

Environmental issues: greenhouse gases, global warming, climate change, overconsumption of energy

Outline

Introduction

Environmental issues are defined as problems with the planet's systems (air, water, soil, etc.) that have developed as a result of human interference or mistreatment of the planet.

Our Mother Earth is currently **facing a lot of environmental concerns**. The environmental problems like global warming, acid rain, air pollution, urban sprawl, waste disposal, ozone layer depletion, water pollution, climate change affect every human, animal, and nation on this planet. I am going to talk about them to raise awareness.

1. Greenhouse gases – gases in Earth's atmosphere that **trap heat**. They let sunlight pass through the atmosphere, but they prevent the heat that the sunlight brings from leaving the atmosphere. *The main greenhouse gases are: Water vapor. Carbon dioxide. Methane. Ozone.*

Positive and negative features of greenhouse gases:

Overall, greenhouse gases are a good thing. Without them, our planet would be too cold, and life as we know it would not exist.

But there can be too much of a good thing. Scientists are worried that human activities are adding too much of these gases to the atmosphere.

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LINK: People's activities are increasing the amount of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, causing the earth to warm up.

2. The impact of global warming – is the long-term heating of Earth's climate system observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth's atmosphere.

Greenhouse gases act like a blanket, making the earth warmer. The recent buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from human activities has changed the earth's climate and resulted in dangerous and detrimental effects to human health and ecosystems.

LINK: The effects of human-caused global warming are irreversible. They drive changes to Earth's climate and have widespread effects on the environment.

3. Climate change – is a long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's local, regional and global climates.

Negative impact of climate change:

- glaciers and ice sheets are shrinking;
- river and lake ice is breaking up earlier;
- plant and animal geographic ranges are shifting;

- plants and trees are blooming sooner;
- more frequent and intense drought, storms;
- oceans are warming, which can directly harm animals and wreak havoc on people's livelihoods and communities.

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Environmental effect: As climate change worsens, dangerous weather events are becoming more frequent or severe.

LINK: One more environmental problem is directly related to energy consumption.

4. **Excessive consumption of energy** – humans consume energy at a higher rate now than they have at any other time in history. The overuse of energy contributes to a scarcity in this energy supply and thus an increase in overall electricity costs.

Natural consequences:

an increase in your carbon footprint;

an increase in overall electricity costs (fuel and energy bills);

risk lowering the expected lifespan of appliances and electronics;

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Steps to reduce energy consumption:

- shutdown your computer (biggest energy users, ditch the screensaver, does not affect your computer's lifespan);
- choose the right light (LED bulbs are the most energy efficient option);
- unplug idle electronics (televisions, microwaves, scanners, and printers use standby power, even when off);
- use a power strip to reduce your plug load (to turn all devices off at once);
- turn off the lights

Conclusion

Environmental issues are the harmful effects of human activities on the environment. These include gas emissions, global warming, climate change, overconsumption, the greenhouse effect.

Various environment protection programs should be practised at the individual and government levels with the aim of establishing a balance between people and the environment.