

Climate change – what it is and how we can stop it

LUCY CLAY

CLIMATE CHANGE – WHAT IT IS AND HOW WE CAN STOP IT

Climate is the big picture of temperature and rainfall across a large area. The global climate is the average climate over the entire planet. This global climate is warming up quickly at the moment. This is the fastest it has ever warmed up. This warming is called climate change.

Changing climates are bad for people and animals. The whole world is connected and what happens in one place can impact another place. This means that changes in climate can impact humans across the whole world. Everybody is being impacted because of this change and the impact will only get worse.

WHY IS THE CLIMATE CHANGING?

The climate is changing because of humans:

- Burning fuel like oil and gas to make energy: this is because invisible gases are released into the air when we burn fuel. These trap the heat from the sun and it warms up the earth.
- Farming causes a build-up of heat because cows make a gas called methane. The methane from all of the cows in the world is a lot! This collects in the air and also traps heat on the earth.
- Cutting down a lot of trees is called deforestation. This has bad impacts because trees store a gas called carbon dioxide. When we cut down trees the carbon dioxide is released. This also warms the planet up when a lot of it is in the air.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Changing climates means that some areas are getting warmer and some are getting cooler. People and animals are having to live in climates that they are not used to living in. If animals are not adapted to a climate then they can die. The weather is also becoming more difficult

for humans to live in.

This will cause:

- There will be less rainfall. This will cause more droughts and mean that more crops will die. This makes it harder to get food and water to help us to live.
- There is less ice in some areas and the sea levels are rising. This means that some places are more likely to flood. Big floods can destroy homes and kill people.
- The weather will become more extreme and less predictable. Natural disasters such as droughts and hurricanes are more likely to damage crops and houses. This can cause big problems for people.

HOW WE CAN STOP IT

Living in a warmer world will be bad for us. Luckily there are ways to stop climate change. Many people are making small changes in their lives to stop climate change. If everybody does something little then this can have a huge impact.

One way to help is to use less energy. When products are made this uses a lot of energy. To make these products people burn fuel. Burning fuel releases gases into the air and these can cause climate change. Buying less products and recycling old ones is an important way to stop climate change.

ANYBODY CAN HELP

Recycling is where an old product is turned into a new one. This uses less energy than making the product from new materials. If it uses less energy then this traps less gases. If we all recycle then we can help to stop climate change.

62 million tons of waste is generated in Sub-Saharan African every year. 60% of waste that is thrown away could be recycled. Materials like glass are fully recyclable. If we throw them away they will never decompose which is bad for the environment. Recycling them would make a huge difference.

The best way to get involved is to reuse old products and turn them into other things. Some people in Africa have started their own businesses in recycling to help to stop this. Women have been turning

old cans into earrings or have turned old paper into carrier bags.

Any small action can have a huge impact on the climate of the whole world. We are all trying to work together in order to do lots of small things that can stop climate change. This will improve life for us and for many generations to come.

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