

# A Climate Counternarrative

“The Science” is Wrong: It’s Soil, Not Oil

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# Denis de Bernardy

## Appalled Environmentalist

- Engineer triggered by dubious climate science and solutions
- Agroecology, permaculture
- Author of A Natural Language:
  - Environmental big lies
  - Carbon accounting chicanery
  - Solutions to actual problems

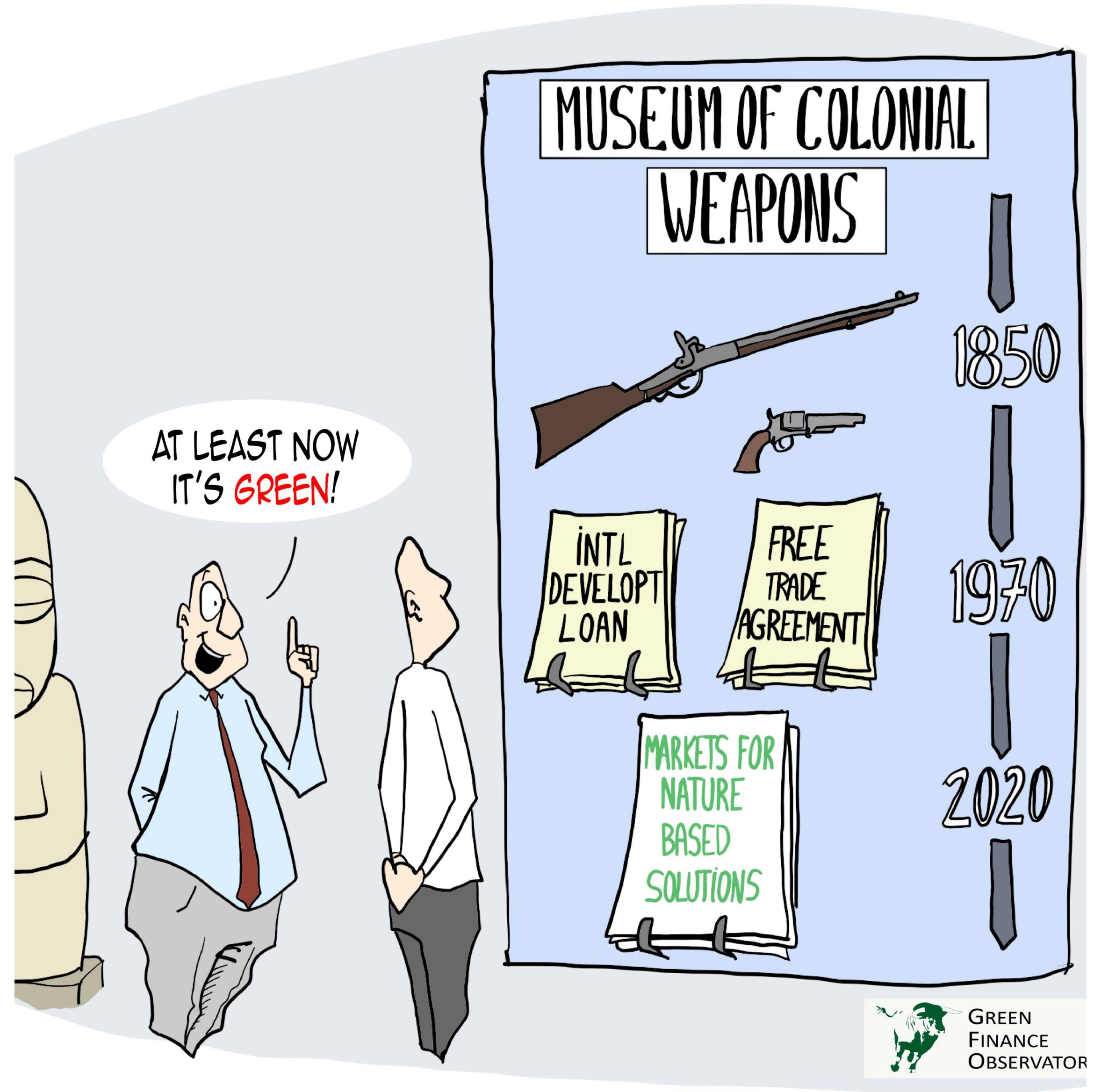


# Environmental Big Lies

# Climate “Solutions”

## Green Imperialism

- Green tech: military-driven mining
- Carbon allowances (caps), taxes, and offsets: control infrastructure
- Carbon capture and storage:
  - Subsidies for fossil fuel giants and tree plantation operators
  - Land grabs by conservancies
- Geo-engineering: weather warfare

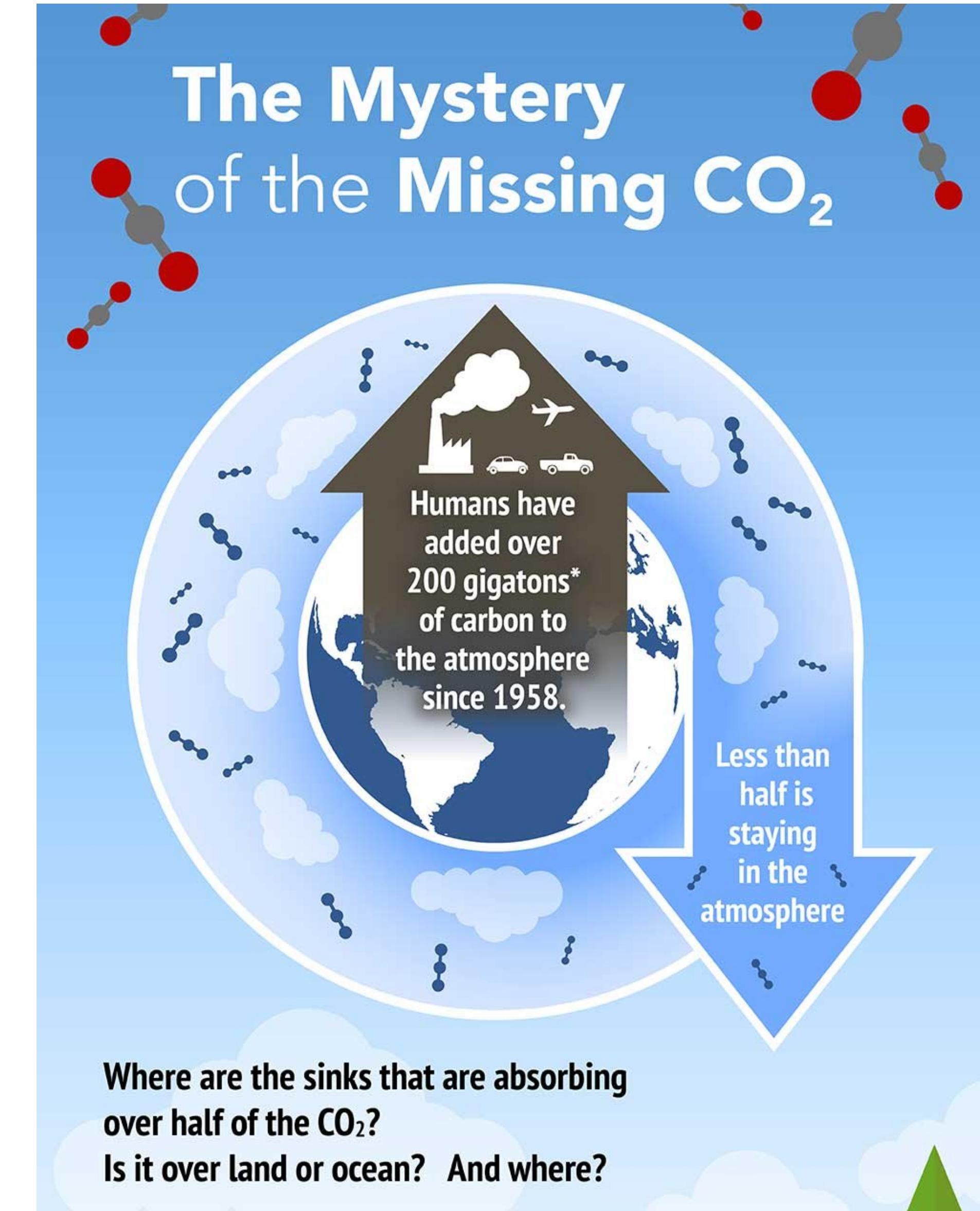


Credit: [Green Finance Observatory](#)

# Climate “Science”

## A Manufactured Consensus

- Doctored research that ignores:
  - Conflicting data and dynamics
  - Geological effects (volcanos)
  - Basic modeling principles
- Malthusian and religious twists:
  - Aura of inevitability (overshoot)
  - Discounts land stewardship



Credit: [NASA OCO-3 mission / science](#)

**“The Science” is so bad it doesn’t even get the CO<sub>2</sub> attribution right.**

# Canopy Loss

# Biomass Energy

## The Giveaway

- Reviled by just about everyone
- Logging produces biogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that get reported as land-use emissions (i.e. zero)
- To avoid double counting, no CO<sub>2</sub> gets reported for burning forestry waste as energy
- Lavish **green subsidies** (Drax, biomass co-firing in Korea)



The CO<sub>2</sub> tied to burning forestry waste is the tip of the iceberg.

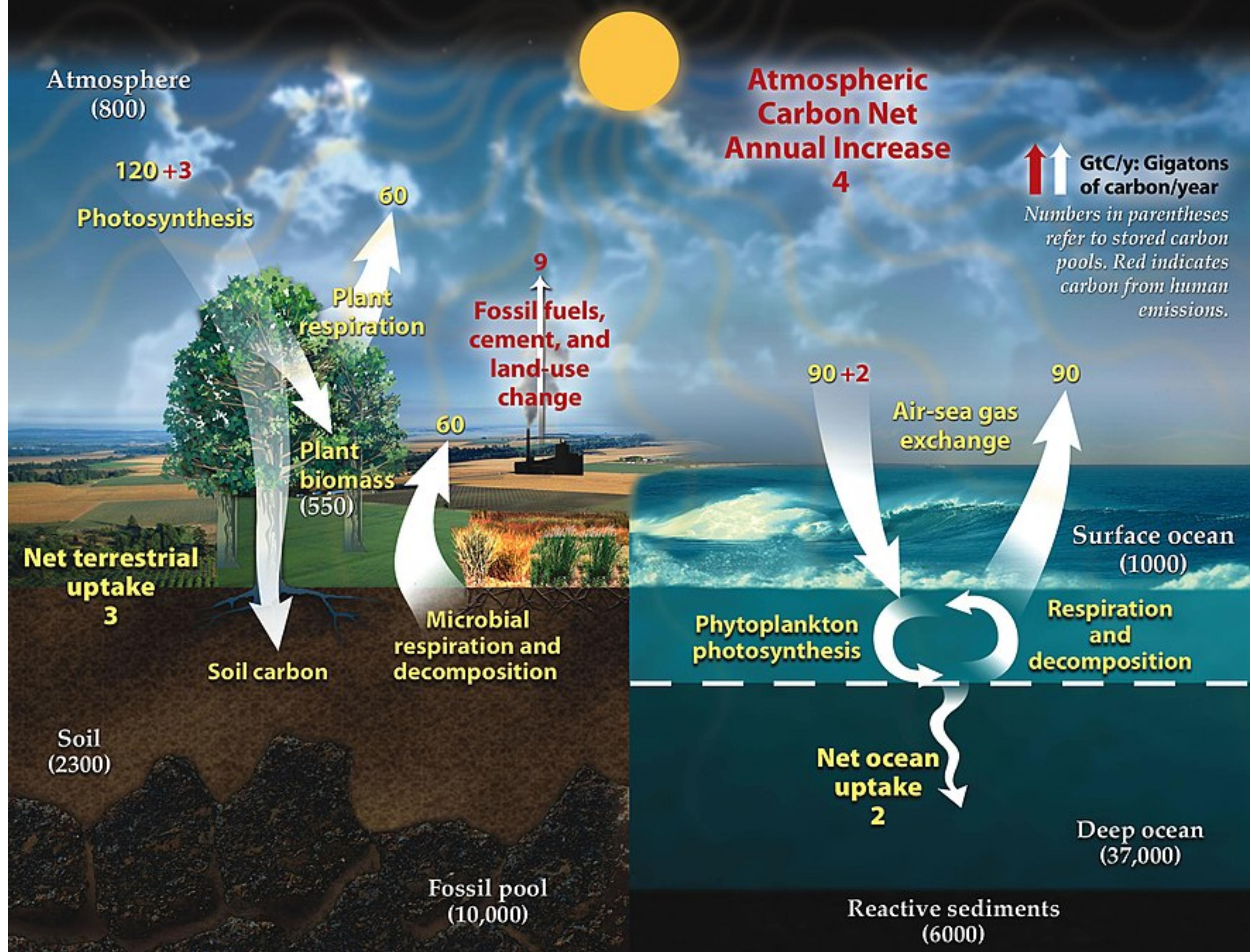
# Forest Clear-Cuts

## Avoidable Plumes of CO<sub>2</sub>

- Plume of CO<sub>2</sub> when you clear a forest (Korkiakoski et al, 2019)
- Continues until the canopy is mature enough to soak it up
- No plume when you thin a forest instead (Vesala et al, 2015)
- Trees keep the fungi alive, break the wind, and **soak up the CO<sub>2</sub>** emitted beneath the canopy



Carbon cycle research, charts,  
and visualizations distract from  
these surface level interactions.



# Canopy Loss

## What Actually Changed

- Loggers switched to clear-cutting
- Farmers removed hedgerows:
  - Fewer, larger landowners
  - Industrialized farming
- Other canopy-related changes:
  - US Midwest, Great Steppes
  - Deforestation, dead waters (?)



# Avoidable Plumes

## Keep Plants in the Ground

- **Simple and profitable** to curb:
  - Forest thinning, mosaic system
  - Alley cropping, intercropping
  - Sylvopasture, rotational grazing
- Short-cycle coppicing for biomass would keep crop yield impacts low
- Would also solve biodiversity loss (roadsides, “re-wilded” gardens)



**Open question: best approaches  
to use the inevitable CO<sub>2</sub> plumes?**

# Carbon Accounting Chicanery

# Forestry Models

## Designed in Good Faith

- Transition matrixes move carbon stocks from one discrete state to the next
- Sound choice, since continuous tracking would be impractical
- That tracks the net contribution of these avoidable plumes
- These avoidable plumes thereby go **uncounted and unreported**



Credit: [Andreas Pommer for the European Forest Institute](#)

The numbers reported under Land Use 4.A.1 “Forest land remaining forest land” are based on models.

# Carbon Accounting

## Contrived By Financiers

- Works like a financial statement
- Cherrypicked emission sources get vilified as reducible expenses
- Carbon stocks are more like balance sheet entries:
  - Tracked as stock changes
  - Keeps internal emissions out of view (and out of scrutiny)



**Makes sense if and only if the avoidable emissions hidden in stocks are negligible.**

# Soil Emissions

# Logging Emissions

## Anything But Negligible

- A few kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per sq. meter  
(Korkiakoski et al, 2019)
- About 10 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per acre
- Loggers clear over 60 million acres per year
- A German economy or so worth of avoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Kicker: Reduced-Impact Logging



**Loggers stand to pocket carbon  
offsets to curb these plumes.**

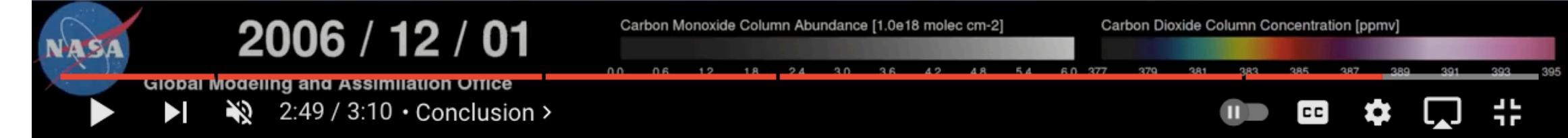
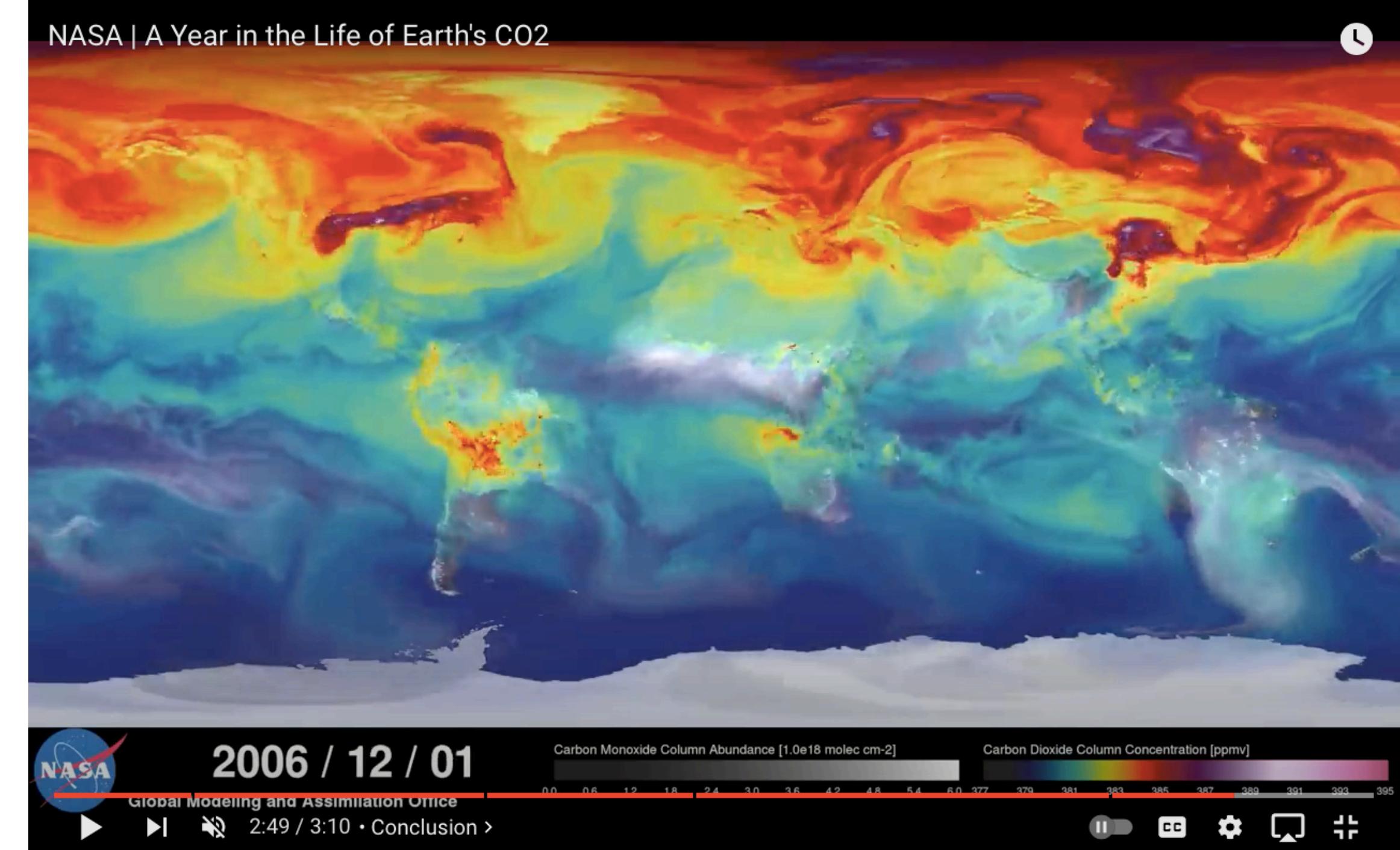
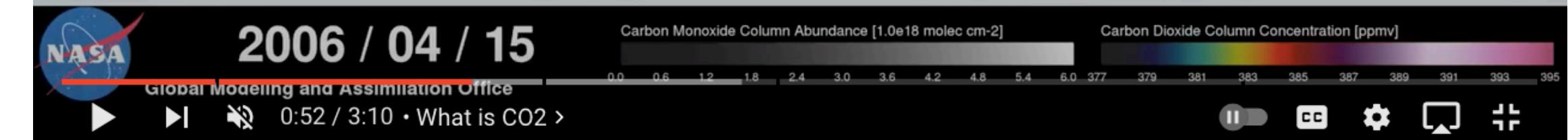
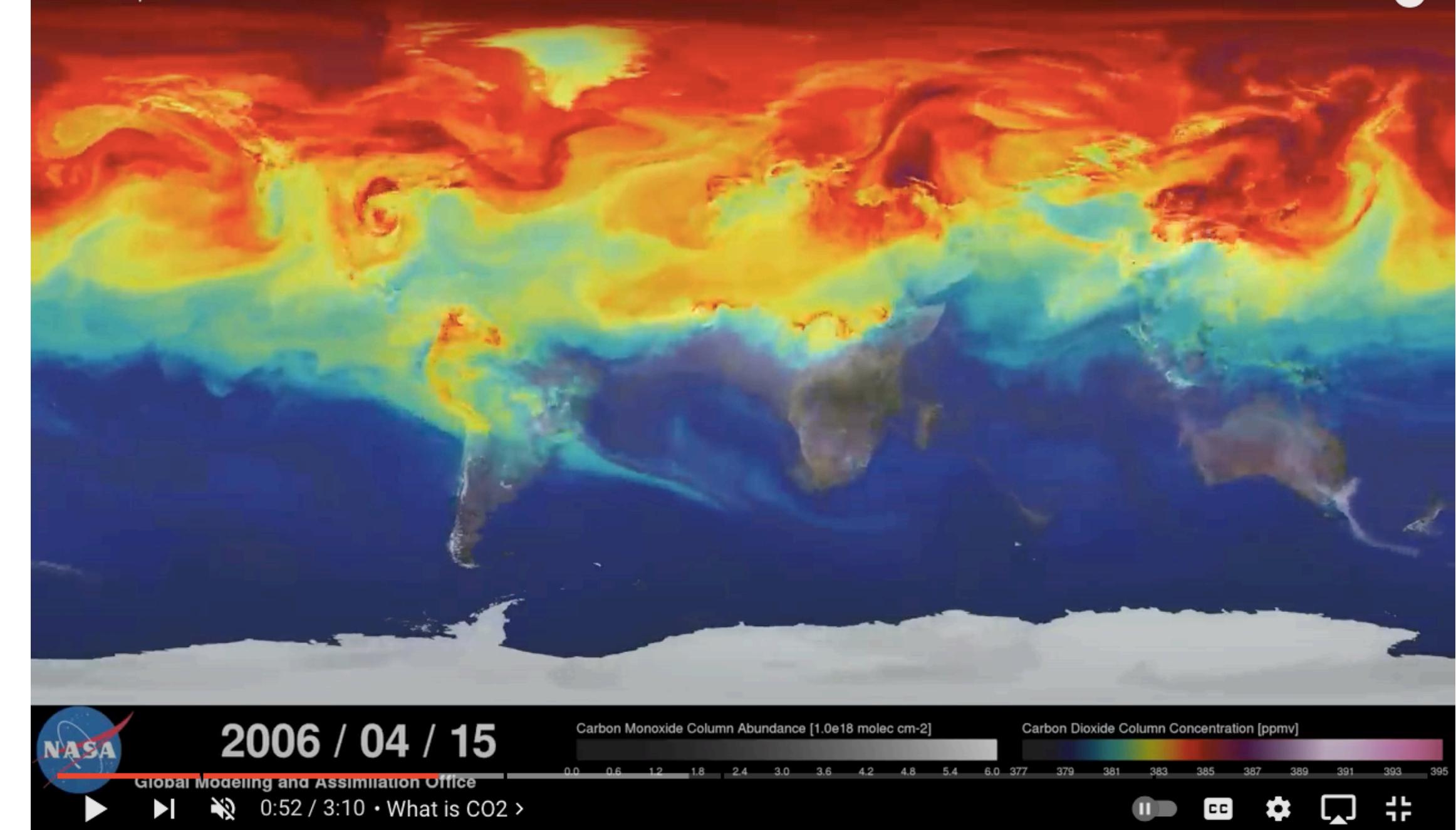
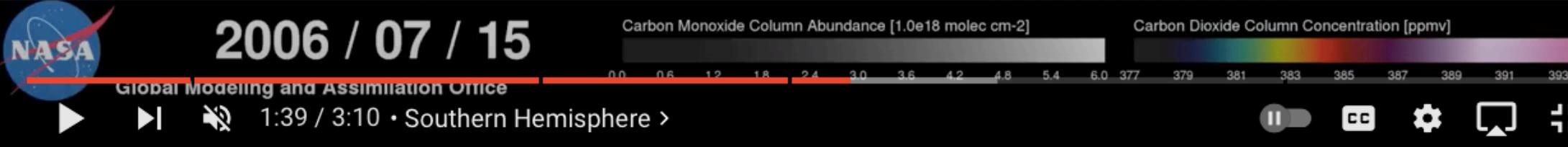
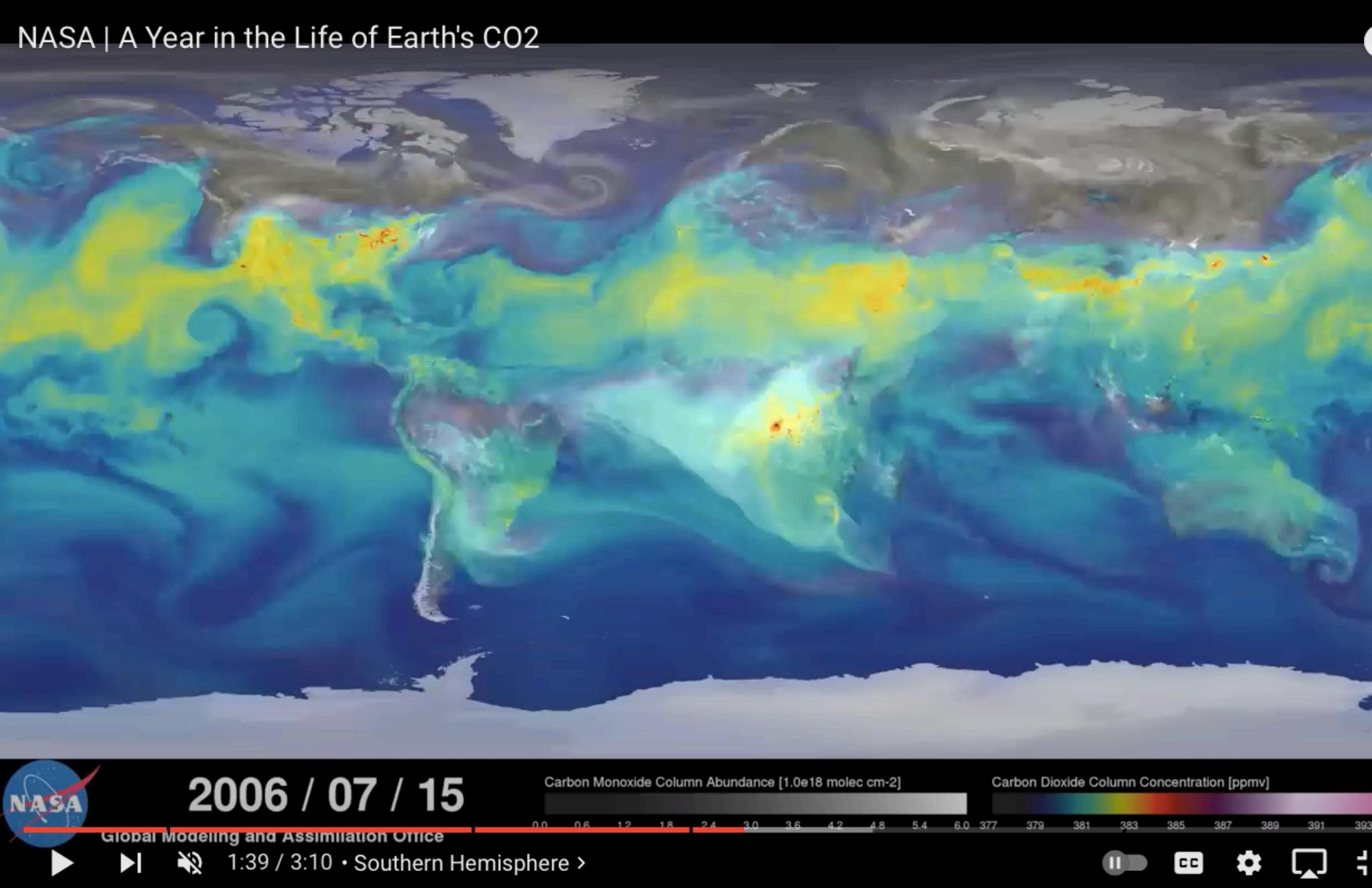
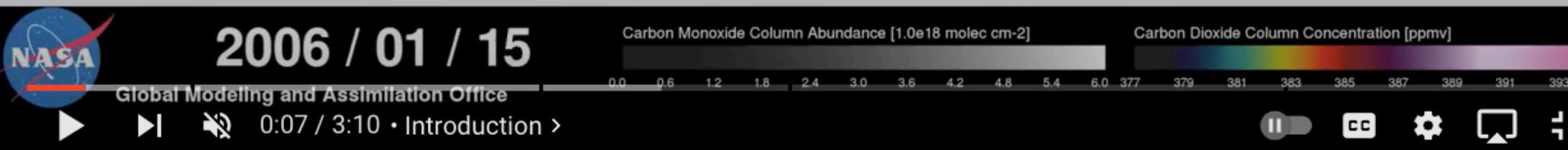
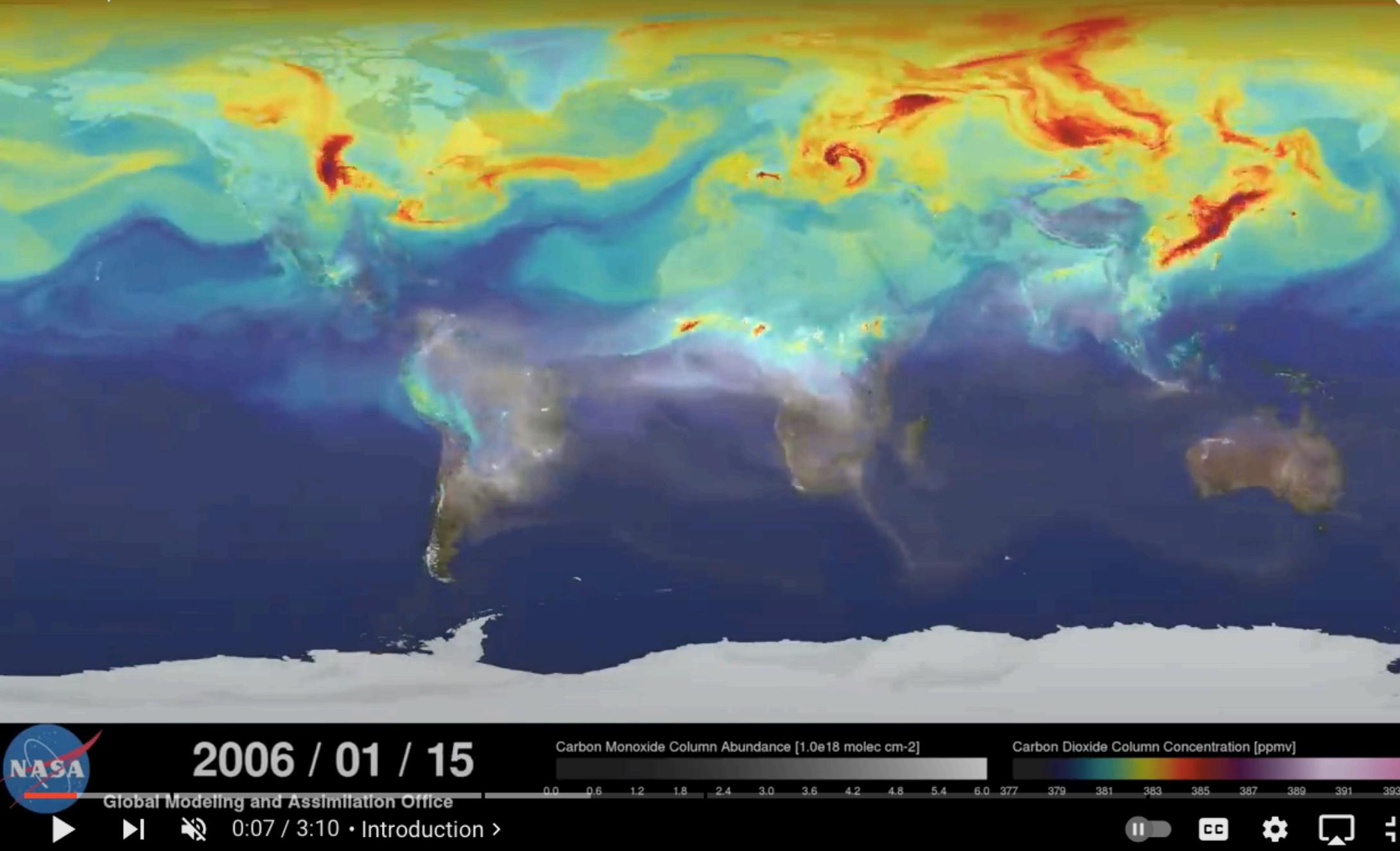
# Farming Emissions

## The Elephant in the Room

- Vary widely (Abdalla et al, 2016)
- Localized: a few grams (no-till) to dozens of grams (till) of CO<sub>2</sub> per sq. meter in 5h (Reicosky, 1997)
- About 25kg (no-till) or 100-400kg (till) of CO<sub>2</sub> per acre
- 340 million acres of farmlands under temporary crops in the US alone (~8.5Gt of no-till CO<sub>2</sub>)



You can tell when farmers are tilling,  
harvesting, or using fire to clear fields.



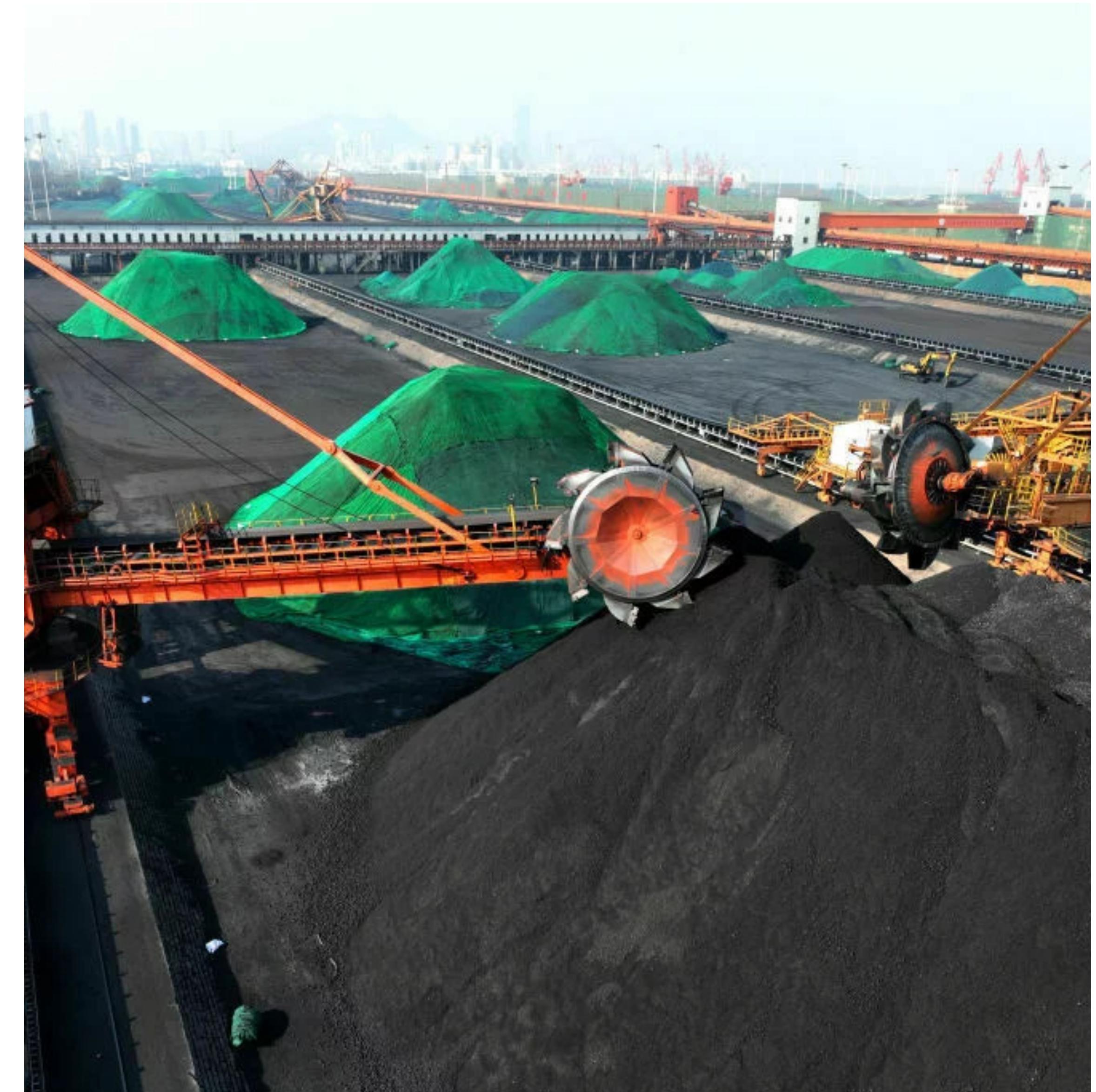
**“The Science” is confusing a canopy loss problem for an energy problem.**

# Industrialized Bio-Sequestration

# Fossil Fuels

## (Not So) Unfairly Vilified

- Naive isotopic analyses can't tell if plants are cycling the fossil fuel carbon or not
- Only 12% of the CO<sub>2</sub> is tied to fossil fuels ([Skrable et al, 2022](#))
- CO<sub>2</sub> increased like clockwork despite the 2020 lockdowns
- Sources with little or no nearby plants (planes, smokestacks)



Credit: Visual China Group

**Make no mistake: there isn't much to  
love about fossil fuels (or any mining).  
But energy is critical, and so is CO<sub>2</sub>.**

# CO<sub>2</sub> is Plant Food



385 ppm



535 ppm



685 ppm



835 ppm

Dr. Sherwood B. Idso showing the effects of CO<sub>2</sub>. ([Idso and Idso, 1994](#))

# Bio-Sequestration

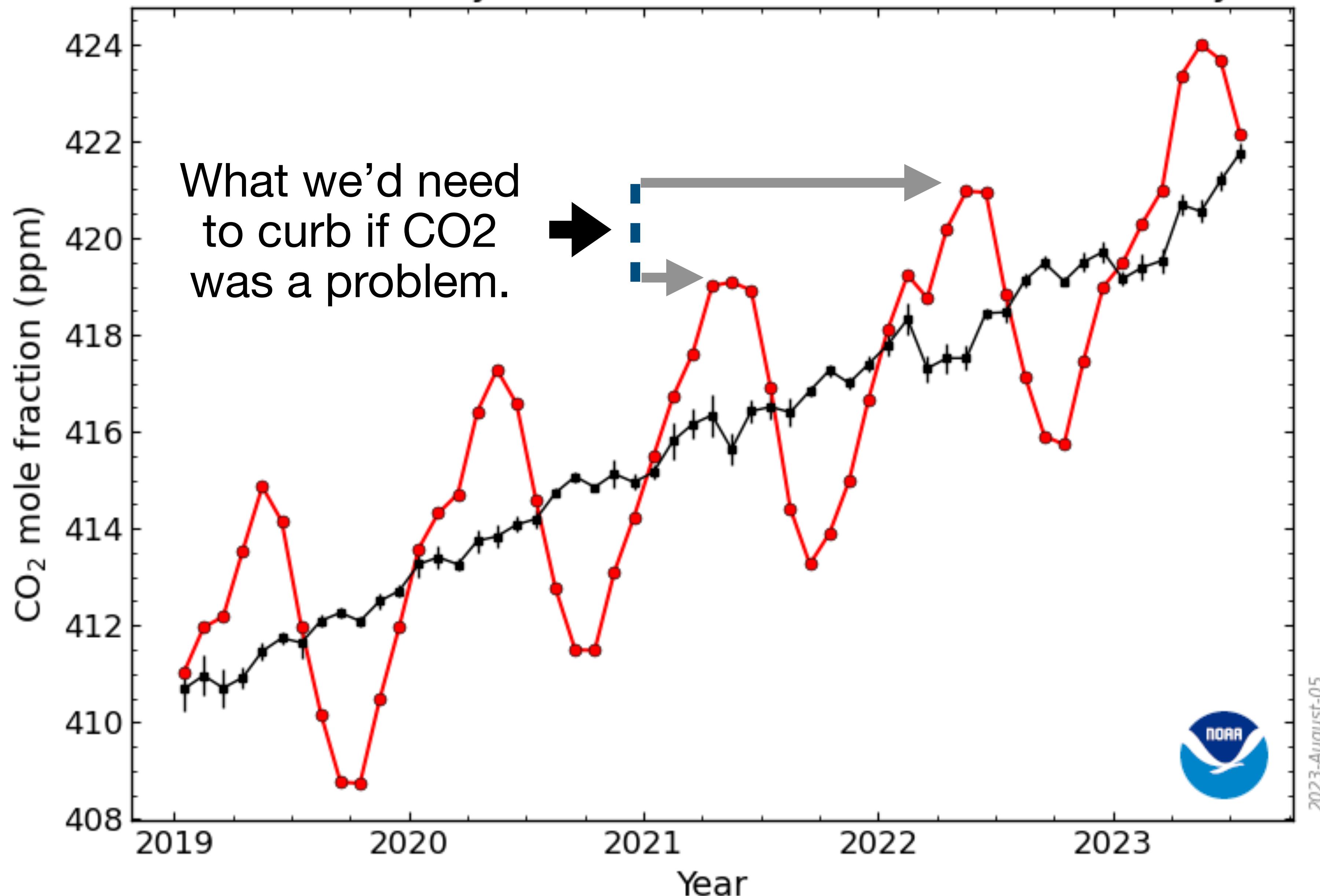
## Hemp CO<sub>2</sub> Fertilization

- Capture the smokestack's output (rocket mass heater like setup)
- Filter/process as needed (pH)
- Put the heat to good use
- Pipe the output towards plants (drip irrigation/FACE like setup)
- Hemp soaks up toxins and has many industrial uses



Or just let the CO<sub>2</sub> escape freely.  
Plants are soaking it up just fine.

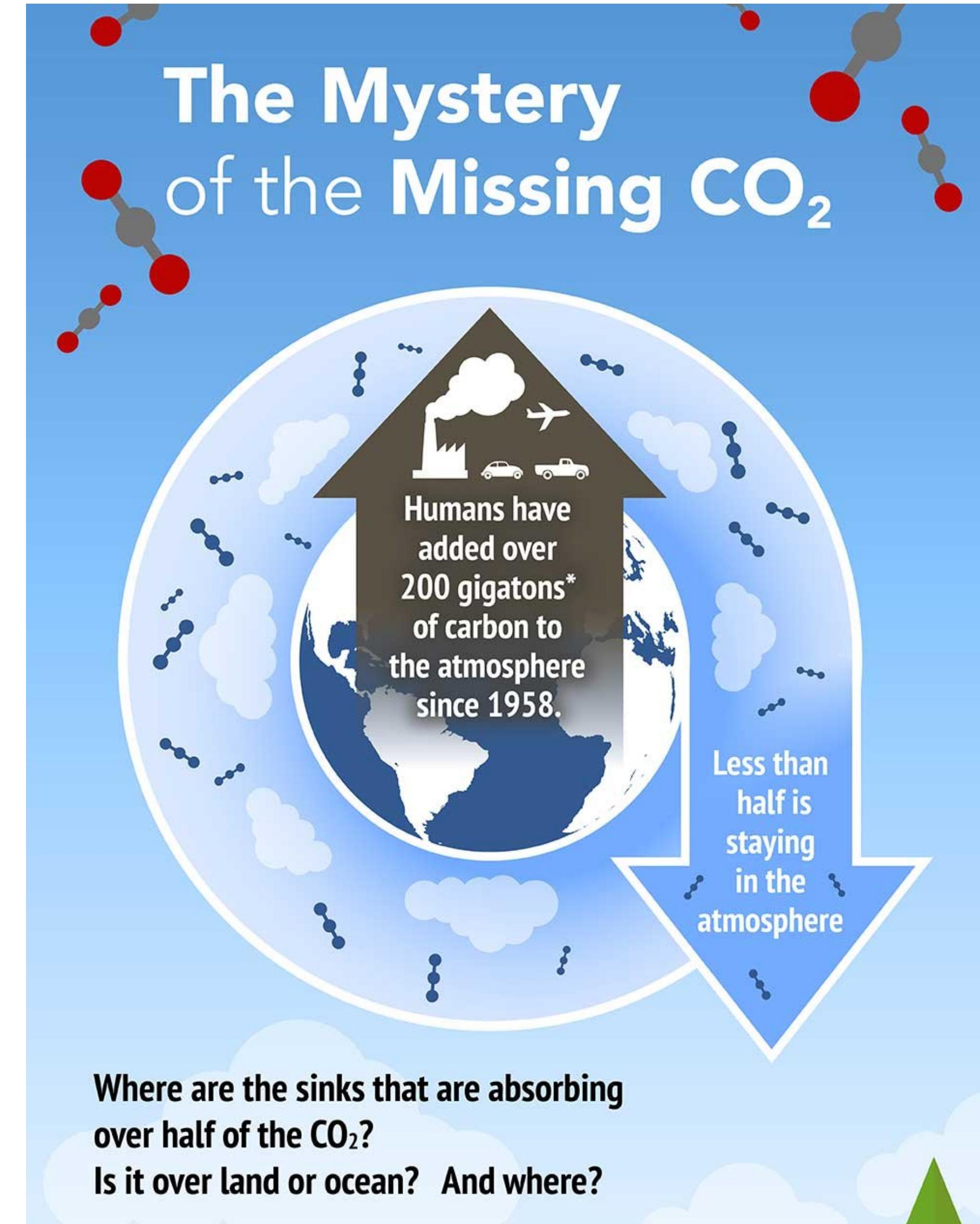
# Recent Monthly Mean CO<sub>2</sub> at Mauna Loa Observatory



# The Missing CO<sub>2</sub>

## Piecing the Story Together

- Plants soak up most of the CO<sub>2</sub>
- Biology moves the C around
- Clearing fields releases it as CO<sub>2</sub>
- Wind moves it around (esp. to the North pole)
- Plants (esp. algae) soak it up
- Biology moves the C around...



Credit: [NASA OCO-3 mission / science](#)

**Clearly, there is no emergency.  
We need more CO<sub>2</sub>, if anything.  
(Just not from topsoil loss.)**

# Environmental (Non-)Crises

**Topsoil loss actually matters if you value healthy food. It also genuinely affects the climate.**

# Climate Change

## Man-Made Desertification

- Soil with less carbon (and less cover) holds less water:
  - Runoffs, water evaporation, and hot air build-up lower moisture
  - Drier, warmer landscapes
  - Cycle of droughts and floods
- Straightforward to reverse



Loess Plateau, China, before and after restoration

# Bulldozers, seed pellets, and fencing can quickly transform a landscape.



[HarvestingRainwater.com](http://HarvestingRainwater.com)

Depression-era swale in Tucson, Arizona. The blue arrow shows the water flow. Photo: Brad Lancaster (2014).

# Natural Disasters

## Man-Made Calamities

- Poor land stewardship:
  - Poor water harvesting
  - Poor infrastructure
  - Industrialized plantations
- Other man-made factors:
  - Aerial coal fly ash releases
  - Subsidized flood insurance



# Mass Extinction

## Man-Made Habitat Loss

- Species are cornered, but fine
- Authoritarian inversion of reality
- Biggest land grab in history
- Nature self-organizes holistically:
  - Dynamic, not static
  - Resilient, not optimal
  - Additive, not subtractive



Credit: Tim Lane / Guy Shield for Buzzfeed News: [WWF's Secret War](#)

**The only real concerns are pollution  
and stopping the green agenda.**

# Get Involved

# The Great Resist

## Dismantling Oppression

- Growing public awareness:
  - Contract-based coup
  - Depends on consent
- Three power levers to dismantle:
  - Coercion: local autonomy
  - Legal: truth, jury annulment
  - Currency: local alternatives



You can put pressure on key enforcers  
by spreading the truth around them.  
(Tell their neighbors, colleagues, etc.)

# Hope, Not Anger

## Offer Counternarratives

- Factual information does not matter to demoralized people:
  - Truth bombs invite anger
  - Only they can do the work
- Problem-reaction-solution hinges on (false) promises that give hope:
  - Solutions invite taking action
  - Making progress fuel hope



Syntropic Farm in Sitio Semente, Brasília - DF. Photo credit: [ecoportal.net](http://ecoportal.net)

Get climate activists to work on food sovereignty. It's far more effective than blocking streets.

# Legal Jiu-Jitsu

## Let's Work Together

- Clearcut carbon accounting fraud:
  - Straightforward to understand
  - Indefensible in court
- Crowdsourced legal campaign:
  - Confront key enablers
  - Repeal climate policies
  - Detonate green finance



# **Contribute / Support:**

[t.me/a natural language](https://t.me/a_natural_language)

[ddebernardy.substack.com/support](https://ddebernardy.substack.com/support)

# Useful Links

## Spread the Word

- **The Big Lie That Climate Propagandists Don't Want You To Talk About:**  
<https://ddebernardy.substack.com/p/the-big-lie>
- **Carbon Accounting is Making a Canopy Problem Look Like an Energy Problem** (non-editorialized):  
<https://eartharxiv.org/repository/view/5378/>
- **A Climate Counternarrative:**  
<https://ddebernardy.substack.com/p/a-climate-counternarrative>
- **Git repository** (this deck and printable documents):  
<https://github.com/ddebernardy/a-climate-counternarrative>

**Thanks for your time!**

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