gaining on the surface via snow every year.

如果我们.....把一个引爆点定义为一个稳定动态向另一个稳定动态的转变，这当然符合那个标准，因为我们现在看到2000年以前冰盖或多或少是稳定的，那时从冰川脱离的冰大约等于每年通过降雪在表面积累的冰。

Ice is made from snow falling on Greenland's glaciers-large, slow-moving masses of ice.

冰由落在格林兰岛的冰川——大型缓慢移动的冰——上的雪形成。

At the same time though, ice is also lost through melting.

不过同时冰也通过融化在消失。

These two processes of making and melting ice kept the ice level in balance-having different parts or elements arranged in the correct proportions.

这两个制造和融化冰的过程使得冰的水平保持平衡——不同的部分或元素的比例相当。

Essentially, the melting ice was replaced by newly frozen ice.

基本上，融化的冰被新结的冰所代替了。

But now, the glaciers are shrinking faster than new ice is being accumulated and the situation may have reached a tipping point-the time at which a change or an effect cannot be stopped.

但是现在冰川缩小的速度大于新的冰积累的速度，而且这一状况已经到达了爆发点——某种变化或影响已经无法阻止的时刻。

So, does this mean that global heating and ice melting are now running automatically, separate from the amount of greenhouse gases humans are pumping into the atmosphere?

所以这意味着全球变暖和冰川融化现在是自动运转的，跟人类向大气中排放的温室气体的量无关了吗?

And does that mean we should just give up on the planet?

这是否意味着我们应该放弃地球了呢?

In fact the situation is far from simple, as Michalea King explains here to BBC World Service programme, Science in Action.

正如米凯勒·金向 BBC 的世界服务节目《Science in Action》中解释的那样，事实上情况远没有这么简单。

We can definitely control the rate of mass loss, so it's definitely not a 'throw your hands up' and just not do anything about it-you know, give up on the ice sheet kind of situation-that's certainly not the message I want to send-but it does seem likely that we will continue to lose mass...but of course, a slow rate of mass loss is highly preferred to large annual losses every year.

我们绝对可以控制损耗速率，所以绝对不能两手一摊，什么事情都不做——放弃冰盖的现状——这当然不是我要表达的信息——但是似乎我们确实会继续大量损耗.....但是当然慢速损耗相比于大量的年损耗会好一些。

Michalea thinks that changes in human activity can still slow the rate, or speed at which something happens, in this case the speed of Greenland's ice sheet melting.

米凯勒认为人类活动的变化还是能够减缓速率，或某事发生的速度，在这里指的是格林兰岛冰盖的融化速度。

She's convinced it's not too late for collective action to save the planet, so it's not yet time to throw your hands up, an idiom meaning to show frustration and despair when a situation becomes so bad that you give up or submit.

她认为大家一起努力拯救地球还为时未晚，还不是举手投降——这个成语的意思当情况变得非常糟糕你不得不放弃的时候表现出沮丧和绝望——的时候。

It's a positive message but one which calls for everyone to do what they can before it really is too late.

这是一个积极的信息，但是它呼吁每个人都在为时已晚之前尽其所能。

Because the rate of ice melt is still increasing, right, Neil?

因为冰川融化的速度还在上升，对吗，内尔?

Yes, that's right, in fact, that was my quiz question, Georgina, do you remember?

是的，没错，事实上这是我今天的问题，乔治娜，你还记得吗?

Yes, you asked me how many gigatonnes of Greenland's ice sheet are now melting every year.

是的，你问我格林兰岛的冰盖现在每年融化多少兆吨。

I said b) 500 gigatonnes.

我说的是 B. 500 兆吨。

And you were...correct!

你回答.....正确！

In fact, some of these giant ice cubes are like small towns, almost a kilometre tall!

事实上，有一些巨大的冰块就跟一个小镇一样大，超不多有一公里高！

So there's still work to be done.

所以还是有事情要做。

In this programme we've been looking at the rate-or speed-of ice melt in Greenland's ice sheet-the thick layer of ice covering a large area of the Arctic.

在本期节目中，我们一直在关注格陵兰岛冰盖——覆盖了北极很大一块面积的厚冰层——的融化速率，或速度。

Previously, the melting ice was replaced by newly formed ice on glaciers-large masses of slow-moving ice.

之前，融化的冰被冰川——大量的缓慢移动的冰——上新形成的冰取代。

This kept the Arctic in balance-having different elements arranged in proportion.

这使得北极保持平衡——不同的元素比例相当。

But the effects of global heating have brought us close to a point of no return, called a tipping point-the time at which a change or an effect cannot be stopped.

但是全球变暖的影响让我们靠近了一个不可挽回的临界点，叫做引爆点——某个变化或影响无法被阻止的时刻。

The situation is serious but there's still time to take action and not simply throw your hands up-show frustration and despair when you want to give up.

情况很严重，但是还是有时间采取行动而不是举手投降——当你想要放弃时表现出沮丧和绝望。

That's all for this programme, but if you want to find out more about climate change and Greenland's ice sheets, search BBC's Science in Action website.

今天的节目就到这里，但是如果你想要找到更多有关气候变化和格林兰岛冰盖的内容，请搜索 BBC 的 《Science in Action》的网站。

And for more trending topics and useful vocabulary, remember to join us again soon at 6 Minute English.

要获取更多流行的话题和有用的词汇，请记得再次收听六分钟英语。

Bye for now!

再见！

Goodbye!

再见！