

# Global warming: two sides to every story assignment

[Sociology](#)



Global Warming: Two Sides To Every Story “ Global warming is the increase in the average measured temperature of the Earth’s near-surface air and oceans since the mid-20th century, and its projected continuation. ” - Wikipedia (11) There are always two sides to every story and every different point of view has a right to be heard. When it comes to the discussion of global warming there are two very distinct points of view. The world seems to be split between global warming being caused by humans and it being a natural occurrence. This paper will discuss the two views in depth, followed by my opinion about the global warming phenomena.

Global Warming: A Natural Occurrence What would happen if tomorrow we were told that the Earth is flat? It would probably be the most important piece of news in the media and would generate a lot of debate on whether it was true or not. So why is it that when scientists who have studied the global warming phenomenon for years say that humans are not the cause nobody listens? Global warming is not due to human contribution of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). This in fact is the greatest deception in the history of science. In fact, global warming is a natural occurrence that cannot be stopped; as humans all we can do is slow down this occurrence.

The first reason is because global warming comes and goes. The earth naturally heats up and cools down. Thirty years ago we thought the biggest threat was global cooling and now the biggest threat is global warming. Through out history there has been numerous cooling and warming periods and we are now going through one of those natural warming periods. We also experienced a warming period during the Medieval Warm Period around 1100 AD when Vikings settled into Greenland because it used to be green <https://assignbuster.com/global-warming-two-sides-to-every-story-assignment/>

and the perfect place to grow crops (1); grapes suitable for winemaking were also reported growing in England (2); and the tree line in Scandinavia was 100–200 m higher than present (3). This warming period was followed by a cooling period called the Little Ice Age from 1400 to 1850 AD that brought severe winters and cold summers to Europe (1). Today we are enjoying global temperatures, which have warmed back to levels of the Medieval Warm Period; this means there is an ice age in our near future. The cycle of global warming and cooling has been happening long before humans have occupied the Earth and will continue to happen long after we are gone; it's a nature cycle that cannot be broken.

The second reason why global warming is a natural occurrence is because the sun is what warms the earth. When the sun gets hotter, it stands to reason that we get hotter too and this goes vice versa. If the sun is cooler, we get cooler. The sun has several cycles and the main one we see is the 11-year cycle. “ Every 11 years, the Sun moves through a period of fewer, smaller sunspots, prominences, and flares – called a solar minimum – and a period of more, larger sunspots, prominences and flares – called a solar maximum” (4).

Right now we are currently at the minimum of this cycle, so the sun is in the process of increasing its heat output and we will experience a peak of heat in 2012 (5). When the sun gets hotter there are more rays heating the earth, so the earth gets hotter. If we are so positive that global warming is a man made problem, explain why Mars is also warming at the same pace as the earth is. “ In 2005 data from NASA's Mars Global Surveyor and Odyssey

missions revealed that the carbon dioxide “ice caps” near Mars’s south pole had been diminishing for three summers in a row” (6).

Like Earth, Mars has also experienced warming and cooling periods throughout its history. The changes in the sun’s heat output can account for almost all the climate changes we see on Earth and Mars; manmade greenhouse warming has made only a small contribution to the warming happening on Earth. The third reason why global warming is a natural occurrence is because manmade CO<sub>2</sub> is not the main source of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. The most important greenhouse gas is water vapor; water makes up 95% of the world’s greenhouse gases. Without this amount of water vapor the Earth would be too cold and no one could survive. Out of the other 5% CO<sub>2</sub> only makes up .054% (7) and 96.5% of this .054% are from natural sources, and mankind is responsible for only 3.5% (8). A single volcano eruption emits more CO<sub>2</sub> than all factories and manmade machinery. And animals and decaying vegetation gives off more 150 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> each year, while humans produce about 6.5 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year (9). The largest source of CO<sub>2</sub> is the ocean. As the ocean heats up it gives off CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere and when it cools down, it absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere (10).

Since the Sun is getting hotter is gradually heating the Earth, the oceans are getting hotter thus letting out more CO<sub>2</sub>. The contribution of human made CO<sub>2</sub> is very insignificant and can barely have an effect on global warming. In conclusion, global warming is not the result of mankind abusing the Earth; it is a natural cycle that has been repeated through out history. Global

Warming comes and goes. The earth naturally heats up and cools down. Right now we are going through a natural warming cycle, which will soon be followed by a cooling cycle. The sun is always going to control how hot and how cool it is on the earth.

Scientists need to take this into account. If the sun is hotter, we experience hotter temperatures; and when the sun is cooler, we experience cooler temperatures. Global warming is also not being sped up by the carbon dioxide burned into the atmosphere by humans. We only contribute 3.5% of all CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, while the other 96.5% is released by natural sources. There is no denying that global warming doesn't exist. It does, but mankind is not the cause of it. It is a natural occurrence that will continue to happen even after we are long gone from the earth's surface. Global Warming:

Caused By Humans Every year the average American produces over 22 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> living a normal life (15); and the United States as a whole produces 6,049,435 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> yearly (16). This disturbing figure is the main cause of global warming and we have yet to take responsibility for our actions. There are many different theories of what has caused global warming and the answer is mankind. Humans are the cause of global warming because of pollution, over population, and deforestation. The first reason humans are the cause of global warming is because of pollution.

Pollution is one of the biggest manmade causes of global warming and it comes in many shapes and sizes. The burning fossil fuel is one thing that causes pollution. Fossil fuels are a non-renewable source of energy, such as

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coal, oil and natural gas and when they are burned they give off a greenhouse gas called CO<sub>2</sub> (12). We as humans release CO<sub>2</sub> from power plants, cars, airplanes and buildings. About 40% of U. S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions stem from the burning of fossil fuels for the purpose of electricity generation; about 33% of U. S CO<sub>2</sub> emissions comes from the burning of gasoline in engines of cars; about 3. % of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions comes from planes, and this figure could rise to 15% by 2050; while, buildings structure account for about 12% of carbon dioxide emissions (13). While CO<sub>2</sub> is the major greenhouse gas, methane is second most important; methane is more than 20 times as effective as CO<sub>2</sub> at trapping heat in the atmosphere (14). Mining coal and oil allows methane to escape. Methane is naturally in the ground. When coal or oil is mined it has to be dug up from earth and when this is done you also release the methane letting it escape into the atmosphere.

With the increasing amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>, methane and other greenhouse gases we emit into the atmosphere, humans are causing the intensification of the greenhouse effect known as global warming. The second reason why humans are the cause of global warming is because of over population. More people means more food, more methods of transportation, more power plants, and more buildings. That means more methane and CO<sub>2</sub> will be emitted into the atmosphere because there will be more burning of fossil fuels and more agriculture. Another source of methane is from manure.

Since more food is needed to feed the rapidly growing population we will have to raise food. Animals like cows are a good source of food, which means more manure and more methane emissions. We will also have to plant more

crops to grow more food and plants release CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere as well. Another problem with the increasing population is transportation; more people means more cars, and more cars means more pollution. Lastly, over population causes city growth, which also admits CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere adding to the pollution.

The third reason why humans are the cause of global warming is because of deforestation. Deforestation is the second principle cause of atrophic CO<sub>2</sub> and is responsible for 25-30% of all CO<sub>2</sub> — 1. 6 billion tons — emission into the atmosphere (17). This is done by burring and cutting down 34 million arches of tress a year. Scientists are saying that one day of deforestation is equivalent to the carbon footprint of 8 million people flying to New York. Each year we are losing millions of acres of rainforests, the equivalent in area to the size of The United Kingdom (18).

Trees are 50% carbon and when they are cut down or burned, the CO<sub>2</sub> they store escapes back into the air. The destroying of tropical forests alone is throwing hundreds of millions of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere every year. Two billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> enters the atmosphere every year from deforestation and the remaining standing forests still emit a billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year (19). If we keep loosing our forests at this rate, we will ultimately lose the battle against climate change. In conclusion, humans are the cause of global warming because of pollution, over population and deforestation.

Global warming is a result of our human activity, not natural causes.

Pollution, over population and deforestation all add to the large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> being emitted into the atmosphere, which is increasing the rate of

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global warming. If we want to put an end to this global problem, we as a human race must limit our pollution, gain control of our population, and stop deforestation. If these three factors don't change we will ultimately lose the battle of climate change. Global Warming: My Opinion I believe that global warming is happening due to natural causes, but I didn't always feel this way.

Two years ago I took an English class and as an assignment we had to do a debate. I missed the day that we got assigned our topics and I received the topic that global warming was happening due to natural causes. At the time I didn't agree, but after doing weeks of research I changed my mind about global warming. I think that it's a natural process that will continue to happen even after we are gone. I also think that humans are speeding up the process. There is nothing we can do to stop global warming, but there are things we can do to slow down the progression.

If we stop emitting as much CO<sub>2</sub> as we do now, we may see a slight change in the global warming process, and if not we will see global warming happening more rapidly than it should. WORKS CITED 1. "Medieval Warm Period." 2008. Wikipedia. November 2, 2008. 2. Le Roy Ladurie E. 1971. *Times of Feast, Times of Famine*. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, New York 438 pp. 3. Karlen W. 1998. Climatic variations and the enhanced greenhouse effect. *Ambio*. 27, 270-274. 4. "The Sun's Magnetic Field Changes." *The Magnetic Sun*. November 2, 2008. <http://solar.physics.montana.edu/YPOP/Spotlight/Magnetic/cycle.html>. 5. "The next 11-year cycle of solar storms will start in March and peak in late 2011." 2007. *The Student*



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