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If you think that global warming means slightly hotter weather and a modest rise in sea levels that will persist only so long as fossil fuels hold out (or until we decide to stop burning them), think again. In The Long Thaw, David Archer, one of the world's leading climatologists, predicts that if we continue to emit carbon dioxide we may eventually cancel the next ice age and raise the oceans by 50 meters. By comparing the global warming projection for the next century to natural climate changes of the distant past, and then looking into the future far beyond the usual scientific and political horizon of the year 2100, Archer reveals the hard truths of the long-term climate forecast.

Archer shows how just a few centuries of fossil-fuel use will cause not only a climate storm that will last a few hundred years, but dramatic climate changes that will last thousands. Carbon dioxide emitted today will be a problem for millennia. For the first time, humans have become major players in shaping the long-term climate. In fact, a planetwide thaw driven by humans has already begun. But despite the seriousness of the situation, Archer argues that it is still not too late to avert dangerous climate change--if humans can find a way to cooperate as never before.

Revealing why carbon dioxide may be an even worse gamble in the long run than in the short, this compelling and critically important book brings the best long-term climate science to a general audience for the first time.

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