

Plenary Lecture

## **The reality of anthropogenic climate crisis: convincing a skeptical public**

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The current human-caused climate change clearly poses an existential threat to humanity and biodiversity. The time has come for scientists to make a concerted effort to reach out to the skeptical public to convince them on the reality of anthropogenic climate change, to mobilize public opinion, and to suggest possible ways to curtail it. Denial of the science behind global warming is rampant around the world. Developing economies need to balance their need for growth with mitigating the environmental catastrophes that climate change brings. Attention is also needed on the plight of wildlife in the face of a warming planet. In this plenary talk, I will address five key questions: 1) Is carbon dioxide increasing? 2) If so, is it warming the planet? 3) What is the evidence that humans are causing it? 4) What lessons can we learn from prior episodes of global warming? and, 5) What are the ways we can solve the problem? It will also cover the possible impact of future warming on island nations like Sri Lanka. The presentation will be freely made available to everyone so they can in turn spread the word and do their part to save the planet from this looming catastrophe. The talk is intended for the general public and students, while the focus is on science outreach and environmental education. Although not an expert on the intricacies and nuances of climate change, I emphasize on the role that good science communicators from any discipline can play in educating the masses and helping create an informed citizenry, so that sound, fact-based policy decisions can be made by governments around the world.

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