

## **My View on Climate Change**

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### **Introduction**

There is a lot of debate over the topic of climate change, with most denial coming from non-scientists. Economists are trying to protect profits for the industrial sector from energy and oil supplies, car manufacturing and farming, by arguing that climate change is a natural phenomenon unrelated to human activity. Politicians and policy makers are trying to say they have already done their part by imposing carbon taxes. Some of the worlds' leaders want to help solve the problem but there has been little in the way of a unified global response. Countries have been blaming each other and denying responsibility.

However, there is actually no debate within the scientific community. The majority of scientists agree that climate change is happening and is caused by humans. Although climate change is a phenomena that happens naturally, the speed that it is happening is unnatural. Civilisation is creating things that make the earth warmer, with serious consequences. Climate change brings higher temperatures, flooding and droughts, among other things. Extreme weather patterns will interrupt ecosystems and ultimately threaten human life. If one single living thing becomes extinct, many other living things will suffer as a result.

Wherever there are people, there will be carbon dioxide. It's only a matter of finding a solution to sustain our environment and to balance our eco-system.

### **The Role of the Scientist**

Scientists from around the world and from all disciplines should gauge the human activity that relates to temperature change. Scientists should also research and develop the solution to this problem. And most importantly, with the data on hand and the solution in mind, scientists are the most crucial party to influence the world as they are one of the worlds' most trusted sources of information.

The 5 "P"s can be used to summarise the scientists' roles - prepare, predict, prevent, present, and persuade.

First, scientists have to prepare data. They investigate on the issue of climate change. For example, they measure the increase of carbon in a certain area and monitor the temperature. Our gas emissions have been on the rise since the first large electricity station was built in 1882. Later came the first big discovery of oil in the Middle East in 1908, then the first mass- produced motor car in 1913, followed by the first jet airline service in 1952. The data which the scientists have collected have clearly shown all these inventions and discoveries have gradually attributed to the problem.

With the existing data analysis, scientists predict the outcome such as when and what natural disasters will take place. People will then be warned about these so that they can prepare themselves accordingly.

Now we know how serious the outcome will be, the scientists have to prevent it from happening. This includes using a fundamental-driven approach such as observing nature to enhance evidence, or using a problem-driven approach by developing alternative methods.

In the last 60 years, scientists have discovered only about half of the carbon dioxide we emit into the atmosphere stays in the atmosphere. It would be a new hope for our Earth if the scientists could find out where exactly the other half is going. Is it being all absorbed by the oceans or vegetation on land? If the scientists can fully understand this, we may have a different picture of our future.

Scientists have discovered there are tiny organisms in the ocean called phytoplankton that absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. It could have a big global impact if the scientists could boost their uptake of carbon dioxide, or the scientists could mass-produce phytoplankton.

By observing ants, scientists have found that they have survived for over 120 million years, despite the changes in the earth. This is down to their home-building skills. Ants can combat climate change because they break down calcite into calcium, which then reacts with carbon, creating limestone. The question is, could we mirror this process to break down greenhouse gases?

Migration to Mars is also a hot topic. However, if we solve the current problem by just moving people to Mars, we could be creating problems on other planets. Eventually, history will repeat itself.

As this is a global issue, scientists should present their non-biased findings in a way so that non-scientists can understand the urgency. Several reports produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are very comprehensive and easy to understand.

The first IPCC report appeared over two decades ago and presented an overwhelming scientific consensus that climate change is indeed occurring and attributable to human activity. Non-scientists did not take this seriously and nothing much was done.

Finally, scientists have to persuade the government by means of lobbying for new policies to stop global warming. An urgent call came to action this year as we have record high temperatures. Our Earth is warmer now than at any time during the past 1000 years. After a long-awaited climate policy, more than 190 nations began talks this week on new limits for greenhouse gases that are already changing global climate patterns and making life difficult around the world. There are actually a number of different organisations and government bodies working to tackle this issue. More scientists need to get involved in an advisory role.

## Conclusion

For an issue as serious as this, we need big, global solutions. The whole world has to work together, with scientists gathering and sharing information, governments taking action to formulate policy, economists co-operating to fulfil their social responsibilities, and the general public reacting to reduce their carbon footprint. There are international efforts from the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 to the recent Lima conference focused on draft agreements. While talks toward a new comprehensive global climate change agreement next year are a good start, there is still much more to be done. The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "Science has spoken. There is no ambiguity in their message. Leaders must act. Time is not on our side." This is exactly where we are. We must use science to face this challenge.