

GLOBAL POLLUTION

Article summary

There is something going on with our planet Earth and we actually do not realize how serious it is. Global warming is a threat to all of us. Although it is not yet conclusively proven, it is crystal clear that it occurs. The Earth has heated up significantly over last few centuries. This has led to ice caps melting and increased precipitation. For example, scientists predict that if the Earth heats up by between 1C and 3C in the next 100 years, which is probable, then the sea level will rise between 15 cm and 120 cm in that time, or up to 20 cm by 2030. That means that major US cities such as New York, Boston, Miami, and Washington DC could soon be disposed to the floods, which have caused scores of deaths and millions of dollars worth of damage in these cities. So we can soon expect rising seas, floods and disease.

The United States, as a major polluter, has an unflattering history with international global warming issues. Many US citizens are aware of the danger of global warming and CO2 emissions, but President George W. Bush seems to disagree. He denied an election campaign promise to clean CO2 emissions on home soil and went on to break promises made at the UN Kyoto Conference on Global Climate Change in 1997 - to the outrage of environmental groups and European community leaders. What can we do? We can opt to take public transport or share cars with others, or use a bicycle, choose energy-efficient domestic appliances, and use energy-conserving fluorescent light bulbs. Scientists all agree on one thing: if we wait until global warming is scientifically proven to act, it will be too late. But with our environmentally friendly actions we can at least know that we did our best to make the world a better place.

Unknown words

1. precipitation(n) - water in the atmosphere which may take the form of rain, snow, sleet, etc
2. Ice age (n) - a time in the past when much of the Earth was covered with ice
3. protestation (n) - strong declaration that what you say is true
4. unanimous (adj) - agreed by everyone
5. industrial Revolution (n) - the period in the late 1700s when many power-driven machines first came into use
6. indiscernible (adj) - cannot be noticed
7. biodiversity (n) - variability of living organisms on the Earth

8. erode (v) - gradually destroyed
9. ecosystem (n) - ecological community and its environment
10. recede (v) - move back or away
11. malaria (n) - disease spread by mosquitoes
12. yellow fever (n) - disease producing fever, jaundice and other severe symptoms
13. cohort (n) - companion or follower
14. greenhouse gas (n) - any of the gases, which contribute to the Greenhouse Effect
15. renege (v) - to deny or refuse
16. whopping (adj) - massive
17. lobby (v) - try to influence someone in power over a particular matter
18. ascertain (v) - discover or get to know something
19. ratify (v) - officially approve an agreement
20. non-compliance (n) - failure to agree
21. grass roots (n) - people from rural areas representing fundamental views
22. get off scot-free (informal) - not suffer any unpleasant consequences