WE, THE PEOPLE TAKING ACTION AGAINST CO2

WHAT WE CAN DO

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This newsletter, and all of OMNI’s newsletters, are intended to enable readers to function more effectively as individual citizens, as individual webs of influence, and even more effectively by joining with other individuals. Each of us as individuals is equally responsible and accountable for what happens to our planet—to our children and grandchildren. We must and can intensify and enlarge the familiar recycle, reuse, reduce measures within the daily control of our lives in order to encompass regional and national causes of CO2. We are not equal in causing the national footprint, a print that must be drastically reduced. The owners (the stockholders and managers) of coal and automotive companies (and airlines) and their political supporters continue the old drive for profits through growth and development. (Airbus just received 40 billion dollars of orders for new planes, and Boeing 30 billion.) They are the real public enemies. And against them we are not helpless. Working together we have many tools, including the boycott. It is not too late to stop, for example, the expansion of XNA (new runway, new concourse, and new highway being planned costing millions of dollars) by taking only essential trips (will one of you be OMNI’s leader for this?). We, the People.

Senator Lincoln (202) 224-4843 Fax: (202) 228-1371
Fayetteville office: 251-1380
Senator Mark Pryor: Phone: (202) 224-2353 Fax: (202) 228-0908

PETITION FROM AL GORE
Date: Tue, 11 Dec 2007 15:40 -0500
From: Al Gore AlGore@gore.com To: ahobson@uark.edu

In less than forty-eight hours, I will step onstage at the UN Climate Conference in Bali. With me I will bring hundreds of thousands of messages demanding that a visionary global treaty be completed and brought into effect by 2010.
If we want to solve the climate crisis, together we need to demonstrate the broad public support for action. That's why it's vital that you sign our petition right now by visiting:
http://climateprotect.org/standwithal
Over the past few months we've taken many positive steps towards uniting governments worldwide around the goal of solving the climate crisis. Just over a week ago on December 3rd, Australia's new Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was sworn in. His first formal act in office was to ratify the Kyoto Treaty. This was a clear demonstration of Australia's priorities. Yet this progress has not swayed the Bush Administration. With thousands of delegates gathered in Bali for the UN Climate Conference, this is our last chance in 2007 to show the world how serious the American people are about ending the climate crisis. That's why it is so vital that all of us join together and demonstrate the political will of our country. Only two days remain before I deliver your messages to the delegates meeting in Bali. Over the past few days more than 173,963 people have added their voices. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to demonstrate your support for a visionary global treaty to end the climate crisis.
Sign our petition, then reach out to everyone you know and ask them to sign today by visiting:
http://climateprotect.org/standwithal

OMNI CARBON CAPS TASK FORCE
GLOBAL WARMING CAMPAIGN
Omni worked hard to help create the Governor’s Commission on Global Warming, and two Omni
members have been placed on the Commission. Support and publicity will be needed statewide to have a positive impact on the global warming debate as it unfolds. Conservative estimates of the cost of statewide publicity run to about $50,000. Omni has a history of making a little go a long way though. Please give generously.

Coordinator of OMNI’s CCTF
Robert McAfee, Climate Change Messenger
2610 W Hackett Rd, Hackett, AR 72937

Program based on Al Gore’s An Inconvenient Truth
The truth about the climate crisis is an inconvenient one that means we are going to have to change the way we live our lives.
Al Gore

... unless we advance beyond thinking only in terms of conservation and alternate sources and begin to think in terms of a carbon pie, we will have no chance to stop the rise in atmospheric CO2. Wallace S. Broecker

secretary: Gladys Tiffany

OMNI: CARBON CAPS TASK FORCE: Meeting Agenda: 16 December 2004
1:30 PM, United Campus Ministries - Basement - enter door on east side. Corner of Maple & Storer Streets.

Agenda
1. Report from CLAN
2. Logo / Slogan
3. Discussion of 2007-8 Priorities
4. Funding the promotion

OMNI Carbon Caps Program Agenda: 2008 - 2009

Two broad goals:
I. Citizens Legislative Action Network. To create a data base of active citizens in each Arkansas House & Senate District who will:
1. Respond to alerts for immediate action to support or oppose legislation in the 2009 General Assembly.
2. Contact the Public Service Commission, ADEQ, Corps of Engineers and others who have authority to approve / disapprove construction of new coal fired power plants in Arkansas.

II. EDUCATION / ADVERTIZING CAMPAIGN. To promote an intensive informational campaign to alert the citizens of Arkansas to the very detrimental effects of fossil fuel use for energy production, especially COAL.
1. Focus on the opposition to the construction of coal fired power plants
2. Connect at a personal level the burning of coal to everyday activities and products
3. Provide real ways to stop using coal as an energy source
Some ideas:
1. Public Lectures by Art Hobson, Stephen Pollard, others from the Sierra Club, Audubon, etc.
2. SpringFest / Earth Day
3. Develop coal character / logo

December 17, 2007

OMNI CENTER FOR PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY
NEWS RELEASE

Carbon Caps Task Force receives donation for global warming education

Founder:
Dick Bennett
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Melanie Dietzel
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Gladys Tiffany
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Omni Center for Peace, Justice and Ecology announces that its environmental committee, the Carbon Caps Task Force (CCTF), has received a donation of $5,000 from Omni Founder Dick Bennett.

The CCTF was formed in 2006 to encourage Arkansas to address problems related to climate change, and the group was instrumental in the creation of the Governor’s Commission on Global Warming. The Commission is mandated to suggest legislation that will help Arkansas mitigate the effects of global warming. Preparing the state to adapt to the climate as it changes, in ways that are good for the economy, environment and people of Arkansas. Commissioners are from a broad variety of energy stakeholders across the state, representing science, industry, labor, business and nonprofit environmental groups.

Now that the Global Warming Commission is at work, CCTF is seeking ways that it can support them through education about global warming, and coalition building with other people and groups working on this critical issue. Donor Dick Bennett sees an opportunity to make a strong impact in our state. As a former teacher he feels that when people understand just what global warming could do to our lives, they will be willing to make changes.

“We’ve been living in a carbon bubble, and thought it could go on forever,” Dick says. “Re-educating ourselves for a sustainable life may not be easy, but it’s possible now. As time goes on, it’ll be harder. Re-education now is crucial. CCTF is a group dedicated to this kind of education, and I’m ready to support them in this by beginning this fund.”

For more information on how you can participate or donate, see the Carbon Caps Task Force link on Omni Center’s website at www.omnicenter.org, or contact committee chair Robert McAfee at 479-462-8834, robertmcal@aol.com.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST

CO2 INCREASES ANYWHERE ARE A THREAT TO SPECIES EVERYWHERE. Corporations are expanding and reinforcing the CO2 Regime. “Yet our politicians are giving us policy proposals that are little more sophisticated than those of 20...years ago. Real pressure for them to change will have to come from the ballot box. Are Americans ready to vote as if the environment really matters?” John Young, “Salience, or Voting as if the Environment Matters.” World-Watch (Nov. Dec. 2007).

But the public is part of the CO2 Regime. As James Baldwin said about the US Racism Regime of the 1950s, nothing will change until the base of power is changed. And the CO2-military-corporate-White House-congressional-mainstream media complex will not change until we make them. We must mobilize the people to change that power.

These are some of the reasons why our CCTF campaign is so necessary.

C O A L

STOPPING COAL PLANTS (from Art H)

Hello carbon cappers -

Because of the increased concern about global warming, there's been a wave of coal plant cancellations around the country. Here are three articles about this. According to the third article, of the 151 new coal plants that were planned several years ago, only 15 have been built since 2002 while over 50 have been either scrapped or delayed as utilities face increasing pressures due to concerns over global warming and rising construction costs.

"TXU coal plant cancellations are the tip of the iceberg":
"Coal industry future uncertain without carbon capture":
"Plans for coal power plants scrapped":
http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iLDFiy6UAMerElG5pLIs-9KMS_0g.
Coal-to-liquids technology is a threat to the planet. It will convert coal to a transportation fuel that can go into gasoline tanks. Because of the extensive processing needed, this will emit about twice as much global warming pollution as is emitted by gasoline. Coal-to-liquid technology might be coming to Arkansas soon, using Arkansas lignite (low-grade coal) resources. To hear and see a brief message (a couple of minutes) about this, and to take action, click on: http://beyondoil.nrdc.org/news/gas-from-coal.php

PETITION TO STOP COAL PLANT NEAR TEXARKANA
http://www.petitiononline.com/noccoalpp/petition.html
Go to Omni's website -- www.omnicenter.org.
On the upper left corner below the Omni banner, is the link that says "Stop the Coal Plant Petition." Click on that, and you'll be there.

To: Governor Mike Beebe
We believe that the Arkansas Public Service Commission made a mistake when it approved Soco's plans for a new coal-fired electric generating plant to be built near Texarkana. Far from being "clean," this plant will spew five million tons of global warming pollution into the atmosphere every year, increasing our states' global warming emissions by 8 percent. These emissions are equivalent to the annual emissions from half of the cars and light trucks in Arkansas. This is especially ironic when the Arkansas legislature earlier this year voted overwhelmingly to establish the Governor's Commission on Global Warming with the goal of establishing, by the time of the 2009 legislative session, a reduction goal and a plan for achieving it.

There are better solutions: energy efficiency, renewable energy resources such as wind, and, if necessary, natural gas (which is far cleaner than coal, and emits only half as much global warming pollution as coal). Furthermore, all of these solutions will provide more jobs for Arkansans than will be provided by the planned coal plant.

We call on you to issue a moratorium on all physical preparations for construction at the Texarkana plant until the Governor's Commission on Global Warming has reported to the Arkansas legislature.

SENATOR LINCOLN (202) 224-4843 Fax: (202) 228-1371.
Fayetteville office: 251-1380

Dear Art Hobson,
I wanted to share with you my speech from the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo. Check AlGore.com for video of the event later today. Thank you, Al Gore

SPEECH BY AL GORE ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE NOBEL PEACE RIZE
DECEMBER 10, 2007, OSLO, NORWAY

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Honorable members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen.
I have a purpose here today. It is a purpose I have tried to serve for many years. I have prayed that God would show me a way to accomplish it. Sometimes, without warning, the future knocks on our door with a precious and painful vision of what might be. One hundred and nineteen years ago, a wealthy inventor read his own obituary, mistakenly published years before his death. Wrongly believing the inventor had just died, a newspaper printed a harsh judgment of his life's work, unfairly labeling him "The Merchant of Death" because of his invention - dynamite. Shaken by this condemnation, the inventor made a fateful choice to serve the cause of peace.

Seven years later, Alfred Nobel created this prize and the others that bear his name.

Seven years ago tomorrow, I read my own political obituary in a judgment that seemed to me harsh and mistaken - if not premature. But that unwelcome verdict also brought a precious if painful gift: an opportunity to search for fresh new ways to serve my purpose. Unexpectedly, that quest has brought me here. Even though I fear my words cannot match this moment, I pray what I am feeling in my heart will be communicated clearly enough that those who hear me will say, "We must act."
The distinguished scientists with whom it is the greatest honor of my life to share this award have laid before us a choice between two different futures - a choice that to my ears echoes the words of an ancient prophet: "Life or death, blessings or curses. Therefore,
choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

We, the human species, are confronting a planetary emergency – a threat to the survival of our civilization that is gathering ominous and destructive potential even as we gather here. But there is hopeful news as well: we have the ability to solve this crisis and avoid the worst – though not all – of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively and quickly. However, despite a growing number of honorable exceptions, too many of the world’s leaders are still best described in the words Winston Churchill applied to those who ignored Adolf Hitler’s threat: “They go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all powerful to be impotent.”

So today, we dumped another 70 million tons of global-warming pollution into the thin shell of atmosphere surrounding our planet, as if it were an open sewer. And tomorrow, we will dump a slightly larger amount, with the cumulative concentrations now trapping more and more heat from the sun.

As a result, the earth has a fever. And the fever is rising. The experts have told us it is not a passing affliction that will heal by itself. We asked for a second opinion. And a third. And a fourth. And the consistent conclusion, restated with increasing alarm, is that something basic is wrong. We are what is wrong, and we must make it right.

Last September 21, as the Northern Hemisphere tilted away from the sun, scientists reported with unprecedented distress that the North Polar ice cap is “falling off a cliff.” One study estimated that it could be completely gone during summer in less than 22 years. Another new study, to be presented by U.S. Navy researchers later this week, warns it could happen in as little as 7 years.

Seven years from now.

In the last few months, it has become harder and harder to misinterpret the signs that our world is spinning out of kilter. Major cities in North and South America, Asia and Australia are nearly out of water due to massive droughts and melting glaciers. Desperate farmers are losing their livelihoods. Peoples in the frozen Arctic and on low-lying Pacific islands are planning evacuations of places they have long called home. Unprecedented wildfires have forced a half million people from their homes in one country and caused a national emergency that almost brought down the government in another. Climate refugees have migrated into areas already inhabited by people with different cultures, religions, and traditions, increasing the potential for conflict. Stronger storms in the Pacific and Atlantic have threatened whole cities. Millions have been displaced by massive flooding in South Asia, Mexico, and 18 countries in Africa. As temperature extremes have increased, tens of thousands have lost their lives. We are recklessly burning and clearing our forests and driving more and more species into extinction. The very web of life on which we depend is being ripped and frayed. We never intended to cause all this destruction, just as Alfred Nobel never intended that dynamite be used for waging war. He had hoped his invention would promote human progress. We shared that same worthy goal when we began burning massive quantities of coal, then oil and methane.

Even in Nobel’s time, there were a few warnings of the likely consequences. One of the very first papers of the Prize in chemistry worried that, “We are evaporating our coal mines into the air.” After performing 10,000 equations by hand, Svante Arrhenius calculated that the earth’s average temperature would increase by many degrees if we doubled the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere.

Seventy years later, my teacher, Roger Revelle, and his colleague, Dave Keeling, began to precisely document the increasing CO2 levels day by day. But unlike most other forms of pollution, CO2 is invisible, tasteless, and odorless -- which has helped keep the truth about what it is doing to our climate out of sight and out of mind. Moreover, the catastrophe now threatening us is unprecedented -- and we often confuse the unprecedented with the improbable.

We also find it hard to imagine making the massive changes that are now necessary to solve the crisis. And when large truths are genuinely inconvenient, whole societies can, at least for a time, ignore them. Yet as George Orwell reminds us: “Sooner or later a false belief bumps up against solid reality, usually on a battlefield.”

In the years since this prize was first awarded, the entire relationship between humankind and the earth has been radically transformed. And still, we have remained largely oblivious to the impact of our cumulative actions.

Indeed, without realizing it, we have begun to wage war on the earth itself. Now, we and the earth's climate are locked in a relationship familiar to war planners: "Mutually assured destruction."

More than two decades ago, scientists calculated that nuclear war could throw so much debris and smoke into the air that it would block life-giving sunlight from our atmosphere, causing a “nuclear winter.” Their eloquent warnings here in Oslo helped galvanize the world’s resolve to halt the nuclear arms race.

Now science is warning us that if we do not quickly reduce the global warming pollution that is trapping so much of the heat our planet normally radiates back out of the atmosphere, we are in danger of creating a permanent “carbon summer.”

As the American poet Robert Frost wrote, “Some say the world will end in fire; some say in ice.” Either, he notes, “would suffice.”

But neither need be our fate. It is time to make peace with the planet.
We must quickly mobilize our civilization with the urgency and resolve that has previously been seen only when nations mobilized for war. These prior struggles for survival were won when leaders found words at the 11th hour that released a mighty surge of courage, hope and readiness to sacrifice for a protracted and mortal challenge.

These were not comforting and misleading assurances that the threat was not real or imminent; that it would affect others but not ourselves; that ordinary life might be lived even in the presence of extraordinary threat; that Providence could be trusted to do for us what we would not do for ourselves.

No, these were calls to come to the defense of the common future. They were calls upon the courage, generosity and strength of entire peoples, citizens of every class and condition who were ready to stand against the threat once asked to do so. Our enemies in those times calculated that free people would not rise to the challenge; they were, of course, catastrophically wrong.

Now comes the threat of climate crisis - a threat that is real, rising, imminent, and universal. Once again, it is the 11th hour. The penalties for ignoring this challenge are immense and growing, and at some near point would be unsustainable and unrecoverable. For now we still have the power to choose our fate, and the remaining question is only this: Have we the will to act vigorously and in time, or will we remain imprisoned by a dangerous illusion? Mahatma Gandhi awakened the largest democracy on earth and forged a shared resolve with what he called “Satyagraha” - or “truth force.”

In every land, the truth - once known - has the power to set us free.

Truth also has the power to unite us and bridge the distance between “me” and “we,” creating the basis for common effort and shared responsibility.

There is an African proverb that says, “If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” We need to go far, quickly.

We must abandon the conceit that individual, isolated, private actions are the answer. They can and do help. But they will not take us far enough without collective action. At the same time, we must ensure that in mobilizing globally, we do not invite the establishment of ideological conformity and a new lock-step “ism.”

That means adopting principles, values, laws, and treaties that release creativity and initiative at every level of society in multifold responses originating concurrently and spontaneously.

This new consciousness requires expanding the possibilities inherent in all humanity. The innovators who will devise a new way to harness the sun’s energy for pennies or invent an engine that’s carbon negative may live in Lagos or Mumbai or Montevideo. We must ensure that entrepreneurs and inventors everywhere on the globe have the chance to change the world.

When we unite for a moral purpose that is manifestly good and true, the spiritual energy unleashed can transform us. The generation that defeated fascism throughout the world in the 1940s found, in rising to meet their awesome challenge, that they had gained the moral authority and long-term vision to launch the Marshall Plan, the United Nations, and a new level of global cooperation and foresight that unified Europe and facilitated the emergence of economic and prosperity in Germany, Japan, Italy and much of the world. One of their visionary leaders said, “It is time we steered by the stars and not by the lights of every passing ship.”

In the last year of that war, you gave the Peace Prize to a man from my hometown of 2000 people, Carthage, Tennessee. Cordell Hull was described by Franklin Roosevelt as the “Father of the United Nations.” He was an inspiration and hero to my own father, who followed Hull in the Congress and the U.S. Senate and in his commitment to world peace and global cooperation.

My parents spoke often of Hull, always in tones of reverence and admiration. Eight weeks ago, when you announced this prize, the deepest emotion I felt was when I saw the headline in my hometown paper that simply noted I had won the same prize that Cordell Hull had won. In that moment, I knew what my father and mother would have felt were they alive.

Just as Hull’s generation found moral authority in rising to solve the world crisis caused by fascism, so too can we find our greatest opportunity in rising to solve the climate crisis.

In the Kanji characters used in both Chinese and Japanese, “crisis” is written with two symbols, the first meaning “danger,” the second “opportunity.” By facing and removing the danger of the climate crisis, we have the opportunity to gain the moral authority and vision to vastly increase our own capacity to solve other crises that have been too long ignored.

We must understand the connections between the climate crisis and the afflictions of poverty, hunger, HIV-Aids and other pandemics. As these problems are linked, so too must be their solutions. We must begin by making the common rescue of the global environment the central organizing principle of the world community.

Fifteen years ago, I made that case at the “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro. Ten years ago, I presented it in Kyoto. This week, I will urge the delegates in Bali to adopt a bold mandate for a treaty that establishes a universal global cap on emissions and uses the market in emissions trading to efficiently allocate resources to the most effective opportunities for speedy reductions.

This treaty should be ratified and brought into effect everywhere in the world by the beginning of 2010 - two years sooner than presently contemplated. The pace of our response must be accelerated to match the accelerating pace of the crisis itself.
Heads of state should meet early next year to review what was accomplished in Bali and take personal responsibility for addressing this crisis. It is not unreasonable to ask, given the gravity of our circumstances, that these heads of state meet every three months until the treaty is completed.

We also need a moratorium on the construction of any new generating facility that burns coal without the capacity to safely trap and store carbon dioxide.

And most important of all, we need to put a price on carbon -- with a CO2 tax that is then rebated back to the people, progressively, according to the laws of each nation, in ways that shift the burden of taxation from employment to pollution. This is by far the most effective and simplest way to accelerate solutions to this crisis. The world needs an alliance - especially of those nations that weigh heaviest in the scales where earth is in the balance. I salute Europe and Japan for the steps they’ve taken in recent years to meet the challenge, and the new government in Australia, which has made solving the climate crisis its first priority.

But the outcome will be decisively influenced by two nations that are now failing to do enough: the United States and China. While India is also growing fast in importance, it should be absolutely clear that it is the two largest CO2 emitters – most of all, my own country -- that will need to make the boldest moves, or stand accountable before history for their failure to act.

Both countries should stop using the other’s behavior as an excuse for stalemate and instead develop an agenda for mutual survival in a shared global environment. These are the last few years of decision, but they can be the first years of a bright and hopeful future if we do what we must. No one should believe a solution will be found without effort, without cost, without change. Let us acknowledge that if we wish to redeem squandered time and speak again with moral authority, then these are the hard truths:

The way ahead is difficult. The outer boundary of what we currently believe is feasible is still far short of what we actually must do. Moreover, between here and there, across the unknown, falls the shadow. That is just another way of saying that we have to expand the boundaries of what is possible. In the words of the Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, “Pathwalker, there is no path. You must make the path as you walk.”

We are standing at the most fateful fork in that path. So I want to end as I began, with a vivid clarity the necessity of choosing between those two futures, and the urgency of making the right choice now.

The great Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen, wrote, “One of these days, the younger generation will come knocking at my door.”

The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the next generation will ask us one of two questions. Either they will ask: “What were you thinking; why didn’t you act?” Or they will ask instead: “How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?”

We have everything we need to get started, save perhaps political will, but political will is a renewable resource. So let us renew it, and say together: “We have a purpose. We are many. For this purpose we will rise, and we will act.” [end of Gore’s Nobel speech]

Summary of the Synthesis Report of the IPCC Fourth Assessment

Issued 11-17 in Spain.

(From Robert M)

"[T]he world's scientists have spoken, clearly and in one voice," said U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, on the most recent report of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). After a rigorous multi-stage review process that includes 2,500 scientific expert reviewers, 800 contributing authors, and 450 lead authors representing 130 countries, the IPCC warns that "all countries" will be affected by climate change if carbon emissions continue to spiral. By 2100, global average surface temperatures could rise by between 1.1 and 6.4 degrees celsius, and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could lead to an eventual rise in sea levels of up to 1.40 meters. With "strikingly" blunt language, the report reads like "a final warning to humanity," notes Time magazine. "What we do in the next two to three years will determine our future. This is the defining moment," declared IPCC chairman Dr. Rajendra Pachauri.

UNEQUIVOCAL FACTS VERSUS BUSH ADMIN. AND MAINSTREAM MEDIA:

Earlier this year, the IPCC said it was "more than 90 percent likely" that global-warming was man-made. It now reports "increased confidence in climate science," leading to the conclusion that "the time for doubt has passed." The IPCC has unequivocally affirmed the warming of our climate system, and linked it directly to human activity." This increased consensus pours water on right-wing insistence that there is still debate on climate change science. "The scientific definition of that [climate change] is lacking," maintains White House environmental adviser Jim Connaughton. The traditional media are also at fault in going against the scientific consensus. For example, ABC and CNN regularly air segments claiming global
warming is not human-induced.

**Effects Already Here:** The **IPCC** report notes that the effects of climate change are "becoming evident already," and without due action, will be "abrupt or irreversible." The United States is seeing these ramifications today. The normally wet southeastern United States is currently suffering from the worst drought of the past 100 years. Recently, the IPCC reported that the last three decades have seen "a spring/summer warming of 0.87 degrees celsius," caused by global warming, and "earlier spring snowmelt has led to longer growing seasons and drought." Furthermore, Arizona is currently entering into its second decade of extensive drought. The intensity of hurricanes, the recent California wildfires has also been linked to the warming earth.

**Immediate Action Needed:** The **IPCC** concluded that "reductions in greenhouse gases had to start immediately to avert a global climate disaster," calling on the United States and China to play "a more constructive role." "If there's no action before 2012, that's too late," said Pachauri. The White House cites the need for "the technology that will make a lasting solution possible" but pushes only "voluntary" emissions reductions. The upcoming Bali conference, which the United States will attend, "is tasked with launching a two-year round of negotiations for intensifying cuts in carbon emissions beyond 2012, when current pledges run out under the Kyoto Protocol." "We cannot afford to leave Bali without such a breakthrough," Ban said. Furthermore, the White House and EPA should cease their "unprecedented obstructionism" and allow California's request that the federal government allow the state to regulate automobile greenhouse emissions under the Clean Air Act. Finally, Congress can reduce greenhouse gases 20 percent by 2030 compared to business as usual by passing a comprehensive energy bill after Thanksgiving recess.

**Footprint of Nations and Cities**


**Science Magazine on the Fact of Heating**

Here is a one-page article from Science magazine titled "The scientific consensus on climate change": [http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/306/5702/1686](http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/306/5702/1686). Science magazine is arguably the world's leading scientific journal. It's the official publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, probably the world's largest and most influential general membership scientific organization. The paper makes it clear that there is no dissent among knowledgeable scientists about the reality and cause of global warming: It's occurring now, and its due to the observed increase in human-caused greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Note that the article appeared in 2004, and is based partly on the 2001 IPCC report. The consensus today, as stated in the 2007 IPCC report, is even stronger. (from Art H, 11-26-07)

**Kathy Kelley Understands Warming War Complex.**

Great Kathy Kelley was on FSTV Sun. 11-11-07, CAN TV Community Forum (773-878-3815). She is wise, forceful, articulate. She now coordinates Voices for Creative Non-Violence. Will one of you contact her about a possible visit?

**Population, A Too Little Examined Factor in Global Warming**


**Politics of Reducing CO2: Bribing Congress**

When Robert Kennedy Jr. was asked what two things should we do above all to reduce CO2, he replied: Campaign finance reform to end corporate control of Congress and the breakup of media monopoly to enable the people to speak.

**The Science and Other Information**

- Dear Folks (from Chris D),
- RealClimate ([http://www.realclimate.org/](http://www.realclimate.org/)) is a commentary site on climate science by working climate scientists for the interested public and journalists. We aim to provide a quick response to developing stories and provide the context sometimes missing in mainstream commentary. The discussion here is restricted to scientific topics and will not get involved in any political or economic implications of the science. Check out the topics below or at [http://www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2004/12/index/](http://www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2004/12/index/)
- Categories:
Andrew Dessler
Atmoz
Christian Science Monitor
Clear The Air
Climate Change Education
Climate Science
Climate Science Watch
ClimateArk
Climatedenial.org
ClimateEthics.org
ClimateProgress
Cntr. for Enviro. Journalism
Cosmic Variance
Deltoid
deSmogBlog
DotEarth
EcoEquity
Effets de Terre (FR)
George Monbiot
globalchange
Gristmill: GW skeptics guide
Head in a Cloud
Integrity of Science
James' Empty Blog
Jeff Masters' Wunder Blog
John Fleck
Mark Lynas
Nature Blog
One Degree
Only in it for the gold
Open Mind
PrimaKlima (DE)
Prometheus
Rabett Run
Sci. Journalism Tracker
SciDev.Net
Scienceblogs
Scitizen
Stephen Schneider
Stoat
The Heat is Online
The Intersection
World View of Glob.Warm.
Yale Climate Media Forum

Science Links

AIP:Discovery of Glob. Warm.
AMS Env. Science
Climate Basics
ClimatePrediction.net
Columbia Earth Inst.
EdGCM
Element List
ESPERE
Inst. Pierre Simon Laplace
IPCC AR4
IPCC Facts
IPCC TAR
NOAA Paleoclimatology
Penn State Inst. Env.
PodClimate
Sci. Am. Observations
WMO
GLOBAL WARMING CLIP ART

Chris D found an extensive online gallery of Global Warming ClipArt and charts unrestricted by copyright law at http://www.globalwarmingart.com/wiki/List_of_all_images

Global Warming Art had this to say on its website:

One of the goals of Global Warming Art is to provide an archive of easily reusable material related to climate change. This is done by emphasizing figures and images that can be freely licensed; however, because this site presents both original works and material from third party sources, care must be taken to respect the copyright licensing terms associated with the text and images presented here.

PUBLIC OPINION VS CO2

International Polls Find Robust Global Support For Increased Efforts to Reduce Emissions

An analysis by WorldPublicOpinion.org of recent international polls reveals strong support around the world for decisive action to reduce the emission of climate-changing gases.

Representatives from nearly 190 countries are gathered on the Indonesian island of Bali this week and next for a UN conference that will launch negotiations for a treaty to replace the Kyoto protocol, which expires in 2012. On the agenda is how to forge new international agreements designed to reduce or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

A new analysis by WorldPublicOpinion.org of 11 recent international polls conducted around the world shows widespread and growing concern about climate change. Large majorities believe human activity causes climate change and favor policies designed to reduce emissions.

In most countries, majorities see an urgent need for significant action. For example a recent poll by the BBC by GlobeScan and the Program for International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) found that majorities in 15 out of 21 countries felt that it was necessary to take "major steps, starting very soon" to address climate change. In the other six countries polled, opinion was divided over whether "major" or "modest steps" were needed. Only small minorities thought no steps were necessary.

"Leaders in Bali do not need to worry that they will face a difficult job of selling their general public on the need for action," said Steven Kull, director of WorldPublicOpinion.org. "Rather, publics around the world are signaling that they are ready to do more than their own governments have been asking of them."

(UN photo)
in partnership with the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, California LCVEF, Center for American Progress Action Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council Action Fund, and the Presidential Forum on Renewable Energy. The event was attended by Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY), former senator John Edwards, and Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH). "[R]educing oil dependence and global warming is the second most important issue among independent voters," states Daniel Weiss of the Center for American Progress. With "little disagreement among them" on the urgency of climate change, Clinton and Edwards emphasized the need to reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2050, consistent with the goals of the IPCC, along with a mandatory cap on greenhouse emissions. Such plans to combat global warming can be undertaken with a very modest reduction in global annual GDP growth of 0.12 percent, notes Pachauri.

The Presidential Candidates on Climate Change. By Kitty Bennett and Farhana Hossain, The New York Times, September 30, 2007. "A growing environmental awareness among Americans has brought the issue to the forefront of the 2008 presidential campaign. Both Republican and Democratic candidates have been asked to explain their stance on global warming during the debates and on the campaign trail. Most of the Democrats say the United States should lead the global effort to curb greenhouse emissions and advocate federally mandated emission laws. The Republicans, many of whom are unsure about the human role in climate change, tend to emphasize energy independence and efficiency. " A listing of each candidate follows, with blurbs under these headings: "STANCE ON GLOBAL WARMING AND AMERICA'S ROLE; IF ELECTED, THEY SAY THEY WOULD...; PAST ACTIONS ON THE ISSUE." (from Robert M)

Senator Mark Pryor: Phone: (202) 224-2353 Fax: (202) 228-0908

SOME COSTS OF OIL ADDICTION: SPILLS AND SUBSIDIES

Oil and the Environment

Institute for Public Accuracy (IPA): Oil and the Environment

WASHINGTON, DC - November 13 -

STEVE KRETZMANN
Executive director of Oil Change International, Kretzmann said today: "Despite how environmentally damaging and tragic the San Francisco and Black Sea spills are, they are only the most visible of the many costs of our oil addiction. Oil spills cannot truly be called accidents. Like human rights abuses, wars for oil, and predictable and ongoing consequences of our collective addiction to oil. Democratic leadership in Congress, which is considering removing renewable energy incentives in the Energy Bill, should wake up and realize that the only real way to prevent tragedies such as this in the future is to chart an end to our nation's addiction to oil.

More Information

RIKI OTT
Ott wrote the recent piece "Shocking: 18 Years On and Exxon Still Won't Pay $2.5 Billion for Valdez Oil Spill." She is the author of Sound Truth and Corporate Myth$: The Legacy of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill and of the forthcoming Not One Drop: Promises, Betrayal, and Courage in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. She is an aquatic toxicologist and a former 'fisherm'am,' and has a degree in marine toxicology with a specialty in oil pollution.

More Information

TYSON SLOCUM
Director of Public Citizen's Energy Program, Slocum said today: "Right now Big Oil gets over $8 billion in subsidies. There's a move on in Congress to shift some of that to alternative energy and energy efficiency. But even this conservative approach is getting filibuster threats in Congress. This even though we're facing close to $100 for a barrel of oil and environmental damage."

More Information

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WARMING? HEAT
GREENHOUSE GAS LEVELS AT DANGEROUS HIGH
Here's an important article about current greenhouse gas levels. When all GHGs are included (methane etc), the concentration is already at 455 ppm. Note Angela Merkel's response, which implies that the U.S. needs to reduce its GHG emissions by 90% (and Europe by 80%) ASAP. 
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071010/ap_on_sc/climate_change

Art Hobson

A Melting Alaska Draws Visitors. By Yereth Rosen, The Christian Science Monitor, November 14, 2007. "Tourists still flock to Alaska to see Mount McKinley and ice caves, but a small and steady stream of visitors now head to the last frontier to see thawing tundra, crumbling glaciers, and ailing forests. Take Shishmaref, an Inupiat Eskimo village on the state's remote northwest coast. Known for exquisite ivory carvings and high-quality seal oil, it lures travelers these days because of its precarious perch on melting land. When a team of scientists and religious leaders arrived in August, a highlight of the tour was viewing a house that had tumbled over the edge of the beach bluff; A storm had cut 20 feet from the shoreline previously held fast by frozen permafrost and sea-ice buildup. 'To many of us, Alaska is the distant early-warming system for the future of climate change,' says Eric Chivian, of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School, which organized the trip. Because Alaska is heating up more than five times faster than the world as a whole, scientists, congressmen, foreign dignitaries, and the curious are coming to see the effects of global warming firsthand... 'There is that sense that Alaska's going to change because [change] is inevitable, so let's see it before it changes,' says Kirk Hoessle, owner of Alaska Wildland Adventures. Clients become more aware of the warming impacts in Alaska when they see the vast stretches of beetle-killed trees on the Kenai Peninsula or learn about the recent spate of lightning-strike fires that are uncharacteristic for the region, he says." (from Robert M)

ARCTIC MELT AND FEAR OF RISING WATERS
As the New York Times reports, scientists are unnerved by implications of melting artic ice due to global warming for the future. The ice melting has also increased fears of rising sea levels. ABC's Bill Blakemore reported last week on the dangers of rapid melting from Greenland's ice sheet, and the dire predictions for global cities. Click here to watch the video, showing startling evidence of global warming's impact.

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STORMS AND CC
Kerry Emanuel... the foremost hurricane scientist in the US demonstrates in his new book, What We Know About Climate Change, the link between global warming and storminess. In an epic feat of concision, he manages in eighty-five very small pages to explain the state of the science of climate change, concluding on the optimistic note that the extremists [who deprecate the threat of climate change] are being exposed and relegated to the sidelines, and when the media stop amplifying their views, their political counterparts will have nothing left to stand on.. (see BOOKS at end)

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MONBIOT’S ONE-PARAGRAPH SUMMARY ON ELIMINATING CO2
Complete Decarbonization of Global Economy Should be the Goal. By George Monbiot, Mobiot.com, December 4, 2007. "There is now a broad scientific consensus that we need to prevent temperatures from rising by more than 2°C above their pre-industrial level. Beyond that point, the Greenland ice sheet could go into irreversible meltdown, some ecosystems collapse, billions suffer from water stress, droughts could start to threaten global food supplies... A paper in Geophysical Research Letters finds that even with a 90% global cut by 2050, the 2° threshold 'is eventually broken'. To stabilise temperatures at 1.5° above the pre-industrial level requires a global cut of 100%. The diplomats who started talks in Bali yesterday should be discussing the complete decarbonization of the global economy. It is not impossible. In a previous article I showed how by switching the whole economy over to the use of electricity and by deploying the latest thinking on regional supergrids, grid balancing and energy storage, you could run almost the entire energy system on renewable power. The major exception is flying (don't expect to see battery-powered jetliners) which suggests that we should be closing rather than opening runways. This could account for around 90% of the necessary cut. Total decarbonisation demands that we go further. Preventing 2° of warming means stripping carbon dioxide from the air. The necessary technology already exists: the challenge is making it efficient and cheap." (from Robert M)
EXPONENTIAL GROWTH

Al Bartlett from the physics dept of the Univ of Colorado, Boulder, is a friend of mine who has for decades written articles and given talks all over the country, including to the US Congress, about exponential growth, population, and energy consumption. He teaches us to be suspicious whenever somebody touts the virtues of growth (in population, in energy consumption, etc.). He spoke in the law auditorium at U Arkansas earlier this fall--some of you might have heard him. His classic lecture, "Arithmetic, population, and energy," is now videotaped and presented in 8 parts on the net. If you don't know much about exponential growth, you'll learn a lot from this video, even though it's "just" a classroom lecture. It starts out a little slow, but soon presents some amazing (but true) conclusions that arise from very simple arithmetic. When Part 1 ends, you can click below the screen on "Part 2" to continue on to all 8 parts. Check it out at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-QA2rkpBSY.
(from Art H)

Senator Mark Pryor: Phone: (202) 224-2353 Fax: (202) 228-0908

STRONG ADVOCACY FILM BY LEONARDO DE CAPRIO, “Global Warming,” inspired by Thom Hartman’s The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight. www.leonardodecaprio.com Shown on FSTV Sunday 11-11-07. Governments and corporations are not and will not reduce CO2 significantly because they are addicted to fossil fuels. Only an aroused and militant public can separate the corporate state from fossil fuels.

For inspiration about resisting entrenched power, see the video “Rebel Voices,” from Voices of a People’s History of the United States by Howard Zinn.

CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE (I cut the opening–D)

The Globe and Mail (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
October 2, 2007, p. 8 http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20071002.BCMASON02/TPStory/?query=gary+mason "Time to grab a placard and slow climate change” By GARY MASON

VANCOUVER

…I believe the world’s scientists when they say we are running out of time to fix this problem. I also believe that as global issues go, this is No. 1. Nothing else is even close. Not Iraq. Not Osama bin Laden. Not a nuclear-thirsty fruit bar in Korea.

None of those even come close to the threat posed to the Earth by greenhouse-gas emissions.

Despite that, our politicians, well many of them anyway, still don’t get it.

A story in most newspapers yesterday said Canada’s greenhouse-gas emissions have stayed at a record high for another year.

Our emissions are now 32.7 per cent above the target in Canada’s Kyoto Protocol commitment.

That is a disgrace.

Mr. Gore rightly mocked Prime Minister Stephen Harper for talking about “aspirational targets” to cut greenhouse-gas emissions. Aspirational targets are something you hope for, not something that are mandated. And that is not good enough if we’re hoping to stop the planet from burning up.

Here’s the thing: We can all go see Mr. Gore give his slideshow a million times and it’s not going to do a damn bit of good unless it leads to action. Driving our SUVs to hear him speak and then going home and putting out the recycling to make ourselves feel good isn’t going to get it done. Not even close.

Changing the type of light bulbs we use and turning our computers off at night helps. But it’s only going to make a small, small dent in the problem. Only political will is going to change the tide of global warming. Right now, I don’t see that political will anywhere, especially in Ottawa.

To my mind, this is the only issue in the next federal election; which party has a plan to actually do something about climate change. Which party has the courage to introduce measures that are likely going to hurt a bit, economically and otherwise. There is no way around some pain. But it will hurt a heck of a lot less if we do something now as opposed to waiting another 10 or 15 years when the problem is even worse.
Which brings me back to the shivering protesters outside the hotel Saturday.

I’m starting to think this is what everyone in this country may soon have to do: Grab a placard and hit the streets. I think most people in this country are way out in front of the politicians on this issue. And if our national leaders are reluctant to do anything serious about the problem, then Canadians need to send the message that they have to. That we won’t be embarrassed and ashamed by our contribution to global warming any longer.

If it takes marching to be heard then marching it shall be.

Even in the rain. (from Robert M)

**New Social Networking Site Tackles Climate Change**

By Chris Addison.

Web2ForDev, October 4, 2007. "OneWorld, the international network for global justice, is launching a social networking space for climate change that will act as a 'Climate Facebook' to inspire people to take action to protect the planet.' OneClimate.net is a mass collaboration space dedicated to global citizens gathering and distributing solutions to climate change,' says Anuradha Vittachi, co-founder of OneWorld and instigator of its climate initiative. 'It shows what people and organisations all over the world are doing, and offers a response to the question, 'Why should I go green if no one else is?' OneWorld is known for innovating media platforms for eradicating... Vittachi points out that climate change is set to be the greatest creator of poverty and suffering the world has ever known, undermining the good work done by development workers for decades. 'There can be no global justice,' she says, 'without climate justice. Do we really want to be the generation that ended life as we know it for hundreds of millions of people?'” (from Robert M)

**CAR SHARING**

RIDEAMIGOS.COM

One of the best ways to help reduce carbon emissions is to drive less, and carpool when you can. There are a number of online ride sharing solutions. For those in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, check out the new service Rideamigos.com, which helps connect you to neighbors willing to split rides to reduce pollution and transportation costs.

Also check out our partner ERideShare.com, which lists commuter carpool, cross-country travel, and local carsharing opportunities for riders and drivers in the U.S. and Canada. In addition to ride-sharing, there are a number of companies experimenting with car-sharing to reduce impact. Check out Flexcar and Zipcar for more information.

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

How much energy do Christmas lights use?

That depends on the kind you use. Standard mini-bulbs use about 25 watts per 50-bulb strand. If you leave four strands on all night long for a month, the electricity will cost you approximately $5. The larger old-style lights can use as much as 250 watts per 50 bulb strand so will cost 10 times as much as mini-bulbs. If you're looking to reduce costs associated with holiday lighting, your best option is the LED variety. LEDs, or Light Emitting Diodes, use as little as 2 to 4 watts per strand and can last for 20 years. They don't use a heated filament to produce light, so they also run cooler, reducing fire risk.


So we need to know what kind of lights and how many are used in Fayetteville, how long are they turned on?

Below is a quick and dirty guide to all types of Christmas lights, so now it's a matter of converting the energy used to how the energy was produced (coal) and therefore how much CO2 is produced per light.

**The Electric Bill That Stole Christmas**

In our study, we found much higher lighting energy use during December, thanks to the holidays. December had 27% more lighting use than November. We wanted to know just how much energy those Christmas lights use. Using a digital power analyzer, we measured the wattage of five strings of commercially available Christmas lights. Each was classified as a Decorative Lighting String by UL and was manufactured in China or Thailand.

The electricity use of the bulb types varied by a ratio of 46:1 between the highest and the lowest. In general, the miniature incandescent W2 bulbs use only a fraction of the power of the more traditional candelabra base bulbs. Since a typical Christmas tree may have at least 100 bulbs, and the house may have twice as many outdoor strings, connected decorative lighting loads could vary from a low of 60 W up to 3,000 W, depending on the types of holiday lighting system that are chosen.

**Christmas Light Energy Consumption**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>No. of Bulbs</th>
<th>Measured Watts</th>
<th>Watts/Bulb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small clear bulbs, indoor/outdoor, 36W</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small &quot;midget globe bulbs,&quot; indoor, 10W</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small colored/clear bulbs, indoor/outdoor, 36W</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C 71/2 5W bulbs, indoor/outdoor, 125W  25  128  5.1
Large 10W C bulbs, outdoor, 500W  50  504  10

This article was adapted from Danny Parker and Lynn Schrum, Results from a Comprehensive Lighting Retrofit, FSEC-CR-914-96, available from the Florida Solar Energy Center, 1679 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, FL 329922-5703. (from Robert M)

Break the Bottled Water Habit. New American Dream. “Americans consumed more than 31 billion liters of bottled water in 2006 - nearly 28 gallons for every man, woman, and child. Manufacturing all those bottles required 900,000 tons of plastic and emitted as much greenhouse gas as 500,000 cars! Trucking a bottle of water 500 miles can double its climate impact -- and some are shipped much, much farther... Pledge today to Break the Bottled Water Habit and pass the word along.” (from Robert M)

AGAINST BIOFUELS
Monbiot.com

An Agricultural Crime Against Humanity
Posted: 06 Nov 2007 02:40 AM CST
Biofuels could kill more people than the Iraq war.


New Zealand Leads by Example. Commentary Tim Watkin, The Guardian Unlimited, September 25, 2007. "As the world's leaders gather in New York to discuss climate change at the United Nations, one of the world's smaller countries is showing just how much can be done. New Zealand has long had a reputation for being 'clean and green' and has a proud record of conservation, with around 30% of its total land area being protected from development. Last week it announced bold plans [PDF 32 pages] to tackle climate change, following up on a goal set by prime minister Helen Clark at the start of the year for New Zealand to become the world's first carbon neutral country. Among the stated targets, to be legislated within the next year, is generating 90% of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2025. This leaves California's goal of 80% by 2050 and Britain's goal of 60% by 2050 in the shade. (We should note that New Zealand is well ahead of the game, with close to 70% of its power already coming from renewables). What's more it expects its electricity sector to be entirely carbon neutral by 2025, followed by the stationary energy sector (coal and gas) in 2030 and the transport sector in 2040. It laid out a range of ways to achieve those targets, such a net increase in forest area of 250,000 hectares by 2020 and the wide use of electric cars. Government departments are leading the way; all 47 have emission-cutting plans and six - including treasury and the tax department, funnily enough - will be carbon neutral by 2012." (from Robert M)
Americans and Climate Change: Representative recommendations

Posted by David Roberts at 8:46 AM on 16 May 2006

"Americans and Climate Change: Closing the Gap Between Science and Action" (PDF) is a report synthesizing the insights of 110 leading thinkers on how to educate and motivate the American public on the subject of global warming. Background on the report here. I'll be posting a series of excerpts (citations have been removed; see original report). If you'd like to be involved in implementing the report's recommendations, or learn more, visit the Yale Project on Climate Change website.

Below the fold is short list of the most prominent recommendations yielded by the conference's working groups. I tend to think too many of the recommendations pinned their hopes on the creation of new institutions, but I'd love to hear what y'all think.

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Americans and Climate Change: Closing the Gap Between Science and Action

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2. Problem summary
3. Representative recommendations
4. The perfect problem
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27. Leveraging the social sciences I
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Nuggets and Hummers and Fish Sticks, Oh My!
Why Vegetarianism Is the Best Way to Help the Environment.
by Bruce Friedrich.
Published on Saturday, September 22, 2007 by CommonDreams.org

In 1987, I read Diet for a Small Planet by Frances Moore Lappé and — primarily for human rights and environmental reasons — went vegan. Two decades later, I still believe that — even leaving aside all the animal welfare issues — a vegan diet is the only reasonable diet for people in the developed world who care about the environment or global poverty.

Over the past 20 years, the environmental argument against growing crops to be fed to animals — so that humans can eat the animals — has grown substantially. Just this past November, the environmental problems associated with eating chickens, pigs, and other animals were the subject of a 408-page United Nations scientific report titled Livestock’s Long Shadow.

The U.N. report found that the meat industry contributes to “problems of land degradation, climate change and air pollution, water shortage and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity.” The report concludes that the meat industry is “one of the … most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global.”

Eating Meat Is the No. 1 Consumer Cause of Global Warming

Al Gore, Leonardo DiCaprio, and others have brought the possibility of global cataclysm into sharp relief. What they have not been talking about, however, is the fact that all cars, trucks, planes, and other types of transportation combined account for about 13 percent of global warming emissions, whereas raising chickens, pigs, cattle, and other animals contributes to 18 percent, according to U.N. scientists. Yes, eating animal products contributes to global warming 40 percent more than all SUVs, 18-wheelers, jumbo jets, and other types of travel combined.

And Environmental Defense, on its website, notes, "If every American skipped one meal of chicken per week and substituted vegetables and grains … the carbon dioxide savings would be the same as taking more than half a million cars off of U.S. roads." Imagine if we stopped eating animal products altogether.

Eating Meat Wastes Resources

If I lie in bed and never get up, I will burn almost 2,500 calories each day; that is what’s required to keep my body alive. The same physiological reality applies to all animals: The vast majority of the calories consumed by a chicken, a pig, a cow, or another animal goes into keeping that animal alive, and once you add to that the calories required to create the parts of the animal that we don’t eat (e.g., bones, feathers, and blood), you find that it takes more than 10 times as many calories of feed given to an animal to get one calorie back in the form of edible fat or muscle. In other words, it’s exponentially more efficient to eat grains, soy, or oats directly rather than feed them to farmed animals so that humans can eat those animals. It’s like tossing more than 10 plates of spaghetti into the trash for every one plate you eat.

And that’s just the pure “calories in, calories out” equation. When you factor in everything else, the situation gets much worse. Think about the extra stages of production that are required to get dead chickens, pigs, or other animals from the farm to the table:

1. Grow more than 10 times as much corn, grain, and soy (with all the required tilling, irrigation, crop dusters, and so on), as would be required if we ate the plants directly.
2. Transport — in gas-guzzling, pollution-spewing 18-wheelers — all that grain and soy to feed manufacturers.
3. Operate the feed mill (again, using massive amounts of resources).
4. Truck the feed to the factory farms.
5. Operate the factory farms.
6. Truck the animals many miles to slaughterhouses.
7. Operate the slaughterhouses.
8. Truck the meat to processing plants.
9. Operate the meat processing plants.
10. Truck the meat to grocery stores (in refrigerated trucks).
11. Keep the meat in refrigerators or freezers at the stores.

With every stage comes massive amounts of extra energy usage — and with that comes heavy pollution and massive amounts of greenhouse gases, of course. Obviously, vegan foods require some of these stages, too, but vegan foods cut out the factory farms, the slaughterhouses, and multiple stages of heavily polluting tractor-trailer trucks, as well as all the resources (and pollution) involved in each of
Eating Meat Wastes and Pollutes Water

All food requires water, but animal foods are more wasteful of water than vegan foods are. Enormous quantities of water are used to irrigate the corn, soy, and oat fields that are dedicated to feeding farmed animals — and massive amounts of water are used in factory farms and slaughterhouses. According to the National Audubon Society, raising animals for food requires about as much water as all other water uses combined. Environmental author John Robbins estimates that it takes about 300 gallons of water to feed a vegan for a day, four times as much water to feed an ovo-lacto vegetarian, and about 14 times as much water to feed a meat-eater.

Raising animals for food is also a water-polluting process. According to a report prepared by U.S. Senate researchers, animals raised for food in the U.S. produce 86,000 pounds of excrement per second — that's 130 times more than the amount of excrement that the entire human population of the U.S. produces! Farmed animals' excrement is more concentrated than human excrement, and is often contaminated with herbicides, pesticides, toxic chemicals, hormones, antibiotics, and other harmful substances. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the runoff from factory farms pollutes our rivers and lakes more than all other industrial sources combined.

Eating Meat Destroys the Rain Forest

The World Bank recently reported that 90 percent of all Amazon rainforest land cleared since 1970 is used for meat production. It's not just that we're destroying the rainforest to make grazing land for cows — we're also destroying it to grow feed for them and other animals. Last year, Greenpeace targeted KFC for the destruction of rainforests because the Amazon is being razed to grow feed for chickens that end up in KFC's buckets. Of course, the rainforest is being used to grow feed for other chickens, pigs, and cows, too (i.e., KFC isn't the only culprit).

What About Eating Fish?

Anyone who reads the news knows that commercial fishing fleets are plundering the oceans and destroying sensitive aquatic ecosystems at an incomprehensible rate. One super-trawler is the length of a football field, and can take in 800,000 pounds of fish in a single netting. These trawlers scrape along the ocean floor, clear-cutting coral reefs and everything else in their path. Hydraulic dredges scoop up huge chunks of the ocean floor to sift out scallops, clams, and oysters. Most of what the fishing fleets pull in isn't even eaten by human beings; half is fed to animals raised for food, and about 30 million tons each year are just tossed back into the ocean, dead, with disastrous and irreversible consequences for the natural biological balance. Then there is aquaculture (fish farming), which is increasing at a rate of more than 10 percent annually. Aquaculture is even worse than commercial fishing because, for starters, it takes about four pounds of wild-caught fish to reap just one pound of farmed fish, which eat fish caught by commercial trawlers. Farmed fish are often raised in the same water that wild fish swim in, but fish farmers dump antibiotics into the water and use genetic breeding to create "Frankenstein fish." The antibiotics contaminate the oceans and seas, and the genetically engineered fish sometimes escape and breed with wild fish, throwing delicate aquatic balances off-kilter. Researchers at the University of Stockholm demonstrated that the horrible environmental impact of fish farms can extend to an area 50,000 times larger than the farm itself.

Eating Meat Supports Cruelty

Caring for the environment means protecting all of our planet's inhabitants, not just the human ones. Chickens, pigs, turkeys, fish, and cows are intelligent, social animals who feel pain, just as humans, dogs, and cats do. Chickens and pigs do better on animal behavior cognition tests than dogs or cats, and are interesting individuals in the same way. Fish form strong social bonds, and some even use tools. Yet these animals suffer extreme pain and deprivation in today's factory farms. Chickens have their sensitive beaks cut off with a hot blade, pigs have their tails chopped off and their teeth removed with pliers, and cattle and pigs are castrated — all without any pain relief. The animals are crowded together and given steady doses of hormones and antibiotics in order to make them grow so quickly that their hearts and limbs often cannot keep up, causing crippling and heart attacks. At the slaughterhouse, they are hung upside-down and bled to death, often while they are still conscious.

What About Eating Meat That Isn't From Factory-Farmed Animals?

Is meat better if it doesn't come from factory-farmed animals? Of course, but its production still wastes resources and pollutes the environment. Shouldn't we environmentalists challenge ourselves to do the best we can, not just to make choices that are a bit less bad?

The U.N. report looks at meat at a global level and indicts the inefficiency and waste that are inherent in meat production. No matter where meat comes from, raising animals for food will require that exponentially more calories be fed to animals than they can produce in their flesh, and it will require all those extra stages of CO2-intensive production as well. Only grass-fed cows eat food from land that could not otherwise be used to grow food for human beings, and even grass-fed cows require much more water and create much more pollution than vegan foods do.

Conclusion

The case against eating animal products is ironclad; it's not a new argument, and it goes way beyond just global warming. Animals will not grow or produce flesh, milk, or eggs without food and water; they won't do it without producing excrement; and the stages of meat, dairy, and egg production will always cause pollution and be resource-intensive.

If the past is any guide, this essay will generate much hand-wringing from my meat-eating environmentalist colleagues and, sadly, some anger. They will prefer half-measures (e.g., meat that is "not as bad" as other meat). They may accuse PETA of being judgmental — simply for presenting the facts that will make various arguments that are beside the point. They will ignore the overwhelming argument against eating animal products and try to find a loophole. Some will just call the argument absurd, presenting no evidence at all.

But as Leonardo DiCaprio has noted, this is the 11th hour for the environment. Where something as basic as eating animals is concerned, the choice could not be any clearer: Every time we sit down to eat, we can choose to eat a product that is, according to U.N. scientists, "one of the … most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global," or we can choose...
vegan — and preferably organic — foods. It’s bad for the environment to eat animals. It’s time to stop looking for loopholes.

Considering the proven health benefits of a vegetarian diet — the American Dietetic Association states that vegetarians have a reduced risk of obesity, heart disease, and various types of cancer — there’s no need or excuse to eat chickens, pigs, eggs, and other animal products. And vegan foods are available everywhere and taste great; as with all foods — vegan or not — you just need to find the ones you like.

You can find out more at GoVeg.com and get great-tasting recipes, meal plans, cookbook recommendations, and more at VegCooking.com.

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BOOKS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Bill McKibben Reviews A Few Global Warming Books. By Bill McKibben. The New York Review of Books, September 28, 2007. "In his new book, Cool It, Bjorn Lomborg, a Danish statistician, begins by saying that the consensus scientific position on climate change — that we face a rise in temperature of about five degrees Fahrenheit by century's end -- is correct, but that it's not that big a deal... Lomborg casts himself as the voice of reason in this debate... [but his] actual arguments turn out to be weak, a Farrago of straw men and carefully selected, shopworn data that holds up poorly in light of the most recent research, both scientific and economic... Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger [in Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility] further develop their idea that the environmental movement [fails] to deliver progress on global warming for a variety of reasons both structural and philosophical... [The book] is unremittingly interesting, sharp, and wide-ranging, and it provides a great deal of thoughtful comment for anyone trying to figure out how to rally public support behind action on climate change, or indeed behind any progressive change... [However, their] antipathy to placing limits on carbon emissions, an antipathy based on their fervent belief in what they hear in their surveys, locks them into accepting slower progress than is necessary and possible... The authors concede too much to the enemies of regulation... Global warming, they write, will force human societies to adapt in all sorts of ways, not the least of which could be bioengineering ourselves and our environments to survive and thrive on an increasingly hot and potentially less hospitable planet. This is improbable; indeed it sounds flaky... Kerry Emanuel... the foremost hurricane scientist in the US [demonstrates in his new book, What We Know About Climate Change] the link between global warming and storminess. In an epic feat of concision, he manages in eighty-five very small pages to explain the state of the science of climate change, concluding on the optimistic note that the extremists [who deprecate the threat of climate change] are being exposed and relegated to the sidelines, and when the media stop amplifying their views, their political counterparts will have nothing left to stand on... In the best essay from the collection, Climate Change: What It Means for Us, Our Children, and Our Grandchildren, edited by Joseph F.C. DiMento and Pamela Doughman, the New York Times climate reporter Andrew Revkin makes it clear that finally (and no small part thanks to his own reports) the press and television are starting to do exactly that. One of the most important jobs of journalists at the moment, he writes, is to drive home that once a core body of understanding has accumulated over decades on an issue -- as is the case with human-forced climate change -- society can use it as a foundation for policies and choices. Indeed." Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist's Guide to Global Warming, by Bjorn Lomborg, Knopf, 253 pp., $21.00... Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility, by Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, Houghton Mifflin, 344 pp., $25.00... What We Know About Climate Change, by Kerry Emanuel, MIT Press, 85 pp., $14.95... Climate Change: What It Means for Us, Our Children, and Our Grandchildren, edited by Joseph F.C. DiMento and Pamela Doughman, MIT Press, 217 pp., $19.95 (paper). (from Robert M)

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