

Turn Down the Heat!

If I were Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State and Head of the U.S. Department of State, the most important issue that I would try to take care of first is global warming.

Global warming is the warming of the Earth's temperature and is caused by greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane in the Earth's atmosphere, which trap the sun's heat. This is known as "Greenhouse effect."^[1] We need the Greenhouse effect in order to warm the Earth enough for humans to live, but there can be too much of a good thing.

Global warming due to greenhouse gases is causing the polar ice caps to melt. You might be asking, "How will that affect us?" Well, if the ice caps melt completely, scientists believe that sea levels could rise over 26 feet. If you still don't think that seems like a big deal, just ask someone who lives at sea level. Not only would it flood the land but also completely ruin the lives of the people that live there. Scientists predict that if the sea was to rise only forty centimeters near the Bay of Bengal, it would cause over 11% of the land to be flooded and 10 million people would be homeless.^[2]

Global warming is causing climate changes everywhere and everyone is affected in some way. It is specifically affecting people who need to grow crops by causing more droughts in hotter regions, like Africa and India, and colder temperatures in warm countries. These people cannot grow crops like they did before. Many die from not being able to eat or sell the food they grow, or having fresh water to drink. Droughts and floods then bring disease to those countries.

All countries contribute to global warming but the wealthy countries seem to contribute the most. As stated in a United Nations report, “The United States, for example, produces about 36% of all greenhouse gas emissions and about 25% of global carbon dioxide emissions (despite having just 4% of the world's people).”^[3] This fact makes us a very poor example to other countries.

The United States isn't the only poor example. According to The University of California, China is now one of the biggest emitters of carbon dioxide in the World.^[4] As Secretary of State, I would work with China because China is one of the main producers of greenhouse gases. Of the top 10 dirtiest cities, all ten are in China!^[5] Plus China is getting more industrialized, so it could become the dirtiest country on Earth. Also China's huge population is expected to buy

more automobiles than any other country over the next few years and that could mean way more pollution.^[6] Another reason is that China has a lot of poor people, and global warming affects poor people the most because many grow their own food and may not live near clean water and cannot afford to heat or cool their homes.

Global warming is only going to get worse and everyone needs to do their part. Each person can help out because even people like me waste more energy than they should. For example: I usually take long showers, and that wastes energy. Now that I know that, I'm going to start taking 3 minute showers. There are other ways to save energy and reduce greenhouse gases. One idea is to eat at home more, that way you don't have to drive as much. You'll produce less carbon dioxide since cars are big emitters. Another idea is to switch out old light bulbs for the new more energy efficient ones that save 70% more energy than the regular light bulbs. Although these are all good ideas for each of us to do, to make a bigger impact we need to go global.

The U.S.A. needs to set the example. As the Secretary of State, I would help to teach China about our mistakes and share what we have learned. We could export our alternative energy ideas to

China. I would share my favorite ideas like: recycling, planting more trees, and adding solar panels and windmills to homes, farms, and buildings. I would send a group of volunteers to teach the Chinese farmers to use windmills and solar power. We could even export the solar panels and windmills for free. We could help plant trees and plants to reduce carbon dioxide. Maybe China wouldn't be very happy being bossed around by the U.S., but it might help if they were given some rewards for reducing their output of greenhouse gases. We could agree to buy more of China's goods, teach about ways to help the environment at schools in China, or maybe build them a monument in their honor after they show progress in cutting greenhouse gases. My last suggestion would be that the U.S would promise to cut its emissions too.

In conclusion, if I were Secretary of State, I would try to tackle the biggest problems first. I think one of the biggest problems in the world today is global warming, and the countries contributing the most are the U.S. and China. If I could help these two countries to stop polluting, I think it would really help with global warming. Then other countries might decide to follow and that would help us all.

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