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The Warming of the Earth

No one knows for sure why the dinosaurs disappeared, but many theories suggest that a change in environment may have played a significant role. What do dinosaurs have in common with global warming? As a result of global warming our climate is also changing, and if we do not heed the warning of scientists, we too, could become extinct. According to a new report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Paris, “Scientists have agreed that there is 90% certainty that the burning of fossil fuels and other human activities are driving climate change.” Global warming occurs when the gasses from the burning of fossil fuels causes the gasses that are released to become trapped resulting in the greenhouse effect. If the greenhouse effect becomes stronger, it could make the Earth warmer than usual. If the earth becomes even slightly warmer than normal it may cause problems for humans, sea life and the animal kingdom.

Ironically, global warming, enhanced by human activity, is causing serious problem for people around the world. One of the problems caused by global warming is the melting of the Polar Ice Cap and glaciers. When the ice melts, the resulting water flows into the seas causing them to rise. Over the last 100 years the seas have risen 6-8 inches worldwide sometimes causing them to overflow their banks. This can lead to soil erosion and serious flooding which can cause loss of property and destruction of crops. The warming of the seas also causes storms to become more severe. The increasing number of hurricanes is blamed by some on the warmer waters which fuel the storms. The heat waves that have affected the world of late can also be traced to a warming earth. Thousands of people around the world have died from the unusually hot weather. Last, but not least, droughts have become more prevalent around the world because of global warming. The increased droughts threaten our food source. This represents a crisis for people in some parts of the world who do not have enough food to eat because they cannot grow the crops they need.

The warming water also affects sea life. Coral, which is vital to sea life, can become bleached out which causes it to die off. It is important to note that coral reefs harbor more than 25% of all known marine life. Other marine life may be affected when their habitat becomes not fit to live in and their food source disappears. According to a study conducted by Stanford’s Institute for International Studies, polar bears, walruses and seals are finding their usual homes are no longer comfortable places to live as the Arctic sea ice melts. The warmer waters are affecting their food supply, breeding and nesting habits and in some cases causing them to become endangered.

Scientists have examined about 1,200 animals of various species and have found that these animals have exhibited temperature-related changes consistent with global

warming. This is causing many species of animals and birds to migrate northward to avoid the warmer weather, and as a result, they are encountering human and man-made barriers, and other serious difficulties. When the cold-hardy arctic fox moved northward to escape the warmer weather, it ran into larger and more aggressive animals with which it could not compete. Global warming is also disrupting the natural cycle of some mammals by causing them to break hibernation sooner than normal.

In all, global warming is already having a devastating effect on the animal kingdom. We now know that humans are disrupting and increasing the natural warming of the Earth by the burning of fossil fuels. Scientists are holding global warming, at least in part, responsible for the melting of the polar ice caps, the increase in devastating storms, the loss of coral and the changing migration patterns in the animal kingdom. Due to the fact that we all exist on this planet together, the consequences for one group will ultimately affect the others. Unfortunately, According the IPCC report, even if people stopped burning the fossil fuels today, the negative effects of global warming will not be completely eliminated within the next 100 years. In conclusion, if we do not want mankind to go the way of the dinosaurs, it is going to be the responsibility of all of us, to slow down the warming of our planet.