Global Warming

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The earth’s temperatures are rising at an alarming rate. Global warming, the increase in greenhouse emissions is estimated to cause the earth’s temperature to rise on average between two and six degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century (Global Warming. (2010, June 3)). In this essay we will look further into the causes of global warming, taking a deeper look into three of the major causes, increased carbon dioxide, deforestation, and an economic reliance upon fossil fuels that are directly impacting our delicate ecosystem.

The first cause of global warming we will focus on is the increase in carbon dioxide in the earth’s ozone. Carbon dioxide is an important greenhouse gas found in the ozone. This gas is responsible for trapping heat in the earth’s atmosphere. Carbon dioxide can be found naturally in the atmosphere through activities such as plant reparation, volcanoes, and interactions between the ocean and the air above it. The problem begins to present itself when you combine the natural levels of carbon dioxide with the man-made contributions from farming, industrial operations, and changes in land use. These gases are being produced excessively as a byproduct to meet the ever-growing demand for our food supply and keeping up with manufacturing needs. Over the last 170 years, the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have increased by 47% the levels found a pre-industrial revolution in 1850 (Carbon Dioxide | Vital Signs. (2020, November 5)). Due to this increase, the temperatures of planet earth are rising at an alarming rate.

  Secondly, we will look further into our fossil fuel consumption. Fossil fuels are products such as oil, gas, and coal. These fuels are used as a means to power our communities and provide transportation. Petroleum products such as gas and oil supply about 37 percent of the United States energy alone, this does not take into account other countries in North America (Denchak, M. (2018, June 29)). It is important to note that the production of gas and oil does not solely produce carbon dioxide, instead of producing a greenhouse gas that is 80 times more potent, methane. There are two ways for methane gas to be produced, the burning of fossil fuels, and agriculture. The burning of fossil fuels by humans contributes between 25 – 40 percent more methane than previously thought (Cockburn, H. (2020, February 20)).

Deforestation has an enormous impact on global warming making it a global crisis, we are destroying forests at an alarming rate. The level of deforestation in our tropical rainforests alone releases more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than all of the cars and trucks on the roads in the world. Vehicles contribute to a total of about 14 percent, while deforestation in the rainforest’s attributes to 15 percent (Scheer, R. (2012, November 13)). The reason deforestation is so bad for the atmosphere is when a tree is cut down, or burned, it causes it to release any stored carbon dioxide. Activities like logging and paper mills are large contributors. Not only are we causing trees to release an abundance of carbon dioxide, but we are also removing one of the major sources of CO2 reduction. The Brazilian Amazon has experienced 74,155 fires since January (Freedman, A. (2019, August 22)). These fires are caused by a combination of dry climate and humans. Humans, either intentionally or unintentionally, starting fires to clear land for agriculture or due to negligence. A vast majority of the land that has been cleared has been done so illegally. The reason these forests are being cleared links back to our demand for agricultural growth, clearing forests to make room for cattle, and crops.

The three major causes, increased carbon dioxide, deforestation, and an economic reliance upon fossil fuels are all directly impacting our delicate ecosystem. As can be gathered by the evidence presented, the causes of global warming are interlaced. It can be determined that the three points discussed in this paper have direct corresponding relations, from deforestation clearing land for agriculture to agriculture causing more carbon to be expelled during the refinement and shipping processes. As a population, we are directly contributing to the decline of our ecosystem to meet our needs for economic and industrial growth. Our economic growth is vital to sustaining an ever-growing population.

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