

Probably the toughest moral issue we'll ever have to face.

Global Warming is on the TV and in the papers. Floods, hurricanes, droughts and other extreme weather are becoming ever more frequent – as the scientific community has warned for years. So now, the media has got us all talking about it. But what are the facts, and what does this mean for your family.

The Facts you need to know: -

- * All scientists now agree that the amount of carbon dioxide (CO²) in the atmosphere affects the planets climate – there is no longer any debate on that.
- * **The United Nations** set up a panel of the world's foremost climate scientists (The IPCC) to advise all governments on the science of Climate Change. This body of 3,000 scientists has warned that average planetary temperatures could rise by 5.8°C and **sea levels could rise by nearly 1 metre by 2100** - unless we reduce greenhouse gases dramatically. (See their reports at www.ipcc.ch)
- * **Billions will face hunger and starvation.** The **United Nations Environment Programme** (See www.unep.org) has warned that crops will fail and “billions of people will face hunger and starvation” – if temperatures increase by just 2°C in the tropics!
- * **The World Health Organisation** has confirmed that, as the world is warming, more people are being killed by climate extremes, heat and disease. **Globally 150,000 people were killed in 2003** – just due to diseases caused by global warming. **By the year 2050, 30 million people could be dying annually** and it will get worse.
- * The 10 warmest years ever recorded have occurred in the last 14 years, and the warming trend is accelerating.
- * Here in Essex, where land is slowly sinking, sea levels will rise by 3 feet by 2080, making vast areas of the county uninhabitable. Canvey will suffer regular flooding – your children will have to pay to re-house 13,000 families from Canvey alone. Tens of thousands of homes will be lost along the south and eastern coasts. See www.UKCIP.org.uk for an analysis of what will happen in the UK.
- * **In April 2005 NASA scientists** told the Bush Administration that they now had absolute proof of the greenhouse effect. They warned that even if all CO² emissions are stopped today, the world will still warm by 0.6°C. The message was clear – the sooner we turn off the CO² tap, the fewer people we will kill.
- * The IPCC has warned that countries like Bangladesh will suffer terribly. If we carry on as we are, **low lying Bangladesh will lose a fifth of its land mass by 2100 and 30 million people will be displaced.** How many of these people do you think Britain should be required to take?

But, it could be a lot worse: -

The world leading Hadley Centre for Climate Research (www.metoffice.com) has warned that insufficient is known about what are called “positive feedbacks”, and Global Warming could happen a lot faster. It could soon be unstoppable. As the world is warming, CO² is being released from peat bogs, from tropical rain forests, methane is being released from the ocean floors and cloud formations are changing. They recently warned of a worst case scenario - the world could warm by 12°C within the next 95 years. (Methane is a much more powerful greenhouse gas than CO²)

If we don't stop that from happening – virtually all life on the planet will be wiped out. **The children born today into your family (your children/grandchildren) will starve as agriculture collapses.**

Only the most grossly irresponsible or utterly callous of people would ignore such stark warnings from the world's leading scientists. Well over 98% of climate scientists agree that the current rapid warming pattern is being caused by the release of greenhouse gases. But, a small number of mavericks still disagree. To find out more about them – and which ones are funded by the fossil fuel companies visit www.risingtide.org.uk.

Government failure.

The Government claims that Global Warming is the greatest threat to humanity, yet it has refused to reduce road traffic, and is doing all that it can to assist the expansion of aviation. CO² emissions have begun to rise again in the UK, despite Tony Blair telling the rest of the World the UK is a world leader on Climate Change.

I won't fail my family: What must I do? Stand up to the politicians. Write to your MP and the Prime Minister.

Demand politicians start reducing CO² emissions now. Accept personal responsibility. Join an environmental campaign group and get active. **Don't even think of buying a gas guzzler, and never fly abroad more than once a year.** Save energy at home and where you work. (For more information on saving energy see: Energy Saving Trust at - www.est.org.uk)

So, the science is absolutely clear. The longer we take to stop CO² emissions, the more people we will kill.

If we want to protect our families against this unprecedented threat, we will have to change our lifestyles, so we use much less energy. And, we are going to have to get our energy from new sources.

But, what energy sources should the world use? And, does this mean unwelcome and difficult choices?