

Climate Change Essay
By: Brendan McLoughlin

Over the course of billions of years, Earth has changed slowly, yet significantly; however, as we move forward into the 21st century, one key change has caused alarm across the world and has led world leaders to work in order to prevent it: Climate Change. The planet is warming at a catastrophic rate—and we are certainly doing ourselves no favors with rapidly increasing temperatures and 15.3 billion trees cut down annually (*Time Magazine*).

If action isn't taken soon, my generation will be left with an almost irreversible problem. Water levels will rise by several feet making major cities uninhabitable and most of the planet will be too warm to continue our current way of life. With the planet's temperature rising, many people will have to evacuate large cities such as Venice, Miami, New York City, Houston, and many more.

The Earth's climate will be too warm for thousands of species which will end in a great extinction if action isn't taken soon—and unless we make substantial changes, it will only get worse from this point on (*WWF*). With the temperature rising, it can feel as though the chance to save ourselves is slipping away. If we do not act soon, it will be very hard to reverse climate change. The evidence is there: The west coast is burning and losing thousands of acres due to the fires; the east is experiencing dramatic cold weather changes, and we are facing huge hurricanes and storms each year.

Despite all of this, some people say it is not real or believe that it will resolve itself, but this simply is not the case. We need action. We need action to save the one million plant and animal species that face extinction due to climate change; we need action to avoid Earth's sixth mass extinction—the first mass extinction caused by one of its species. If all of these species go extinct, then almost all of Earth's ecosystems will collapse. From what we've seen in the Earth's past, it would take millions of years for our climate and ecosystems to recover from the damage that our planet faces. But this is all theoretical; this is in the near future, but that does not mean that we can't save our planet and its millions of species, there is hope for our redemption. We simply need to take conscientious action.

By 2030, we need to cut our global carbon emissions by nearly 50%. This means that we need to take swift action in order to reverse almost two-hundred years of toxic emissions; the only way for us to win the fight against climate change is to work together. The first step is to go green as a global community and cut down our emission count by more than 60% to be safe. This means making big changes like slowing the production of gas-powered cars by 2038 in order to focus on the production and marketing of electric vehicles (NASA).

Another thing we need to do is start using more renewable energy such as solar or wind energy. We will need to almost entirely end the use of plastic other than for medical purposes. If plastics are too hard to quit, we could even turn to biodegradable plastic that would solve the plastic problem and would help in healing the environment. However, the cost of changing from

plastic to more environmentally friendly products will cost nearly 533 billion dollars but I think that's a price that the government can afford.

But what really needs to happen to end climate change is more activism and more people speaking about what is happening. People need to know what climate change is. They need to understand that we are heading towards a climate catastrophe. If people keep denying this, nothing will happen; the leaders of our planet need to do something about this, or else we are doomed. This means voting with the climate and the environment in mind.

Our planet needs change; the rate of earth's warming is catastrophic and, if left unchecked, it will inevitably end in the extinction of thousands of species. I'm not saying our planet will explode, but species that have been around for millions of years will have to evolve and adapt or they will be lost. We need to replenish our forests. We can't just talk about the theoretical, we need to take action and actually do something or else we will be just as doomed as the thousands of species. We reap what we sow. We still have our chance; it isn't too late, but if we keep procrastinating there will be no more time and no more hope.

Consulted Material

WWF

- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/wildlife-conservation>
- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/oceans>
- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/climate>

IPCC Special Report

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change

NASA

- <https://climate.nasa.gov/>

Time Magazine

- <https://time.com/4019277/trees-humans-deforestation/#:~:text=People%20cut%20down%2015%20billion,trees%20live%20around%20the%20world.>

