

Free essay on causes and effects of global warming

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Global warming is probably among some of the most major issues that our planet and its inhabitants are facing. Indeed, the phenomenon has some very alarming effects on agriculture and on animals, and it has even more frightening effects on the human population. The media and politicians are often heard debating over the fact about global warming. However, even though there is widespread disagreement about the causes, but the reality of the global and measurable effects of global warming cannot be denied. The fact of the matter is that, it is the human race is the source of the causes of global warming, and ultimately, we are the ones facing its severe effects.

Global warming is the global phenomenon that refers to the increase in the average temperature of the planet's surface, including land, near-surface air and water, as a result of the sun's trapped heat in the earth's atmosphere.

Those temperatures have been increasing since the 50s, and continue to increase, causing the earth to warm up. Climate change is another term used to refer to this phenomenon. The surface temperature of the planet refers to the estimate of the earth's mean surface air temperature. However, for changes that are taking place over time, simply anomalies are used, typically on the basis of the area-weighted global average of the land surface air and sea surface temperature anomalies. Carbon dioxide and other forms of air pollution are the cause of this phenomenon.

We cannot live without electricity, but what we do not know is that the power plants that release huge amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from the coal they burn. Electricity production accounts for 40% of the carbon dioxide emissions in the United States, while a majority of these emissions are from the burning of coal (" Air emissions,"). Another source of

carbon dioxide is the cars we drive and the goods we source from around the world, both of which account for a little over 30% of emissions in the United States. The rate at which our population is growing is worrying, which will only increase the demand for cars and consumer goods that are causing a rise in fossil fuel use for manufacturing and transportation. We have yet to discover sufficient ways to diminish the effects, but our consumption keeps on increasing.

Right behind carbon dioxide, another extremely potent cause of global warming is the greenhouse gas methane. Methane is produced in places like rice paddies where the conditions lack oxygen allowing bacteria to break down organic matter. The crystal-like ice structure as in the Arctic seabed comprises of the compound methane clathrate, which contains enormous amounts of methane that is released into the atmosphere, significantly increasing the rate of global warming (" New global warming," 2008). Even though forests can actually help remove atmospheric carbon dioxide, we continue to use forests, especially tropical ones, for farmland, pulp and wood, contributing to global warming. There has also been dramatic increase in the use of chemical fertilizers versus animal manure in the recent century. These fertilizers happen to be rich in nitrogen, and when applied at such a high rate, they affect a cropland's heat storage and " dead-zones" are created in the oceans (" 5-million-year-long ' dead zone'," 2012).

Since the human population is responsible for the causes of global warming, it must also suffer the consequences. According to scientists, sea levels are expected to increase around the world because the enormous ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland, particularly on the East Coast of the United States,

have been rapidly melting (Fahrenthold, 2009). The effects of this rise in sea levels will be experienced by many countries, resulting in the displacement of millions of people. An increase in the severity of storms like cyclones and hurricanes is another effect of global warming. According to scientists, the intensity of some of the most extreme storms all over the world is expected to significantly increase due to global warming. Since 1981, there has been a significant increase in the maximum wind speeds of the most extreme tropical cyclones. Apparently, rising ocean temperatures are driving this trend, and it is not expected to stop any time soon (Romm, 2009).

Recent research claims that there is a very high likelihood that billions of people from all over the world will have to consider moving their families to milder climates to avoid starvation as a result of global warming within hundred years (Brahic, 2009). Water supplies are expected to be most severely affected by global warming. This means, damage to ecosystems, hindrance to economic development, reduction of sanitation and a threat to food production. Along with these factors, millions of species are predicted to go extinct by 2050 due to rising temperatures (" Extinction, mass extinctions,," 2013). The human population should be afraid since human beings cannot exist on this planet without a diverse population of species. By the time the last ice age came to an end, it marked the beginning of the holocene extinction, which has continued in the form of the 6th mass extinction, forcing almost all of the megafauna animals on the planet to extinction (Roach, 2004).

For decades, scientists have been attempting to figure out what are the causes behind the phenomenon behind global warming. They have taken a

look at plenty of natural cycles and events that they believe can influence the climate. However, those factors alone cannot explain the amount and pattern of global warming, since both artificial and natural factors are involved. The population across the United States and all over the world is already feeling the effects of rising temperatures due to global warming, with serious implications for their economy, their environment, and their health. As mentioned, the frequency of dangerous heat waves continues to increase, and an accelerated rise in extreme storms and sea levels is also taking place. The causes of global warming are apparent, and controlling these causes before they get out of hand is the only way to mitigate this phenomenon.

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