UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

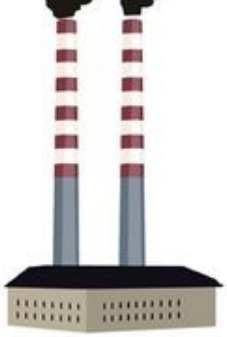
DECEMBER 7 - 18 - 2009

Gulf News Special on the most important problem the world faces today

TIME FOR A CHANGE

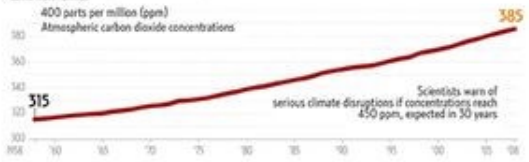
Carbon dioxide emissions have increased to a record 31.5 billion metric tons. That's 40% above levels in 1990

Research and Infographic: GUILLERMO MUNRO, LUIS VAZQUEZ



CO2 concentrations hit record levels

Through this decade, global emissions have grown by 23 percent. In 2008, almost three-quarter of the increase came from China.



PREPARING FOR EVENTUAL CHANGE

Cities, states and countries around the world are starting to adapt to climate change or at least talking about it and setting aside money for the looming modifications.

COUNTRIES

UNITED STATES: Offer to cut emissions by 17 per cent from 2005 levels by 2020, deepening to 30 per cent by 2025, 42 per cent by 2050 and 83 per cent by 2050.

THE NETHERLANDS is making its crucial flood control system stronger.

BANGLADESH, a poor country, is spending more than $50 million on adaptation and will include ways to fend off rising sea levels.

EUROPE—LED BY GERMANY—passed Japan to lead the world in PV manufacture, producing an estimated 1,063 megawatts of solar cells in 2007, up 56 percent over 2006. About 40,000 people are now employed in the PV industry in Germany alone

THAILAND, there are large-scale efforts to protect places from rising sea levels. Monks at one temple outside Bangkok had to raise the floor by more than 3 feet.

ENGLAND is strengthening the Thames River Flood control barrier which is costing about half a billion dollars.

A handful of countries have emerged as leaders in renewables development, thanks to strong government support. A study commissioned by the German government found that in 2006 the country had some 259,000 direct and indirect jobs in the renewables sector.

NORWAY: Says it is willing to reduce emissions by 30 per cent by 2020 over 1990 levels, and says it is willing to consider going to 30 or 40 per cent. Also aims to be carbon neutral by 2030.

AUSTRALIA announced it will provide $126 million to establish the Australian Center for Climate Change and Adaptation.

UNITED STATES led the world in new installations for the third year in a row with a record-shattering 5,244 megawatts of wind capacity added, increasing cumulative installed capacity by 45 percent

CITIES

Amsterdam One hundred percent of house waste is recycled to produce electricity for the citys opublic transport

Stockholm in 2008 there where 28 per cent more bike users than the year before is installing 100 electric car charging stations

Singapore Half of the coty's waste is recycled and two new metro lines are being built

Munich: There are 780 solar facilities. The city is also a hub for environmental technology

Honolulu: In 2008 hawaii became the fist US state to require solar water heaters in each new home

BOSTON raised a sewage plant to keep it from being flooded when sea levels rise. New York is looking at similar plans.

Dubai: Implemented Public transit and has been expanding its public transportation

CHICAGO has a program to promote rooftop vegetation and reflective roofs that absorb less heat. That could keep the temperature down and ease heat waves.

MADRID Solar panels obligatory in all new buildings, biodiesel buses and solar-powered street lamps are standard

INDIVIDUAL

Try eating organic and locally grown vegetables and fruit. Or if you are in Dubai at least try to buy the produce that is grown closer to the peninsula

22 billion empty plastic bottles in the trash. In bottle production alone, the more than 70 million bottles of water consumed each day in the U.S. drain 1.5 million barrels of oil over the course of one year.

PLAN AND COMBINE TRIPS. A lot of driving involves frequent trips nearby, to go shopping or run errands, for example. Plan and combine trips to reduce the miles you need to travel.

BAG YOUR GROCERIES and other purchases in a reusable tote. If you missed out on the the ones GUlf News Gave, most stores now offer them and many are very stylish.

Slow down, going from 88kmh to 120kmh can elevate fuel consumption by 20%

CHECK LIGHTS. Identify frequently used light fixtures that use incandescent bulbs; order fluorescent replacements bulbs

RECYCLE. most communities provide facilities for recycling, and this does not exlude Dubai. If you do not find a place close to home go to the offices by SAFA park

Buy things that last. Choose durable items over disposable ones. repairing rather than discarding, and passing on itmes that are not used instead of discarding.

Check car tires for proper inflation. This can improve gas mileage.

Modify your Diet to include less meat. A high meat diet means a tremendous amount of carbon emissions. It's a good thing that UAE holds the first place per capita in chicken consumption

Encourage schools and your employeers to reduce emissions. There is always room to grow, but here ast Gulf News we have had 2 succsefull campains, **Go Green** and the **WOW** (wipe out waste) campaign

What is the footprint from the things we do and enjoy?

18% The amount of greenhouse gas emissions that livestock is responsible.

They produce 37 percent of methane, which has more than 20 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide, and they emit 65 percent of nitrous oxide. Something to think about next time you go to a restaurant, maybe chicken is not that bad of a choice after all.

8% The amount of global water use that is dedicated to irrigate the crops for cattle

40% Coal was responsible for approximately 40 percent of the carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from fossil fuels

A jet crossing the Atlantic burns up to 60,000 liters of fuel

It would take a person 50 years driving a car to use that much fuel.

"ONE PERSON FLYING IN A JET FOR AN HOUR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAME GREEN HOUSE EMISSIONS AS A TYPICAL BANGLADESHI IN A WHOLE YEAR" Beatrice Schell, European Federation for Transport and Environment

What about Windpower?

Global wind power capacity reached 94,100 megawatts by the end of 2007, up 27 percent from the previous year, and then topped 100,000 megawatts by April 2008.

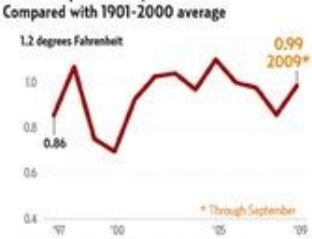
Is there money in alternative energy?

20m Investing in alternative energy and conservation is predicted to create more than 20 million new jobs in everything from wind farming to biofuels to weatherproofing. A healthy environment and a healthy economy according to hopenhagen.org.

So is there an actual climate change?

15% The rise in global temperatures since 1997 since the first international accord in Kyoto, Japan

World temperature departure from normal
Compared with 1901-2000 average



SOURCES: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UN, IPCC, IEA, press reports, National Climatic Data Center, Vital statistics 2008, Vital Statistics 2009, National Geographic, Global Warming, The Weather Makers, Living Green, Our Changing Planet, Vanishing Worlds, Monocle, Wake up and smell the planet, Hopenhagen.org, BBC, MSNBC, Graphic News, Associated Press, Reuters, World Bank, Australian Government