

The Theory of Global Warming: Fact or Fallacy?

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The effects of global warming have been discussed widely for the last century and particularly for the last few decades. The documentary ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ by former Vice President of the USA, Albert Gore, is a loud call to the general public to consider the effects of what humans have been doing since the commencement of the Industrial Revolution and to what extent these effects have developed. This cry has reverberated through media and from the voices of educated scientists and influential politicians, calling for a change in the strategies taken for technological development and for a turnaround in the style of living adopted by the general public.

Although the effects of global warming are real to some extent and have proven to cause adverse effects in some form or the other to humankind, other living creatures, and the biosphere in general, in my opinion, the documentary seems to surmise almost impossible results from the actual effects. Almost always, the data shown by the narrator seems to be redundant or extrapolated. Moreover, the source of data is not as conspicuous as the data itself, and there is not a second person who opines on the data or even the overall context. Unfortunately, the documentary seems to be an opinion arising from a single person who is desperate to have his word out in the open. There is possibly nothing wrong in this, but it is the intention that matters.

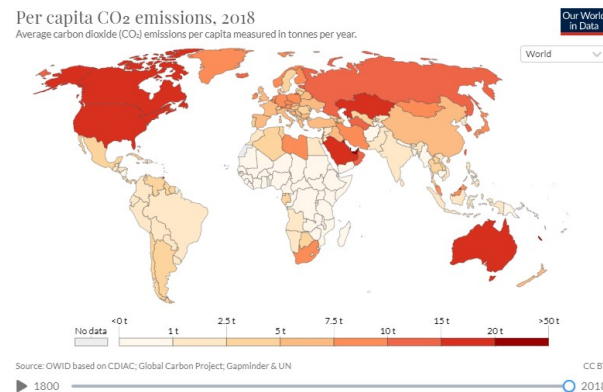
The credibility of the documentary seems to be based solely on the public image of the narrator. It is an understood fact that the opposition in any genuinely democratic setting criticizes the policies taken by the leaders of a nation and, although this right is meant to be for the social, economic and cultural development of the society, criticism is usually a direct consequence of avarice for power and may have ulterior motives behind the statements. Interestingly, the documentary ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ was released towards the middle of the latter term of the narrator’s political opponent and slightly criticizes the then-incumbent government, hence possibly being an indication of ill-governance and a call to choose a different political party in the Presidential Elections that followed two years later. This ‘coincidence’ is repeated with the sequel to the documentary being released right after the opposition party (to the narrator) took on power after eight long years of presidential rule by a leader from the political party that the narrator belongs to.

Needless to say, in the light of these conclusions, my mind was already doubtful about the facts about the first documentary. Watching the second documentary, namely ‘The Great Global Warming Swindle’ directed by Martin Durkin, have complemented these thoughts. This documentary, released an year after the former, serves to some extent as a response to the claims made in the former with references to specific details from the former documentary such as the correlation of the graphs of CO_2 levels in the atmosphere and the average temperature of the planet. Assuming that the data shown about this is accurate, this documentary claims the former to have fallen for the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy (correlation does not imply causation), or one even worse since the graph of CO_2 seems to have a time lag with respect to the other.

On discussing with a friend who is a staunch supporter of the human-induced climate change theory, I came to know that the second documentary is said to contain several erroneous statements and claims. However, I do not believe that everything in the documentary is false. As rightly noted, man-made climate change, while being factual to some extent, has been exaggerated by the media who is desperate for quality content and by politicians who are desperate for power. This has influenced my opinions about this issue as well.

I have come to understand that it is wrong to say that humans do not harm the environment

at all. After all, even the second documentary mentions about global warming being real to some extent. However, it also mentions how a whole new field of journalism has come into existence, namely environmental journalism, for which the facts about global warming, or rather an exaggeration of its facts, is a vital source of subsistence. Quoting Nigel Calder (Former Editor, New Scientist) from the documentary, "the elementary principles of journalism have been abandoned when it comes to this field... If you are an environmental journalist and if the global warming story goes in the trashcan, so does your job." Hence this field and the increasing slope of melodramatics applied to the corresponding news have been a crucial part of their careers. Information from their hands, when reached in the hands of the general public, becomes religious truths and anyone opposing the purported exaggerations is declared to be a heretic. The second documentary concludes by discussing about how developed countries persuading developing countries to decrease their emissions. Given below is a representation of the per-capita emissions of CO_2 as per [Our World in Data](#):



It may be argued that this is not a proper representation since the country as a whole will emit CO_2 proportionate to its population. However, this is at least a vague representation of how developed countries act hypocritically in asking developing countries to reduce their contribution to climate change, by placing unattainable standards that are defined based on the convenience of developed nations. It also seems hypocritical for these nations to 'dictate' policies for others. Although not directly related, a typical example is that of nuclear test explosion treaties which some countries have been advocating for all countries without considering the fact that many of them had already conducted over 500 tests or so by then.

The title indicates the black-or-white impression of the Global Warming 'crisis'. Nevertheless, is it true that the real truth is a one-sided answer? The two documentaries seem to be at two extremes, but in the light of having watched them, I have learned to understand that the truth about global warming is probably a blended version of the facts represented in both documentaries: that global warming is a truth, that global warming needs to be curbed, and that we need to do our best to protect the environment through any means possible, but also that there are some effects that we do not determine and we should respect the fact that the Earth has always had a cycle of climate change throughout its past which is being repeated at present, and that, irrespective of whether or not climate change is vital, developed countries need to provide some slack to developing countries concerning this issue rather than acting to be repented saviors to a society desperate for development.