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In a troubling new study just out in Nature Climate Change, a group of researchers says that a warming climate could trigger a “massive” dieoff of coniferous trees, such as junipers and piñon pines, in the U.S. southwest sometime this century.

The study is based on both global and regional simulations — which show “consistent predictions of widespread mortality,” the paper says — and also an experiment on three large tree plots in New Mexico. The work was led by Nate McDowell of the Los Alamos National Laboratory who conducted the research along with 18 other authors from a diverse group of universities and federal agencies, including the U.S. Geological Survey.

Read more.

Chris Mooney - The Washington Post