

Is Global Warming Real?

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The term climate change is often used to soften the concept of global warming. Climate change indicates nature's normal weather events over long periods of time. It may indicate either increases or decreases in the earth's surface temperatures. It does not usually carry with it accusations which lay the blame for weather anomalies on human activities.

On the other hand, global warming refers to the effects of greenhouse gases such as CO₂ (carbon dioxide) released by humans burning fossil fuels. Global warming refers to increases in the earth's surface temperature of its water and air during this present century. The term Climate Change could be more usefully and accurately called Climate Warming or Climate Crisis or Climate Emergency.

In our modern society humans have many devices that release CO₂ into our environment. Burning coal, diesel fuel, gasoline or oil to heat our homes and fuel our machinery are common ways to increase global warming. Fracking has made finding oil easier so producers are now able to mine more oil and distribute it more widely.

It may help all of us if we know more about the negative effects of global warming. Extremes in weather are among the more obvious effects of global warming. These include tornadoes which may destroy houses and buildings up to a pathway of a mile wide. Even more destructive are hurricanes that may leave pathways of utter chaos up to one hundred miles in width. It is an unanticipated result of global warming that dry desert areas will become even drier as a result of global warming while water-laden land will be affected by torrents of floods and continuing rainfall during and after hurricanes.

Many of the results of global warming are more subtle and happen over longer periods of time. Sea levels may increase from year to year as temperatures rise. Ice fields and glaciers will gradually recede. It will be more difficult to breathe air that is heavy with CO₂, and sunlight will be affected by solar radiation which will bounce solar rays off the earth's surface and into our atmosphere. Breathing will become more difficult and our air more polluted. Growing good farm crops and gardening will become more difficult.

Production and overuse of plastics require more oil-based sources. People suffering from asthma will be badly affected and lung capacity will be compromised. Except for tornadoes and hurricanes, the harmful effects of global warming will go undetected by most people because the effects will happen gradually. Many of us will not be in a position to deter harmful effects of global warming. But every human will have some negative effects by virtue of being alive and requiring food and water and space in which to live, although individual humans will have only a small effect on global warming. However, even a very small effect when multiplied by over seven billion world population can add up to a large amount of harmful results.

The more industrialized 10 % of the world's population will use about 20% more of the world's resources than the least developed 10%. Highly industrialized nations such as China, United States, India and Russia will have a higher per cent of CO2 emissions and are likely to have more extreme weather conditions such as tornadoes (Industrial Energy Agency). However, these extremes are partly due to the fact that some countries like USA are situated closer to the warmth of the equator as well as by the lifestyles of their citizens.

What can ordinary citizens do to minimize the effects of global warming? Eat plant foods which use up fewer resources than meats. While you enjoy eating meat make it an occasional treat but not a regular everyday part of your meals. Consider using wind and solar powered equipment for heating and use battery powered tools. Use electric powered heating and wear adequate clothing to help keep you warm at work or at home. Avoid overuse of plastics. Cooperate and support governments that pay attention to saving energy as part of their political platforms.

I believe the threat of global warming is a real problem affecting the future well-being of our planet earth. On the other hand, the term climate change misses the point that our earth's surface is increasing in warmth each year.