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Topic: The Future of Mankind In A Global Warming Perspective

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Essay.

"We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to". This is an infamous quote by environmental activist Terri Swearingen. This quote not only highlights the urgency of global warming and the resultant climatic changes, but also warns to take immediate and tangible actions to save the planet. Global warming has indeed become a phenomenon which requires immediate attention and major steps towards its mitigation. The melting of glaciers, rising sea levels, increase in floods and droughts, widespread wildfires are all the effects of global warming and are projected to increase at a rapid speed in coming decades according to credible organisations and scientists. ^{However,} It is important to note the human centrality in this issue. It is in mankind's ^{hands either} to collectively cooperate and solve this problem for a better, prosperous and healthy planet for themselves and for future generations or, cause the destruction of this planet due to sustained negligence which will result in resource conflicts, uninhabitability of the planet,

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economic backwardness and ever widening North-South Gaps. Keeping in mind, all of these arguments we can clearly state that the future of mankind in context of global warming hinges on the choice between collective cooperation or sustained negligence.

To begin with, it is extremely important to address the human centrality of the issue of global warming. There is absolutely no doubt about the fact that global warming is essentially a natural ^{greenhouse effect} phenomenon. The Earth's atmosphere traps some of the outgoing infrared radiations, keeping the Earth warm.

However the recent spike in global warming phenomenon is not natural in any case.

Specially the rapid rise of the phenomenon is primarily due to anthropogenic means and activities. It is caused by human activities like rapid burning of fossil fuels, industrial agriculture, ever increasing deforestation, smoke from cars and factories, urbanization and overconsumption. All of these are human induced. In conclusion, it is evident that global warming may be

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caused by some natural processes but human activity has exacerbated the issue beyond anticipation. Hence it is for mankind to find credible solutions to this problem.

Speaking of solutions, the importance of collaborative action in the form of cooperation can not be understated. This collaboration, in its nature, can comprise of all aspects of human life like social, economical, political, cultural, administrative and technological. So, let us dive deeper into these collaborative actions and see what the future of mankind would look like under these circumstances.

Socio-cultural Awakening of Mankind holds grave importance with regards to collective action. If mankind collaborates on creating awareness through various tangible and intangible sources, the problem of global warming can be mitigated to a great extent. To penetrate the minds of people is not an easy task but with collaborative action via civil society organisations, media sources like television, radio, newspapers and social media, the task can become quite easy. A lot of commendable work is

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already being done in this regard. There are multiple school activities and university degrees offered on environmental awareness. Youth activism across the globe has had widespread positive implications on awareness campaigns. Campaigns like Go Green, Save Water Save Lives and Recycle have made tremendous progress. Several media houses like Al-Jazeera and BBC often highlight climate injustices. Hence we can say that all of these sources are playing an important role in socio-cultural awakening for global warming.

Economically sound future for all can be another fruit of labour done for mitigating global warming and related phenomena. If there is collaborative effort between all sections of society, it can help to reduce economic losses caused by global warming. As we know that global warming causes huge economic losses especially in climate vulnerable countries in the form of job and ultimately GDP losses. One such example is India. The economy of this country is highly dependent on heat exposed labor which produces 50 percent of GDP for the country.

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Due to extreme weather and heat conditions, caused by global warming, India's economy is at great risk. According to McKinsey Global Institute report, by 2030, heat-related labor disruptions could place 2.5-4.5% of India's GDP at risk. which can only be recovered by sped-up adaptation measures by collaborative measures. This evidence clearly suggests that mankind can ensure a sound economic future only because of collective action.

Furthermore, mankind can collaborate on green energy usage and one of its significant steps is decarbonising the grid. This step essentially means to switch fossil fuels with cleaner energy sources like hydro, solar and wind energy. This effort has already started to materialize in many regions of the world. Regional organisations like ASEAN have taken bold measures in this regard. The ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) Phase 1 serves as a strategic blueprint for enhancing regional energy connectivity and market integration, while aligning with the transformative changes brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). This program focuses on connectivity and cleaner energy

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alternatives for a prosperous future. Due to this initiative renewable energy made up 13.9% of total energy by 2018. The target is 23% by 2025. The statistics look promising and encouraging for countries which are striving to decarbonise their grids. Hence, we can say that green energy usage is mutually beneficial for all and provides significant measures for collaboration on green energy usage.

Moreover, improved, advanced and better resilience capability to global warming is another collaborative effort to cater to growing global warming challenges around the world. Better resilience here can mean better and improved infrastructure, sound mitigation and adaptation measures and early warning systems. All of these can reduce global warming effects to a great extent. Global climate regime has long been aiding countries in this regard by various means. These means include technological assistance, financial help via green climate fund and carbon trading. One such initiative is the Cool Coalition global partnership under the framework of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC.

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"Cool Coalition" 2020 recognizes cooling access—particularly sustainable and equitable cooling—as a crucial part of climate adaptation infrastructure. Under this initiative 10+ countries pledged to cut cooling emissions by 2050. Hence, in this manner, with many more initiatives of collaborative efforts like these, humanity can ensure a prosperous future in context of global warming.

Another important effort to combat this growing problem of global warming is via sharing the responsibility through generations.

Intergenerational responsibility is crucial in dealing with this difficulty. The solutions and efforts of one generation carry a legacy for the generations to come. It is then, that coming generation's responsibility to further the cause and also providing innovations and novel solutions. Because every generation has unique problems and their own way of dealing with them. Global warming is no different, with every passing year we have advancements in technology such as Artificial Intelligence which require huge amounts of water to train their models and for cooling

data centers. Here lies the crucial role of intergenerational responsibility. Older generations bring experience and policy influence, while younger ones offer innovation and urgency. Younger generations have a responsibility not only to reduce their own emissions but also to anticipate and mitigate future threats from these technologies. Succinctly put, intergenerational responsibility is a collaborative effort which is essential to combat the challenge of global warming.

We have so far discussed that how mankind can ensure a prosperous future for themselves and coming generations via collective effort. But it is equally important to delve into other side of the picture which is not so bright. That side is when mankind will fall short of collaboration and work only for their vested interests. In this case of sustained negligence, the future of mankind appears grim and bleak.

The initial consideration for sustained negligence is that when humans do not pay heed to drastic climatic conditions caused by global warming, it results in the destruction

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of natural habitats of all life forms. The rising sea levels bring about floods. These floods, when strong enough, can completely obliterate human habitats. The 2022 floods in Pakistan are a prime example of this where millions of people were displaced from their homes according to WHO reports. The destruction of their homes caused two fold problems. First they had to be relocated somewhere else and secondly they had to be provided with all the basic facilities. Animal habitats are famously known to be destroyed by global warming. One prime example of this is marine iguanas who are natives of Galapagos Islands. Intensive heat in these islands severely impact their food source, the is the green algae which turns brown. Due to this reason iguana populations are increasingly becoming extinct in recent years. Both of these case studies provide ample evidence to prove that lack of coordinated effort ^{to combat global warming} can be disastrous for habitats of all life forms.

Lack of coordinated effort to tackle global warming can also create health problems and make the planet uninhabitable for human and other species. Due to global warming

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temperature sometimes rises to unprecedented levels. This causes massive changes in precipitation levels. According to WHO report, temperature and precipitation changes enhance the spread of vector-borne diseases.

Without preventive actions, deaths from such diseases may rise to 700,000 annually.

Unfortunately, not much attention is being paid to this cause especially in the climate-vulnerable developing and underdeveloped countries.

So, we can conclude that without active and coordinated efforts towards mitigating global warming induced climatic conditions, mankind is risking the live of hundreds and thousands of people annually.

Additionally, global warming can become a direct cause of resource conflicts in the near future. Due to global warming, water bodies like rivers, lakes, seas and oceans are frequently drying up. Some of these water bodies originate in one country and flow into other countries. Which means that these water bodies are a shared resource for those countries. But as the effects of global warming are becoming more visible, and

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the water bodies are shrinking there is a trend of water conflicts between upper and lower riparian states. This is the most common trend in Asia where upper riparians like China and India frequently cause trouble for their neighbouring countries. A significant case study of this is the Indus Water Treaty signed between Pakistan and India in 1960. The waters were equally distributed between the two countries according to this treaty, but as the climatic conditions in both countries are worsening both want full resource control. India often violates the treaty by constructing dams on the river flow, which significantly impacts life in Pakistan. Countries elsewhere like in the Middle East also have major water conflicts exacerbated by global warming. Unfortunately governments of India and Pakistan are not doing much to solve the problem in totality. This negligent behaviour has put both countries especially Pakistan in extreme paranoia about water scarcity and complete blockade by India in the longer run.

Subsequently, there is an upward trend of militarization of climate impacted zones

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As ecosystems are disrupted and resources become scarce or newly accessible, global warming intensifies state competition and militarization of previously stable regions. The Arctic, Sahel and South Asia are key examples of this climate-security nexus. According to NASA, The Arctic sea ice is declining and warming faster than the global average. This has led to opening up of new sea routes, untapped mineral, oil and gas reserves and greater access to fisheries. Russia has reopened Cold-War era bases, air fields, radar stations and brigades. NATO and US have also increased surveillance and naval exercises in Alaska, Norway and Greenland. As half of the countries surrounding The Arctic aren't doing much to control global warming in the region it has led to militarization and the region is becoming more conflict prone by every passing year.

• Human negligence has added to another misfortune induced by global warming. The developing and underdeveloped countries of the Global South are already paying the price for climate change which they did not bring about during industrialization. The

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industrialized North brought this hell upon these poorer and underdeveloped countries. The Global North under the global climate regime often pledges to compensate for this destruction but little progress has been made in this regard so far. The Green climate fund under this regime pledged \$100 billion but only \$12 billion has been collected so far, which is negligent compared to what these climate-hit regions have to cope against. Moreover, the carbon credits are also a sham as rich countries frequently buy them from poorer ones. This is a textbook case of how exploitative is the nature of climate regime. Negligent and selfish human behaviour is further widening this gap which is leading to erosion of such poor and fragile democracies.

To summarize it all, in the light of various statistics, case studies, reports from credible sources we can say that the future of human beings, with respect to global warming, ultimately relies in their own hands. It all depends on whether they remain mindful of their activities and their consequences and work as a progressive

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civilisation, focusing more on adaptation to global warming rather than mitigation. Others remain aloof from their shared responsibility of tackling this difficulty caused by their own questionable activities. For a prosperous and healthy future, which should be the vision of all mankind, the former is a better and only option. With consistent effort, the well-coordinated mechanisms and the right policies in place this task is very much achievable. Mankind just needs to be a little more considerate to fellow beings and all other life forms. And in this way, we can handle this very hard but achievable goal in a matter of decades.