

Scientific & Business Perspectives on Climate Change

1. What the World's Leading Climate Scientists Are Saying:

There is a scientific consensus that global warming is real and is being caused mainly by human activity. This consensus has existed since 1995, and evidence since then has only strengthened this conclusion.

A. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The IPCC is the world's most authoritative body of scientists and policy experts on the issue of global warming. Its first three scientific assessments, in 1990, 1995, and 2001, were chaired by Sir John Houghton, an evangelical Christian. The 2001 report stated:

“There is new and stronger evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities.”

B. The U.S. National Academy of Sciences

When it first came into office the Bush Administration asked the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to review the current climate science and provide a report. In its 2001 report the NAS determined that the IPCC's basic conclusion was correct:

“The IPCC's conclusion that most of the observed warming of the last 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations accurately reflects the current thinking of the scientific community on this issue ... Despite the uncertainties, there is general agreement that the observed warming is real and particularly strong within the past 20 years.”

C. G8 Academies' of Science Statement

On June 7, 2005 the U.S. National Academy of Science joined with the Academies of Science of the other G8 nations, plus the Academies of China, India, and Brazil, to issue a joint statement on climate change. It stated:

“The scientific understanding of climate change is now sufficiently clear to justify nations taking prompt action ... Failure to implement significant reductions in net greenhouse gas emissions now, will make the job much harder in the future.”

D. Arctic Climate Impact Assessment

This report was requested by the Arctic Council, a high-level intergovernmental forum whose members include the U.S., Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, and Sweden. The U.S. was the lead country on this report. Their conclusion:

“There is an international scientific consensus that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities.”

E. American Geophysical Union

The American Geophysical Union is the premier American professional association for scientists in the areas of atmospheric and ocean sciences; solid-Earth sciences; hydrologic sciences; and space sciences. It recently issued a statement that said:

“A particular concern is that atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide may be rising faster than at any time in Earth's history, except possibly following rare events like impacts from large extraterrestrial objects ... increased levels of carbon dioxide will remain in the atmosphere for hundreds to thousands of years.”

2. What the Bush Administration Scientists Are Saying:

The Bush Administration now agrees with the scientific consensus that global warming is happening and is being caused in part by human activity.

“North American temperature changes from 1950 to 1999 were unlikely to be due only to natural climate variations.”

3. What Business Leaders Are Saying:

Many business leaders in industries that would have to significantly reduce global warming pollution are saying it is time to take action.

Lord John Browne, CEO of *BP*: “We’ve found that an emissions trading system, which ensures that resources are applied in the right places, is the best way to keep costs down, and we’ve demonstrated that, far from being a cost burden, reducing emissions by eliminating waste can add value ... In fact within the first three years we added \$650 million of value, for an investment of around \$20 million ... Our aspiration is to turn a threat and a risk into an opportunity.”

Charles O. Holliday, Jr., CEO of *DuPont*: “DuPont believes that action is warranted, not further debate. We also believe that the best approach is for business to lead, not wait for public outcry or government mandates. From our experience of the past ten years, we know that integrating environmental considerations into our business strategies enhances our ability to achieve sustainable growth.”

Michael Morris, CEO of the U.S.’s #1 coal-burning utility and largest electricity generator, *American Electric Power*: “The science debate goes on, but we know enough to move now.”

Business Week Editorial: “we do know that the world is warming – the ‘90s were the warmest decade in centuries. We know that businesses can save money and increase efficiency by cutting energy costs. And we know that a national policy that cuts fossil fuel consumption converges with a geopolitical policy of reducing energy dependence on Middle East oil. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions is no longer just a ‘green’ thing. It makes business and foreign policy sense, as well.”

James E. Rogers, CEO of *Cinergy*, a utility with \$4.6 billion in annual revenue that produces 95% of its electricity from burning coal: “...I am convinced that it is prudent to take action now to address what we do know (about climate change).”

Paul Anderson, CEO of *Duke Energy*, an electric utility: “Personally I feel the time has come to act.” “We will be proactive on the issue of global climate change ... Ideally, U.S. public policy should encourage a transition to a lower-carbon-intensive economy through a broad-based approach, such as a carbon tax or other mechanism which addresses all sectors of the economy.”

Jeffrey R. Immelt, CEO of *General Electric* (the country’s largest company), in announcing the GE’s “Ecomagination” efforts: “I think [global warming] is something we need to start figuring out and taking proactive steps to make improvements on.”

James Baker, former Secretary of State: “It may surprise you a little bit, but maybe it's because I'm a hunter and a fisherman, but I think we need to pay a little more attention to what we need to do to protect our environment ... When you have energy companies like Shell and British Petroleum ... saying there is a problem with excess carbon dioxide emissions, I think we ought to listen.”

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