A Well-Rounded Approach to Climatology

By Harun Yahya *on* January 10, 2018

The Earth possesses a natural and balanced system that allows for self-sufficiency. Underground water sources, the elements in the soil, the ratio of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and the diversity of living organisms all combine to ensure the preservation of Earth's perfect balance: This balance never shifts unless by an outside intervention.

Think of a house; the size of the windows of the house, the thermal insulation on the walls and the amount of fuel used to keep the house warm are all attuned to ensure that the household lives under near ideal conditions. If someone breaks the windows of the house and meddles with the parameters of the heating system, these ideal conditions can no longer be maintained in the house. That's exactly the situation the Earth is in right now. The balance of the Earth has started to shift due to factors such as global warming, misuse of agricultural land and wastage.

Over the last 100 years, the average worldwide temperature has risen by 0.7 degrees. The reason for this rise is the change in the ratio of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, namely CO, CO2, NO and NO2. Greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide, heat the Earth by covering it like a giant blanket. The use of fossil fuels such as petroleum and coal, the decrease in forested lands, and the unceasing emission of exhaust gases cause greenhouse gases to accumulate in the atmosphere. According to a report, even if greenhouse gas emission to the atmosphere ceased from now on, the global temperature will continue to rise between 0.5 -1°C over the next decades, which will lead to serious consequences.

Climate change causes changes in the amount of rainfall as well as in the temperature of the air, soil and water. This, in many regions, manifests itself as abnormal weather events such as violent storms, floods, extremely high temperatures and drought. Such dramatic changes in the atmosphere are affecting agricultural lands, thus, threatening life on earth. Scientists predict that, by 2050, between 2 to 5 billion people will not have access to sufficient food due to climate change.

Droughts and floods, two indicators of climate change, lead to the loss of agricultural crops prior to harvest. The rise in temperature increases the amount of agricultural pests and requires more irrigation, which depletes underground water sources. At the same time, the impoverished soil requires more fertilizer and therefore, the ground waters become polluted. Even though all of these negative factors do not result in a complete yield loss, they do lead to an overall drop in quality and nutritional value; it becomes increasingly difficult to process and store such products. As everyone knows, with a decrease in the quantity of any product, prices increase, and it thus becomes more difficult to maintain healthy nutrition.

All these interconnected developments are extremely important, because today the income of 80% of the world's population depends on weather conditions in one way or another. Therefore, radical changes in the weather will hamper people's ability to farm

and as a result, 80% of the world will be affected by these changes.
Scientists agree that urgent measures are necessary in order to prevent any further deterioration of the natural balance and to prevent the increasing hunger problems as a result. In this regard, controlling the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is considered a priority that must be taken without further delay.
Today unfortunately, there is no general consensus on the use of biofuels as an effective way to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Even though it is argued that biofuels reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere, other research proves otherwise. Many countries today choose a product to use as biofuel and focus on cultivation of this product on the land typically used for agriculture. For example, the US prefers corn, Brazil prefers sugar cane, and Indonesia prefers the canola plant; regardless of the preferred plant to use for biofuels, the end result is the destruction of valuable forested areas to create the necessary land to grow these plants. Indonesia lost some 8.400 square kilometers of its forests in 2012 alone. This directly affects the ecological balance and therefore the quality of agricultural products used for nutrition.
When all of these negative factors are combined, what we can see as an unintended consequence is not only the loss of agricultural diversity but more importantly, the area of arable land used to grow food products shrinks rapidly. If this situation is not mitigated by governmental measures, people will end up losing access to products and the arable land they need to feed themselves in the not- too- distant future. With the decline in food production, prices will invariably rise and people on low incomes, who often spend as much as 70% of their income on food, will no longer be able to feed themselves adequately, even if they were to spend all of their earnings.
Then, is it possible to prevent this dangerous outcome and protect the world from starvation?
For this, we need to approach the issue from two different perspectives: Incentivizing methods that increase productivity in agriculture and raising people's awareness. One of the first steps to take in this regard is to encourage agricultural practices that utilize natural farming methods instead of chemicals. Additionally, agro-ecological practices that eliminate the reliance of farmers on expensive fossil fuels and industrialized seeds will also increase production by ensuring that agricultural products are healthier and of higher quality. Combined with reduced costs, farmers will be able to earn more profit and thus the accessibility of food will increase.
Today, the world's population is almost 8 billion and still increasing and 1.3 billion tons out of 4 billion tons annually produced goes to waste. it does not seem to be possible to explain the problems and the possible solutions in the world as a singular matter. The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions would not be sufficient by itself; the prevention of waste is another fundamental issue that needs to be taken into consideration urgently as well. It is our responsibility to make the world a better place to live in by directly addressing problems with definitive solutions without blaming global warming or other factors as a single cause because a multi-faceted problem requires a multi-faceted solution.

The author is a prominent Turkish writer.

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