

SPACE TOURISM LINKED TO CLIMATE CHANGE



This year has become very significant for space tourism. As Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic plans to start the first trips to the orbit in nine months, warnings of their threatening impact on our climate and environment have been revealed.

A century ago, traveling to the moon seemed like an outrageous thought. However, the 20th century overcame many taboos and today, **visits to space no longer count as news of the week**. As NASA's visits to the international space station became rather regular, many entrepreneurs spotted the opportunity. They do not want to miss the day when trips to space will be accessible to the wider public.

Recent years have proved that at the moment, whoever has money and is willing to pay, gets a seat reserved. However, no matter how fantastic the view of Earth from the orbit may be, **latest research reveals the dangerous impact of black carbon on our climate**.

The studies not only focus on carbon dioxide emissions, but also on black carbon created by the rocket fuel. Virgin Galactic vows that the harm of the carbon dioxide emissions will not be any worse than a regular London-New York flight.

While that may be true, research has shown that black carbon (created by the burning fuel) gets removed by rain from lower atmosphere. However, Virgin Galactic's flights to the orbit will reach the stratosphere where there is no rain. Soot will remain there for ten years. **This will result in a 'cap' over our atmosphere and the estimated global temperature increase may be as much as 1.5 degrees**.

Such climate change is extremely dangerous and scientists are trying to raise awareness among the general public and appeal to those about-to-be-responsible to try to put a stop to this. After all, there is still time.

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