

The following text is a review of a discussion, with three childhood friends of mine, regarding global sustainability. We discussed several topics during our discussion, namely the impact of global warming, the actions to mitigate climate change, and how digitalization can be a tool for it.

When I introduced the topic of global warming in the coming 100 years the first thing that came to mind in the group was rising sea levels and its direct consequence of urban areas becoming inhabitable for large amounts of people. The group agreed that it would cause large waves of migration and that it would lead to overpopulated cities combined which would be met by harsh immigration politics. Being that everyone in this discussion is from Stockholm and Sweden, where immigration is an extremely hot topic in media and politics, I was not surprised that the discussion fell into this topic. Everyone agreed that global warming would further complicate an already complicated issue. To continue the discussion, I asked the group what they thought global warming would mean for our resources. The group gave several answers such as depletion of farms that could lead to famine; extinction of species as a result of increased temperatures in water, air, and land; and depletion of marine and water resources as a result of changing pH levels from mixing salt water with fresh water when ocean-levels rise. We concluded that all of these would lead to extremely negative economic consequences as the damage would be enormous and production drop a lot.

The next question that we discussed was what policies have been implemented to counter the negative trend of pollution and climate change. The group were aware of the work from Swedish institution such as “panta mera” and that Swedes in general are very good at sorting their trash according to the material that is being thrown away. Our common view was that few countries in the world have the same culture regarding garbage disposal. Upon that acknowledgment, one person brought up the sustainability goals introduced by the EU. However, when I asked what these goals were, the group only knew about the goal to remove all carbon-emitting cars by 2050. This initiated a discussion about the difficulties of having global goals. One person argued that it is difficult to incentivize poor countries to increase their efforts to prevent climate change, whilst still having fundamental and structural deficiencies in equality, health, economy, and democracy. Another person argued that pollution increase “global warming, not local warming”, and explained that it is an issue for all countries, poor or wealthy. In turn, the group concluded that the most reasonable action is to have national goals, but goals that all aim to mitigate climate change on a global level. We all agreed however that there are great difficulties in both calculating what reasonable goals are for individual nations and additionally introducing accountability so that the goals are met.

Lastly, I asked the group how digitalization can play a role in climate change mitigation. This question was followed up by great ideas. Firstly, since climate change is a global issue, digitalization can help with communication across the globe in discussing both local and global policies to reduce the effects of climate change. Secondly, the gathering of data was something that we all agreed is important to know how climate change affects different areas. We agreed that digitalization is a key component of gathering data in the form of weather

stations, and satellite images and simply storing and sharing the data. Lastly, a member of the discussion added that AI could potentially help to analyze the data, figure out trends and even come up with potential solutions.

Concludingly, the group engaged in an intriguing discussion about the future of climate change. I must say that my friends all had general ideas of the consequences of climate change and understood the difficulties in mitigating them. However, I realized that the general public might not know so much about the importance of holistic efforts to save the environment, but rather focus consider the local struggles that come with it. Another realization was that the connection between climate change and the economy was rarely considered by any other party than me during the discussion. Furthermore, the other parties were poorly informed about what work is being done internationally, by the EU, and by the United Nations to mitigate climate change. All in all the discussion lead to interesting topics, issues, solutions, and thoughts about the future.