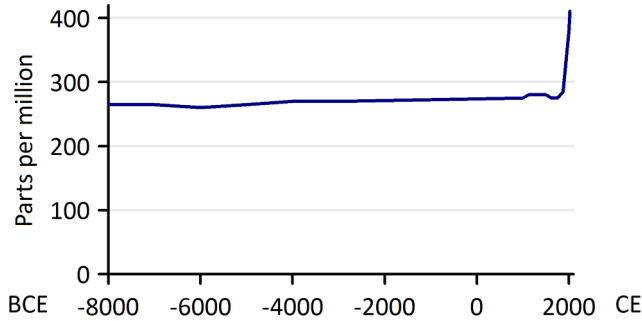
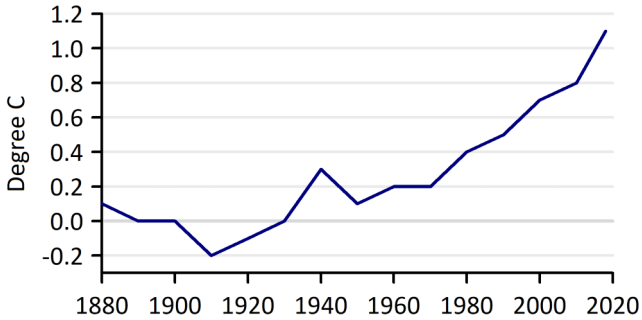


We've changed the climate

We've burnt coal, oil and natural gas and this has caused a 45% increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂):



The average global temperature has risen by 1.1°C from the pre-industrial average:



This might not sound much but it's caused

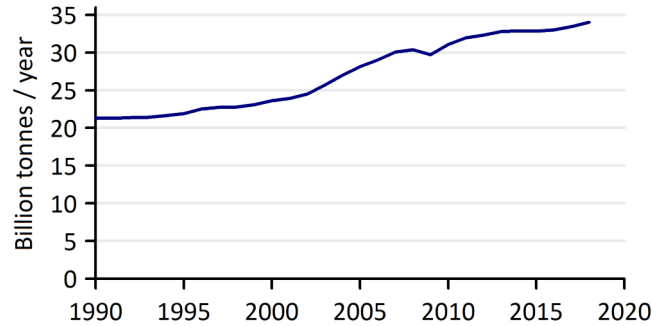
- record heatwaves and wildfires
- species extinctions
- record storms
- record rainfall
- record floods
- unprecedented human disasters, misery and loss of life

This is what we've done and it's getting worse as we add more and more CO₂ to the atmosphere.

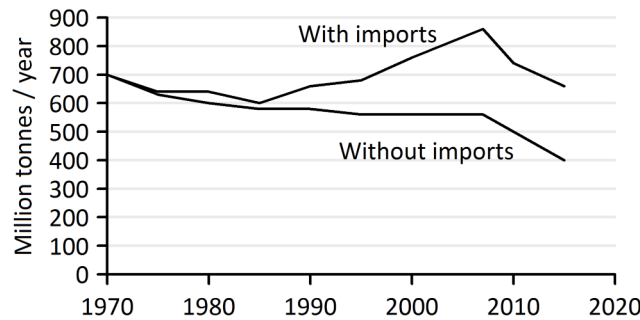
Governments have failed

Governments have known about the problem for decades - the first international agreement to reduce emissions was in 1992.

But governments have broken their pledges, and global CO₂ emissions have continued to rise:



Current UK CO₂ emissions are still similar to 1970. Emissions within the UK itself have fallen, but this fall has been cancelled out by the increase in CO₂ emitted by the manufacture of goods we import:



Governments have acted as if everything is fine, and built more roads and airports and encouraged more and more use of fossil fuels.

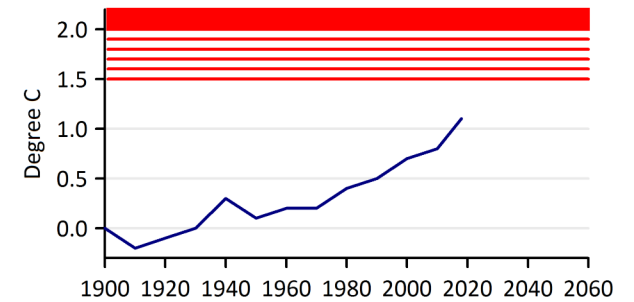
Time is running out

The situation is becoming desperate in many parts of the world. Positive feedback loops are exacerbating the warming, e.g. the melting of ice caps means less sunlight reflected by ice and more sunlight absorbed by the darker water.

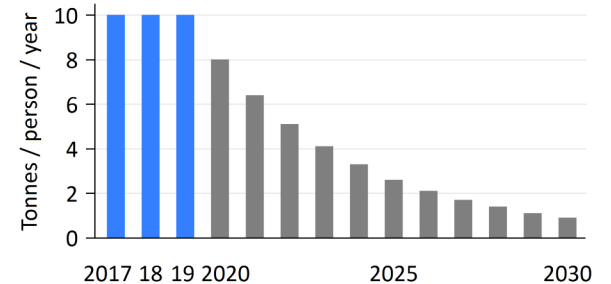
Extinction of species is accelerating.

Agricultural land is being lost and we are heading for an uninhabitable earth.

We risk catastrophe by going above 1.5° of warming, but we are fast approaching this:



The science says we must limit further release of CO₂ to 420 billion tonnes and must do this by halving emissions by 2030 - and more quickly in developed countries. This now means a 20% per year reduction in the UK:



Options

How should we respond to the crisis?

We have three options.

1. Ignore it

But the problem won't go away. It will get worse.

Food supplies will become precarious, sea levels will rise, and there will be more and more climate refugees - and by the time people are forced to take notice, it will be too late. Our children will suffer the consequences of our greed and lack of care for their future.

2. Fudge it

We could take a few token actions - but as with ignoring the problem, it won't go away. If we don't act now, it will be too late.

3. Face up to it

Like alcoholics coming off alcohol, or gamblers breaking their addiction, we can face up to what we are doing: how our use of fossil fuels is wrecking the world, how we are betraying previous generations who worked hard to build what we have now, and how we are betraying our children who will be left with an uninhabitable planet - and we can accept that big changes are needed, and resolve to do whatever it takes.

Some jobs that are dependent on fossil fuels will no longer be needed, but other new jobs will mean new opportunities.

Many of the changes that are needed will bring an increased well-being, not less - from cleaner air, healthier food and transport choices, and more connected communities.

Actions

Personal actions

- Reduce your carbon footprint - at least 10% per year - go to carbonindependent.org.
- Review spending, banking etc decisions - prefer well-being over polluting goods and pastimes. Every purchase is a vote for the kind of world you want to live in.
- Tell your local community including friends, family, work colleagues and media.
- At work, challenge the organisation to become more sustainable.
- Link up with people who can share the conversation as no one needs to feel alone.

Supervise and contribute to local and national government decision making

Local and national governments should be working towards a better, cleaner future - by stopping road and airport building - and starting large scale investment in home insulation, public transport, walking, cycling, and local food production & distribution - but many are failing to act. So:

- Scrutinise decisions and ask questions
- Contribute to consultations
- Complain if necessary
- Protest if necessary - actively support the School Climate Strikes and other protests.

Links

- IPCC: ipcc.ch
- UK Student Climate Network: ukscn.org
- Greenpeace: greenpeace.org
- Extinction Rebellion: rebellion.earth

More at Carbon Independent:
carbonindependent.org/64.html

The climate crisis

Why are people so worried?

What do we need to do?

