Global Warming: Climate Change

The world today is going through many irreversible changes due to global warming. Global Warming is a pressing issue that, without taking action, will lead to many greater issues in the future. There are many problems that are caused by climate change due to global warming, though there are also many ways that can be used to slow or stop global warming.

Global Warming has caused many of the icecaps in the world to melt. Recently, Scientists have discovered that the rate of Arctic ice melt has accelerated rapidly. They project that at the current rate, the Arctic Ocean could be ice-free by the summer of 2012. (ProQuest Staff). The ice melting is not only dangerous to the animal species living in the more frigid zones of the planet, but is dangerous because it causes the ocean water levels to rise. Another area experiencing severe warming is the Montana Glacier National Park. When the park was created in 1910, there were 150 glaciers within it; there are now less than 30, all of which are greatly shrunken. (Clemmitt 16.4). Also, the snows on Mount Kilimanjaro have melted about 80 percent since 1912 and it is projected that they will be completely gone by 2020 if nothing is done to prevent global warming.

One of many contributors to global warming is the energy business. According to Keith Bradsher, reporter for the International Herald Tribune, China is the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases. "China's frenetic construction of coal-fired power plants has raised worries around the world about the effect on climate change. China uses more coal than the United States, Europe and Japan combined, making it the world's largest emitter of gases that are warming the planet." (Bradsher 2R Ed). China has been frantically trying to keep up with its energy needs. This has lead to rapid construction of inefficient coal power plants. Lately, China has found new ways of improving efficiency and is attempting to build all of the new plants so that they can achieve 44 percent efficiency. (Bradsher 2R Ed). Though about half of China’s coal power plants have the ability to remove sulfur compounds from the emissions, and not all of the plants with that functionality use it consistently. This inefficiency in most of China’s coal power plants has led to them to look for more advanced and efficient ways to run the plants though. The International Energy Agency said on April 20th that, “After relying until recently on older technology, China has since become the major world market for advanced coal-fired power plants with high-specification emission control systems”. (Bradsher 2R Ed). Since China relies so heavily on coal power, they are making more advances than the United States in efficiency. According to Bradsher, “China has just built a small, experimental facility near Beijing to remove carbon dioxide from power station emissions and use it to provide carbonation for beverages, and the government has a short list of possible locations for a large experiment to capture and store carbon dioxide. But so far, it has no plans to make this a national policy.”(Bradsher 2R Ed). Even though the government hasn’t made it nation-wide, this experiment is one of many ways that the Chinese are paving the road to a better, more energy efficient future.

The world-wide climate change is not only affecting the animals and the icecaps, it is also affecting the people that live in cooler climates in many ways. “Meanwhile, like Alaska, many states eye global warming as potentially devastating. New Hampshire officials warn that climate change threatens the twin foundations of the state's lucrative tourist industry. A ski season shortened by 20 percent, for instance, could cost $84 million a year in lost tourism revenue.” (Clemmitt 16.4). This loss due to global warming causes not only devastating results to the landscape, but also causes major economic issues in most cold tourism centered states.