

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

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The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions and ways of living. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The Earth Charter, Excerpt from the Preamble

“One of the most critical environmental challenges facing the world today is reducing the long-term growth in greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions.” So say business leaders at the 2005 World Economic Forum. www.willyoujoinus.com/issues/environment

The Greenhouse Effect

Greenhouse gases (GHG) make up about 1 percent of the atmosphere. They act like a blanket around the Earth, or like the roof of a greenhouse -- they trap heat and keep the planet some 30 degrees Centigrade warmer than it would be otherwise. To state it in another way, without a natural greenhouse effect, the temperature on Earth would be about zero degrees Fahrenheit. This blanket of gases has become more dense and many in scientific fields are convinced that human activity is playing an active part in this increase and as more fossil fuel is burned, massive deforestation takes place, changes appear in land use, and industrial gases collect. The cumulative result is a warming of the earth's surface and lower atmosphere--global warming**.

“The use of fossil fuels to meet the world's energy needs has contributed to an increase in greenhouse gases--mainly carbon dioxide and methane--in the earth's atmosphere. Many think this increase is leading to climate change, with potentially adverse effects on people, economics and the environment-- from coastal flooding, to droughts, to changes in ecosystems and biodiversity.”

www.chevron.com/social_responsibility/environmental/global_climate.asp.

Global warming has touched all continents -- icebergs are fast melting, oceans are warming, glaciers are disappearing, and with the record shrinkage of the Arctic Sea ice, the polar bear “may be the first animal to be threatened with extinction by climate change,” says Andrew Wexler an attorney for the National Resources Defense Council, “and it won't be the last.”

...a global partnership to care for Earth and each other.

The Kyoto Protocol

“The Kyoto Protocol or Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an international treaty on climate change. Countries which ratify this protocol commit to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases...” Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. The treaty was negotiated in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997, closed on March 15, 1999, and as of September 2005, a total of 157 countries have ratified the treaty. The United States signed, but did not ratify the treaty. From November 26 to December 9, 2005, with over 150 countries in attendance, Montreal, Canada will host a Climate Control Conference. The representatives will continue exploring global warming and man's impact on nature as introduced in the Kyoto Protocol.

Action step go to: www.kyotoandbeyond.com
www.climatecrisis.us

**Discover how you can voice your concern about
the future viability of the planet.**

Stop global warming!

Join the Virtual March on Washington www.stopglobalwarming.org

What is the March?

“The march is a bipartisan effort to bring all Americans together in one place, proving there is a vast consensus among Americans that global warming is here now and it is time for our country to start addressing it.” (web site www.stopglobalwarming.org) The March allows you to let your fingers do the walking by utilizing the Internet to visit locations across the country. “Through our interactive map, you can track the progress of the March”, says the web site, “and see the path on which we are traveling together widen and read the stories from March Stops across the country.” The 1st stop on the March was Shishmaref, Alaska on Earth Day April 22, 2005, and it continues traveling across the United States, via the Internet, raising the awareness of global warming. On Earth Day, April 21, 2006, the March will arrive in Washington, D.C. and urge:

1. The president to enact a real plan of action to address global warming
2. Congress to enact new laws to reduce global warming pollution from U. S. power plants, factories and automobiles.
3. U. S. businesses to start a new industrial revolution of clean energy products that will reduce our oil dependence and global warming pollution.

Perhaps you haven't heard about the March. Well good news! It is easy to catch up. No one is a late joiner because, with just a click of the mouse, you can visit all the locations, read all the stories, and discover that Walter Cronkite, Senator John McCain, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., just to name a few, have joined and are marching. (Go to www.stopglobalwarming.org, click on Join the Virtual March to Washington to read their piece)

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., explains why he is marching: “Our generation faces the greatest moral and political crisis in human history. Will we take the steps necessary to avert catastrophic global warming or will we doom our children to a new Dark Ages in a world that is biologically and economically impoverished and defined by ever diminishing quality of life.”

Walter Cronkite's reason for marching: “..to demonstrate the concern....for the future of our planet and all living things-- flora, fauna, human and animal--that exist upon it. The governments of the world have tarried long enough, and the United States is scarcely without doubt the greatest culprit among them.”

Checking the Internet site each day is always amazing. The names of some communities “Rosebud, South Dakota” and “Buffalo Creek, Minnesota” may not roll off the tongue, but their stories will be worth retelling and why don't you become the bearer of their stories to others?

Join the March. You will be in good company.