

# Study: Earth soaking up less carbon

By Chelsea Harvey, Washington Post

It might sound strange, but scientists believe the ground we walk on can be a huge weapon in the fight against climate change. That's because the earth's soil serves as a giant carbon reservoir, containing trillions of tons that would otherwise end up in the atmosphere.

Currently, soil is believed to be a carbon sink, meaning it's still taking up more carbon than it's releasing into the air, and models have suggested that it will keep sucking up carbon through at least the end of the century. But according to research, scientists may have been seriously overestimating the extent to which this is going to happen – and that could be a big setback in our global climate efforts.

The study, published this month in the journal *Science*, used carbon dating to help figure out how quickly carbon can be stored in the ground and how long it stays there – information that informs scientists' estimates of how much carbon will be sequestered by the earth's soils through the next 100 years.

**[Read the whole story](#)**