

public sector. On the one hand underground is a substitute for corruption (bribery), and on the other hand the empirical results point more to a complementary process: Countries with more corruption and bribery have larger shadow economies.

THE GLOBAL ECOLOGICAL CATASTROPHES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Since ancient times Nature has served Man giving everything he needs: air to breathe, food to eat, water to drink, wood for building and fuel for heating his home. For thousands of years, people lived in harmony with the environment and it seemed to them that the resources of nature had no end or limit. With the industrial revolution our negative influence on Nature began to increase.

So, pollution is one of the most burning problems of nowadays. Now millions of chimneys, cars, buses, trucks all over the world exhaust fumes and harmful substances into the atmosphere. These poisoned substances pollute everything: air, land, water, birds and animals.

The greenhouse effect is unquestionably real, and is essential for life on Earth. It is the result of heat absorption by certain gases in the atmosphere (called greenhouse gases because they trap heat) and re-radiation downward of a part of that heat. Water vapor is the most important greenhouse gas, followed by carbon dioxide and other trace gases. Without a natural greenhouse effect, the temperature of the Earth would be about zero degrees F (-18°C) instead of its present 57°F (14°C).

Human activity has been increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere (mostly carbon dioxide from combustion of coal, oil, and gas; plus a few other trace gases). There is no scientific debate on this point.

Relatively cool surface and tropospheric temperatures, and relatively warmer lower stratosphere, were observed in 1992 and 1993 following the 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. The warming reappeared in 1994. A dramatic global warming, at least partly associated with the

record El Niño, took place in 1998. This warming episode is reflected from the surface to the top of the troposphere.

The problems and prospects of the blue planet interest not only scientist and futurologists, but also politicians, industry, the public – and above all, young people! There is hardly a young person who is not concerned with the preservation of our natural habitat. To recognize environmental problems and master them, to reduce and avoid environmental pollution, to discover and develop ecologically sound technologies – there are the essential building blocks for our future.

Nowadays there are many different pressure and interests groups in many countries, which try to find solutions to the problems of pollution at the national and international level. So they are groups of people with a common interest in trying to draw the public attention to environment problems, to influence the government decisions.

And there is no escape from this ecological crisis without organizing a single body dealing with the environmental problems, developing and carrying out a nationwide program of environmental protection and co-operating with international schemes.

Scientists now predict that by the year 2050 the population will be doubled what is today. The fact remains that the rate of food production fell behind population growth in many of developing countries. The annual fish catch already exceeds what the world's oceans can successfully sustain. If we go on using our natural resources at today's rates, we will have used up the intire reserves of cooper, natural gas and oil by the year 2054.

But the problem ahead lie not so much in what we use but in what we waste. What faces us is not so much a recourse crisis as a pollution crisis. The only solution is to try to change the areas of consumption, technology and population. Changes in technology must be backed by slower population growth. And it can be achieved by education in health and women's rights. And there is a little hope of reducing consumption over the next half century.