Within a few years, the world’s started to heat up more than it ever has. One major factor for this is the greenhouse effect. What is it? Should we be concerned? How can we help? These are the questions that this report will answer.

First let’s introduce ourselves to the greenhouse effect. So basically, the term refers to the way certain gases trap heat in the atmosphere, much as the glass in a greenhouse prevents rising warm air from escaping. This effect is completely natural and actually played a huge role in the development of organisms on our planet, but the enhancements to this, done by us humans are the leading risk factors and concerns of the current and future population.

What human enhancements you ask? They are mainly because of the gases that we previously talked about. These gases are called greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere trap a lot of heat that would otherwise escape to space, raising the temperature. From the end of the last Ice Age episode about 10,000 years ago until the end of the 18th century, the levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere remained fairly constant. Since the Industrial Revolution 200 years ago, mankind has been releasing extra quantities of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, which trap more heat, enhancing the natural greenhouse effect. The "enhanced" greenhouse effect is the direct result of human activities. Processes such as the burning of fossil fuels, industrial operations and forest clearing release carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide into the atmosphere. Chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, are also potent greenhouse gases.

Now let’s come to the main question. Is it bad for us? One point that’s already been stated is that it increases the planet’s temperature making the weather hot for us. But there are problems that are much worse than this. A global rise in sea level and the release of large methane columns are only some of them, however, they are all dramatic for the planet. During the period 1901-2010 the global average sea level rose 19 centimetres. It is estimated that by 2100 the sea level will be between 15 and 90 centimetres higher than it is now and will threaten 92 million people. Many animal species will be forced to migrate in order to survive the changes in the main climatic patterns altered by the progressive increase in temperatures. Human beings will also have to move: according to the World Bank, by 2050 the number of people forced to flee their homes due to extreme droughts or violent floods could reach 140 million. There are more bad consequences of the “enhanced” greenhouse effect.

Now that we have established that it is harmful for our environment and thus us, the only question that comes to mind and the only question left to answer is, how do we control this? One of the best ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to limit energy consumption. Using energy in many of its forms comes with the negative externality of releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. For instance, electricity is commonly produced by coal power plants which burn goal and release CO2 into the air. Limiting the use of devices which use fossil fuels for energy is especially important--cars, lawn mowers, chainsaws, and other gasoline and diesel-powered devices account for a large portion of the greenhouse gasses emitted by humans. Finding clean energy alternatives is a good way to limit the greenhouse effect while still getting the energy you need. Efficient hybrid cars and green electricity sources, such as solar and wind power, help reduce greenhouse emissions.

Wasteful and needless consumption contributes greatly to the release of greenhouse gases. Every physical product that you use--magazines, boxes, food products, toys--requires energy to produce and for disposal. Buying fewer needless products will limit the demand for those products and put downward pressure on the energy use and subsequent greenhouse gas emissions associated with their production. Whenever possible seek green alternatives for the things you want. For instance, instead of getting a magazine subscription, you might be able to sign up for an online subscription, forgoing the need to produce paper. Also, avoid using aerosol products with pressurized gases like canned air, as these products tend to release large amounts of greenhouse gases into the air.

Still, one of the best ways to control the greenhouse effect is to plant more trees. The process of photosynthesis that converts carbon dioxide to oxygen is one of the best effective measures to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in air.

Looking back at the report, we conclude that the greenhouse effect, although a natural and very important one, is becoming harmful for us due to our negative usage of certain resources and there is now an urgent need to mend this problem.