

LISTENING TRANSCRIPTION

Climate change has been in the news for years, but what is it? And how will it affect us?

To understand **climate change** (**cambio climático**), you first need to know about the **greenhouse effect** (**efecto invernadero**); the Earth gets heat from the sun. In the atmosphere, **greenhouse gases** (**gases causantes de efecto invernadero**) like carbon dioxide trap this heat and keep it from escaping back to **outer space** (**espacio exterior**). Trapping some heat in the atmosphere is a good thing, because it keeps the planet warm enough for us to live.

But there's a problem, people all over the world are adding extra carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, that's because today we burn fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas to do many of our everyday activities, like driving our cars, using our computers, and heating our homes. All this extra carbon dioxide is trapping more heat in the atmosphere, making the Earth warmer and causing other climate changes, too.

The signs of climate change are all around us, temperatures are getting warmer, giant ice sheets are **melting** (**To melt: derretirse**), and the oceans are rising. In many places, flowers are **blooming** (**to bloom: florecer**) earlier, snow is melting sooner, and birds aren't flying as far south for the winter, so, why does this matter?

Well, if the planet keeps getting warmer, we can expect more powerful storms and more **flooding** (**inundación**), **droughts** (**sequías**), and **heat waves** (**olas de calor**). And these changes could cause additional problems, like the spread of certain **diseases** (**enfermedades**), more **wildfires** (**incendios**), and food and water **shortages** (**escasez**). Climate change could put entire ecosystems, like coral reefs, in danger, and many plants and animals could become extinct.

The good news is that we can take action! We can put less carbon dioxide into the atmosphere if we generate electricity from clean sources like solar and **wind power** (**energía eólica**) instead of burning coal, oil, or gas. We can also drive less, use public transportation, and choose cars that go further using less gas, and you can do your part.

Reduce your energy use by turning off the lights, the computer, and TV when you're not using them, and walk or ride your bike to work or school. By making smart choices and working together, we can make a difference.

Check out the rest of this website to learn more about the causes and effects of climate, as well as the practical solutions that can help to protect our planet's future.