

Headline: Don't let the skeptics win

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The recent news is that the 450-ppm threshold of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere will be a reality soon. Is this cause for global alarm?

Yes, and it must be prevented from happening at all costs because it will raise global temperatures by 2 degrees Centigrade and lead to extreme droughts, floods, storms and typhoons—the “usual” calamities, but with more intensity and frequency.

And yes, the ice caps are melting even faster, strongly indicating the reality that is to come and that must not be ignored.

Consequential to such a scenario are widespread food shortages, extreme poverty, massive destruction of our habitats, and imbalance in our ecosystems. Biodiversity will decline to its worst, even to the extinction of more and more species. For all we know, it can lead to the extinction of our civilization!

The powerful tornadoes that leveled parts of Oklahoma in the United States are another sign of worse environmental disasters to come.

In fact, we are already experiencing strange weather patterns locally and globally as the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has reportedly gone over 403 ppm.

In an article titled “Climate Skeptics Have Already Won” (The Financial Times, 5/22/13), Martin Wolf put it very well: “Humanity has decided to yawn and let the real and present dangers of climate change mount.”

How can we not totally agree with the author, considering that nothing has actually been done to mitigate and reduce the greenhouse gases released in the atmosphere?

Today, 30 percent of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is directly due to humankind's careless lifestyle. China was responsible for 24 percent of the global total emissions in 2000; the United States, 17 percent; and the Eurozone, 8 percent. But each Chinese emits only a third of that emitted by an American.

China's catch-up growth is making this harder. What kind of growth does it want? A growth blanketed with dark toxic air in its capital, Beijing, or a growth that will give its people the quality of life that they deserve?

News reports suggest a number of steps to fight global warming and climate change. These are: Implement a “carbon tax” (or make polluters pay); impose really tough emission standards; create a secure global trade regime in low carbon fuels; develop ways of financing the transfer of the best available technology for creating and, more importantly, saving energy; and require governments to invest in research and early-stage innovation.

We have the technology for renewable energy, or at least Germany does at the cheapest cost. It's a move worth emulating by the rest of the world.

We totally agree with the steps recommended. Sadly, none of them has been tackled by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Wolf mentioned two others: nuclear energy and geoengineering, which we strongly oppose. These are steps leading backward and comparative to comic-book solutions.

In dealing with global environmental threats, the answers we need are simply “classroom solutions.” All we need to do is put the brakes on so-called “development.” We should also go full-blast on renewable energy and change our present development model.

And also, work on how to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from livestock, which release at least 51 percent of the total amount of greenhouse gases.

With these steps, we can begin to win the war against climate change. If we don’t take these steps, Wolf may be right: We may have already lost.

We must not let ourselves be subjected to the destructive development model and settle with fence-sitting and watching the planet heat up. We must do everything to prevail and save our Mother Earth, men and women alike.

Climate change and global warming are genuine and concrete issues. If the worst calamities and catastrophes do not compel our leaders to act promptly against the ultimate destruction of our planet, not even their skepticism can be of use in the end.

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