

Climate Change: A Global Cry for all Humanity

Climate Change is an issue that indiscriminately affects our lives with significant global consequences. It is defined as a “large-scale, long-term shift in the planet’s weather patterns or average temperatures” [1] leading to unprecedented weather events: from deadly heat waves in India to catastrophic tropical storms here in the Philippines. More than 97 percent of climate scientists agree with the reality of human-caused climate change [2], echoing the call for urgent and drastic action to mitigate and restrain its effects.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports global temperatures are estimated to rise 2.5 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit over the next century due largely to greenhouse gases by human activities [3]. An increasingly warmer planet alters ice, weather and oceans leading to a rise in sea levels and extreme weather conditions. As a result, human life and prosperity suffers due to the impact of climate change on human health, agriculture, infrastructure, transportation, energy, along with the profound disruption of natural habitats and ecosystems [4].

There is a reason our beautiful country, The Philippines, has been named “Ground Zero for Climate Disaster” by TIME magazine. 8 - 9 tropical storms make landfall here in an average year with 5 of the country’s 10 most devastating storms occurring in the past decade alone [5]. We are one of the most vulnerable nations when it comes to the weather effects of climate change which research suggests is a precipitating factor for storm severity and frequency.

With the effects of Climate Change devastating the environment and, in some cases, decimating wildlife populations in our fragile ecosystems, there has never been a more crucial time to enact strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Foregoing fossil fuels for greener alternatives; upgrading infrastructure to reduce pollution; incorporating ‘zero waste initiatives’ to reduce, reuse and recycle operational waste; along with research and innovation in renewable energy are all solutions with the potential to slow down the effects of climate change [6].

It is little wonder that Climate Change is now considered as one of the greatest threats to the continuity of our species. Therefore, the time for drastic action is now – it must be now. After all, this majestic planet called earth – nestled among billions of stars – has been entrusted to each one of us, and without our help, will one day cease to be the haven of beauty and wonder for all humanity.

References

1. Met Office, ‘What is climate change’, MetOffice (Website), 2018, para. 1, <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate-guide/climate-change>, accessed 4th March 2018.
2. NASA, ‘Scientific Consensus: Earth’s climate is warming’, NASA (Website), para. 1, <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus>, accessed 4th March 2018.
3. NASA, ‘The consequences of climate change’, NASA (Website), para. 3, <https://climate.nasa.gov/effects>, accessed 4th March 2018.
4. Environmental Defense Fund, ‘How climate change plunders the planet’, EDF (Website), <https://www.edf.org/climate/how-climate-change-plunders-planet>, accessed 4th March 2018.
5. J. Worland, ‘Philippines: Ground Zero for Climate Disaster’, TIME (Website), <http://time.com/4137154/philippines-ground-zero-for-climate-disaster>, accessed 4th March 2018.
6. D. Biello, ‘10 Solutions for Climate Change’, Scientific American (Website), <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/10-solutions-for-climate-change>, accessed 4th March 2018.

Thank you,
Nam Nguyen, Renewable Energy Society and Save Resources,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia