

By **John Ingham**  
Environment Editor

THE great British cuppa could be a thing of the past if the rate of global warming does not slow down, a study warned yesterday.

As climate change brings more extreme weather conditions, plantation owners are struggling to save their crops.

The US-style coffee revolution sweeping our high streets could be halted in its steps too.

Tea, coffee and cocoa growers are fighting to maintain current levels of production in the face of floods, hurricanes and droughts.

Although the plight of the cuppa is not likely to be top of the agenda as delegates from 180 countries gather to discuss climate change in Bali this week, it will be of concern to millions of tea lovers across Britain.

And it could spell disaster for growers across Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The warning came in a study by CafeDirect and the German Technical Co-operation, GTZ, which supports sustainable businesses in the developing world. Spokesman Wolfgang Weinmann said: "Water availability, rising temperatures and extreme weather conditions in some of the world's key tea and coffee-growing areas are threatening production and livelihoods.

"In Latin America floods and hurricanes are jeopardising production, while growers in East Africa have been paralysed by drought.

"This year alone our growers in some parts of Latin America have faced record rains and flooding.

"It is hitting poor smallholder growers the most. Many have

# How global warming threatens your cuppa

ideas on how to cope with climate change, and some have begun their own adaptation projects – but they lack financial and technical support to put these ideas into practice."

The company has pledged to help smallholders. And Julius Etang'atha, a grower from the firm's tea partner Michimikuru in Kenya, said: "It is time to act."

The findings were released yesterday as thousands of delegates arrived on the tiny Indonesian island of Bali to try to get international agreements to cut carbon emissions in place of the troubled Kyoto Protocol.

Any new agreement must get the support of America and developing countries like China

to succeed. President George Bush – who refused to ratify the Kyoto agreement – now looks isolated after Australia's new prime minister Kevin Rudd pledged to sign the Protocol.

Another report claims computers will soon overtake aviation as the fastest-growing source of greenhouse gases. The study by Global Action Plan and the Environmental IT Leadership Team said growth in carbon emissions from the IT sector is exacerbated by government policies requiring more data to be stored.

It said 86 per cent of IT departments did not know the scale of their emissions.

---

**OPINION: PAGE 12**