



SPEAK OUT NOW

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Planet Earth – A Source of Life, Not a Source of Profits

Recently there have been a string of extreme weather events throughout the world. In January, South America experienced record flooding in Colombia that left millions without access to safe drinking water or shelter. In April, flooding battered Colombia again.

In the U.S., there were a record number of tornadoes in the Midwest. The massive flooding of the Mississippi River in the central states, forced the state of Louisiana to break levees and flood parts of the state to save the cities of Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This came in the middle of one of the worst droughts in history. Some parts of Texas and Oklahoma had temperatures of over 100 degrees for more than 50 days running and fires are ripping across Texas. Recently, Hurricane Irene ravaged the East Coast, leaving millions without electricity, destroying homes and killing at least 43 people.

In Pakistan, the flooding last year covered one fifth of the country and affected over 20 million people. In Australia this year an area the size of France was flooded causing billions of dollars in damage. In East Africa, the countries of Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Somalia are experiencing the worst drought in 60 years and 14 million people are at risk of having no access to food or water.

In China, flooding in the eastern part of the country has forced over five million people to leave their homes. These torrential rains and flooding follow a drought that has gripped this part of China for the past fifty years. China's second-largest freshwater lake, Dongting, has lost two-thirds of its water over the past few months. The Chinese government warned that food prices will continue to rise as drought and floods destroy agricultural lands.

The response from governments, and the heads of banks and corporations to this massive change in weather patterns has been lip service, at best. Their policies are guided by an economic system that places no value on the environment, other than as a source of resources. This is an economic system that only has one priority – profit.

Today much of their economy is based on carbon

in the form of oil, coal and gas. The energy companies continue with business as usual, even though all the scientific evidence shows the connection between releasing more carbon into the atmosphere and these extreme weather events. The governments that supposedly regulate them do little or nothing as they blow the tops off mountains to get coal or destroy ocean life with their oil drilling or “frack” the earth to extract natural gas.

In many parts of the world, corporate policies have led to wars of conquest to control oil and other resources. In the industrialized countries, people are left in the trap of relying on ancient carbon in the form of oil and gas for cars and electricity and consuming mounds of plastic that everything is wrapped in. Of course there are small things we can do – drive less, consume less electricity, reduce or eliminate buying things in plastic and recycle. These individual efforts do make a difference and are necessary. But they are not enough.

Limiting our efforts to these individual acts does not address the real problems of Global Warming or Climate Change. Those who control the wealth and direct the economy treat the planet like an all-you-can-eat buffet. Their motto is “Grow or Die”. And the governments of the world serve the planet up to them to make sure they will grow. As long as there are profits to be made in the short run – the ruling elite have no concern for what happens in the long run. There will be many more Hurricane Irene's, droughts, flooding and the disasters that follow.

The ways societies are organized now and the way energy is produced, the planet is being destroyed. They will continue to pollute and ravage the earth as long as it is profitable for them, even if it means destroying the precious possibility of life, as we know it today. We can no longer accept this. We can no longer leave our future and the fate of the planet in the hands of those who have created this environmental crisis.

The line has been drawn – the extinction of life as we know it or extinction of their system. The choice is ours.

Global Warming—Their Profits, Our Planet

Climate change threatens the possibility of life on Earth. We are already seeing the consequences – hurricanes, floods, and some of the hottest weather on record. These events seem like natural disasters, but in fact they are man made catastrophes caused by the people who run this society – the banks, corporations, and investment houses. If we don't stop the wealthy elite who are profiting from environmental destruction, the planet will become unlivable.

- **Global Warming is a Fact** - In 2007, thousands of scientists concluded that **over 90%** of climate change is caused by human activity.

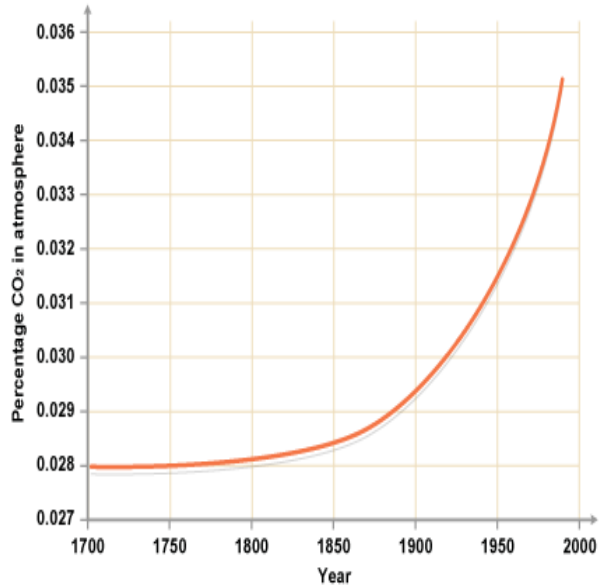
- **Carbon emissions** - There is more carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere than at any time in the last 800,000 years. Industrialization and the use of coal and oil based fuel in the last 200 years has increased CO₂ levels by 40%. CO₂ absorbs the sun's heat and holds it in, increasing the Earth's temperature.

- **Temperature change** - Texas has experienced the worst drought in over 100 years, due to heat waves without an end. Arctic regions and areas are melting fast. Montana's Glacier National Park has only 27 glaciers left. In 1910, there were 150 glaciers.

- **Death of Species** – The rate at which species are disappearing is greater now than in any other time in the history of the planet. 50,000 species disappear every year, mostly due to human activity. Since the 1960's, 600 square miles of coral have died every year in the Pacific Ocean due to carbon dioxide in the water.

- **Deforestation** - 4,500 acres of rain forests are destroyed every hour. Half of the world's forests have been wiped out completely. This contributes to global warming because forests absorb carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

- **The Cost of Destruction** - The activities of the biggest three thousand companies in the world caused \$2.2 trillion worth of environmental damages in 2010. If these companies paid for their damages, it would cost them one-third of their profits!



It is Up to Us to Stop Global Warming

People are starting to do something. In August, thousands rallied in Washington DC against climate destruction and the passing of the Keystone Oil Sands Bill, a law approving a 3,200 kilometer oil pipeline from Alberta, Canada to the Gulf Coast of Texas. The protest lasted 15 days, and over 1,200 people were arrested. It is absolutely right to stand up against the attacks on the environment. But the problem is bigger than any single law. Our planet and therefore, our lives are risked by the people who run this society for their own profit.