

The Epic 2024 Election - What It Means for ESG and Sustainability Careers



February 12, 2025

Rutgers Business School - New Brunswick, NJ

Welcoming & Opening Remarks



Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Professional Practice
Executive Director,
Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation

Agenda

- 6:00 – 6:15 p.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D., Executive Director, Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation
 - James King, Senior Director, RBS Office of Career Management
- 6:15 – 6:45 p.m. Keynote Speaker
- Govi Rao, CEO, Phase Change Solutions
- 6:45 – 6:55 p.m. Remarks
- Dr. Alexander Gates, Distinguished Service Professor, Rutgers University and Author
- 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Panel Discussion
- Moderator: Erin Byrne, Distinguished Executive in Residence, Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation
 - Panelists:
 - Sam Caucci, CEO and Founder, 1Huddle
 - Rebecca Lubot, CEO and Founder, Lubot Strategies
 - Ben Glowacki, Sustainability Strategy & Market Insights, BASF Corporation,
 - Francine Chew, Head of Corporate Impact, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America
 - Mark Malek, Chief Investment Officer, Muriel Siebert & Co.
- 8:00 p.m. Raffle of Books, Post-Event Surveys, & Closing

Attendee Info

CEO
Director
Partner
ESG Officer/Project Manager
Sustainability Leader/Manager
Supplier Diversity & Inclusion
Principal
Student
Founder

Goldman Sachs
Chevron
Rutgers Business School
Novo Nordisk
Johnson & Johnson
KPMG
Kenvue

Corporate Social Innovation (CSI) A Positive Way Forward

We recognize that today's societal needs are profound, & believe business has untapped potential to address them.



What is ESG?

Managing Inside Out and Outside In Risks and Opportunities



Environmental: how the company impacts the environment, how the environment impacts the company, and how we can proactively reduce the negative impacts and leverage the opportunities.



Social: how a company manages relationships with stakeholders (employees, clients, suppliers, communities) and what impact the company has on society and culture.



Governance: the system of practices, controls, and procedures your company adopts in order to define its purpose, govern itself, make effective decisions, comply with the law, and meet the needs of its stakeholders.



The Evolution of ESG



ESG is often used interchangeably with “sustainability” and “corporate responsibility.” Priorities and strategies vary by company and often include these topics:

Environmental:

- Climate Risks
- Carbon emissions
- Energy efficiency
- Pollution and waste management
- Use of natural resources
- Clean energy and technologies
- Biodiversity

Social:

- Human capital
- Labor relations and working conditions
- Diversity agenda
- Employee safety
- Product safety
- Human rights
- Child labor

Governance:

- Compliance with law
- Business Ethics
- Risk tolerance
- Corruption and bribery
- Transparency
- Board diversity
- Compensation policies

ESG goes Mainstream Facing Backlash

“The range of ESG reporting frameworks, Standards, requirements and voluntary initiatives is continuing to expand.”
Has ESG Gone Mainstream?
Ethical Corporation, 2020

Tales of ESG's Demise are greatly exaggerated.

ESG is Under Attack. How Should Your Company Respond?
Andrew Winston

“ESG has become more important and mainstream, even in the US, over the last few years.”
Has ESG Gone Mainstream?
Ethical Corporation, 2020

“There is a broader mandate to address environmental, social, and governance issues beyond the historical bounds of ‘sustainability.’”

Amy Senter, Kellogg Company

“Green-hushing” – speaking less about sustainability – will continue to grow in 2025.

“Sustainability professionals and Scientists are advocating for complete economic system transformation towards science-based targets, multi-capital accounting and equitable, just, context-based allocation of resources.”

Transitioning to Green

Financial media warns that the “lack of regulatory restrictions that police what products can be labeled as ESG lets advisors take advantage of investor interest in ‘socially conscious’ products.”

Wagner, 2021

“Facing Sustainability Backlash with Strength & Strategy”

by Solitaire Townsend, Forbes, Feb. 6, 2025

1. Don't Panic
2. Adapt and Reinvent
3. Keep Going – No Matter What
4. Celebrate – Loudly and Proudly



<https://www.forbes.com/sites/solitairetownsend/2025/02/06/facing-sustainability-backlash-with-strength--strategy/>

Welcoming Remarks



James King,
Assistant Professor of Professional Practice
Senior Director, Office of Career Management

Rutgers 4 R's

Resilient Resourceful Responsible
Reinventing

Keynote Speaker



Govi Rao
CEO
Phase Change Solutions

**"What you spend
years building may be
destroyed overnight;
build it anyway."**

— Mother Teresa



**"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a
stone across the water to create many ripples"**

Setting the Context amidst Global Challenges

- Increasing Natural Disasters caused by Climate Change
- Geopolitical Pressures
- Nationalism
- 5th Industrial Revolution





Macro trend analysis and Workforce strategies from:

1000 Leading Global Organizations/employers

Representing 14 million workers

Across 22 different industries

From 55 economies around the world

Major drivers expected to shape and transform the global labor market by 2030

- 1. Broadening Digital Access/Industry 5.0**
- 2. General Economic Slowdown**
- 3. Climate Change Mitigation**
- 4. Geoeconomic Fragmentation & Geopolitical Tension**
- 5. Demographic Shifts**

Nearly 40% of today's skills will need to be updated or replaced by 2030!

Davos 2025: Rebuilding Trust

Over 130 countries; 3,000 attendees; Over 50 heads of state;
Hundreds of other top governmental leaders.

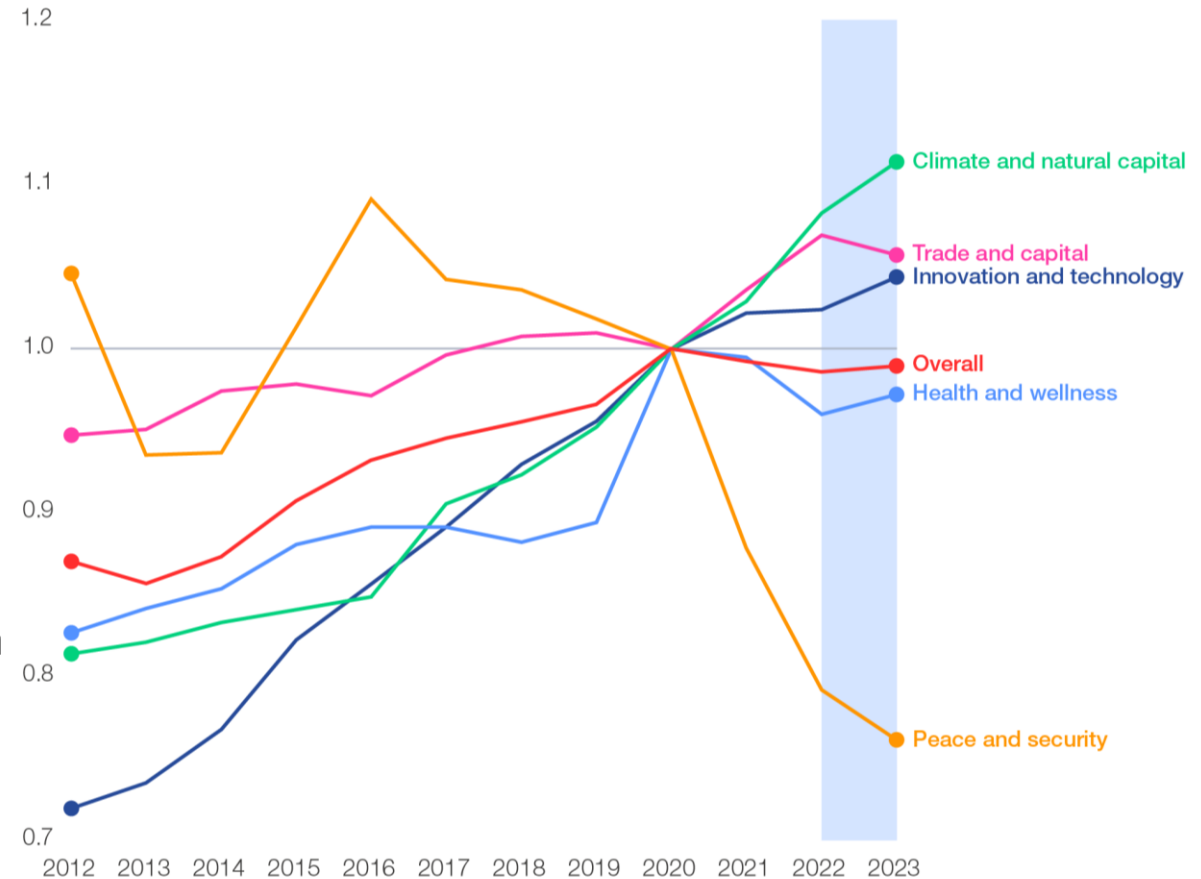
1. Reimagining Growth
2. Safeguarding the Planet
3. AI as a Driving Force for the Economy and Society
4. Investing in People

Global Cooperation is being reframed in today's context

Global Cooperation Barometer over time

Room for Optimism!

- **Global cooperation** is higher than pre-pandemic levels but has flatlined over the past three years.
- Cooperation around **climate and natural capital** remains a brighter spot across the five pillars.
- **Digitization** of the global economy continues to drive increased cooperation in the innovation and technology



Source: Aggregation of 41 metrics, McKinsey & Company analysis.

Global Cooperation Needs Reframing – in Public & Private Sectors

Key Trends



- **AI Everywhere**
 - Artificial Intelligence was the most frequently heard word.
 - Amidst excitement, there's a collective call for governance and ethical frameworks.
 - Automation + Robotics Driving AI's flywheel
 - Quantum Computing hasn't hit scale, so it's flying under the radar.
- **Energy Revolution is well Underway**
 - Cleantech, nuclear energy, and ocean-based solutions\
 - Fun fact: By 2030, 20% of global energy may be consumed by AI/data centers.
- **Healthcare Breakthroughs**
 - Longevity is real—many alive today could hit 100+ years
 - The real challenge - Mental health.
- **Demographics Dilemma**
 - With aging populations in Europe and Asia, replacement rates are dropping.
 - Consumption will need longevity to avoid falling off a cliff.

An abundance of Opportunities for Individuals !

About 59% of the global workforce will need reskilling by 2030!

A Major challenge for Organizations

Key Capabilities shaping the Future of Work

1. **Resilience**
2. **Analytical/Critical Thinking**
3. **Adaptability & Agility**
4. **Empathy & Social Influence**
5. **Technological Literacy/Learning Rate**

An abundance of Opportunities for Individuals !



What are the key (Top 10) skills that'll shape the future

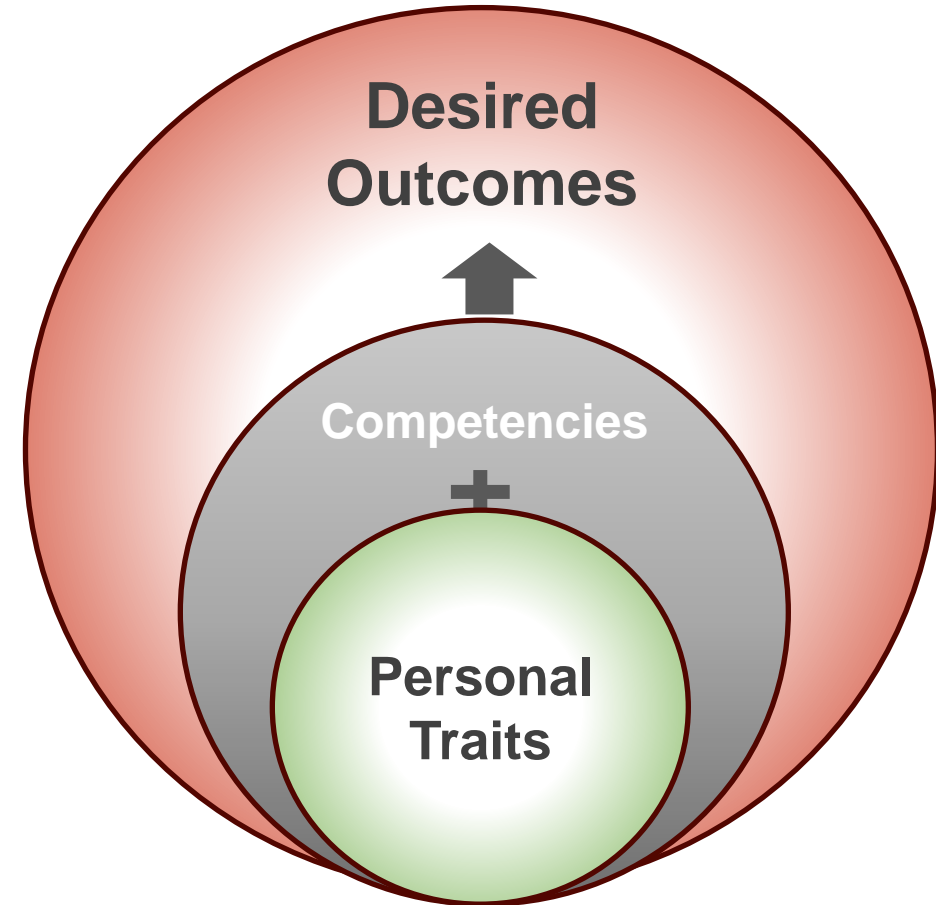
1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility

**The future of work is all
about adapting, being
flexible and
Constantly learning**

Reskilling & Upskilling to Build Organizational Capability

Individually, and as a team, we must focus on our way of working to achieve our desired outcomes

- **Our personal traits**
- **The Five critical competencies**
- **The desired outcomes**



Desired Outcomes



Vision

PCS leaders are expected to develop, both individually and collectively, a compelling picture of the future. We must ensure our team members and other relevant stakeholders are motivated, inspired and driven by your view of the company's mission and strategic objectives.

Innovation

As leaders, we must **elicit creativity** from all stakeholders and **be a model for others** on our team, in creative ways we approach and resolve problems. Also, you need **to provide the means for creativity** to be applied through new solutions, systems and methods.

Customer Excitement

Adding value to our customers is the cornerstone of our sprint focused activity for the next 24 months. As a leader in PCS, you **must deliver satisfaction** to our customers.

Trust

We must establish **both personal and professional credibility**. All stakeholders and team members should trust that you will **act with honesty and integrity**, and they **should feel confident about your capabilities**.

Organizational Stewardship

As a good steward of the organization, you are **expected to manage resources** in the interest of all our key stakeholders – **owners, employees, customers and the community**. PCS will be strengthened and continuously improved through your **consistent stewardship**.

Results

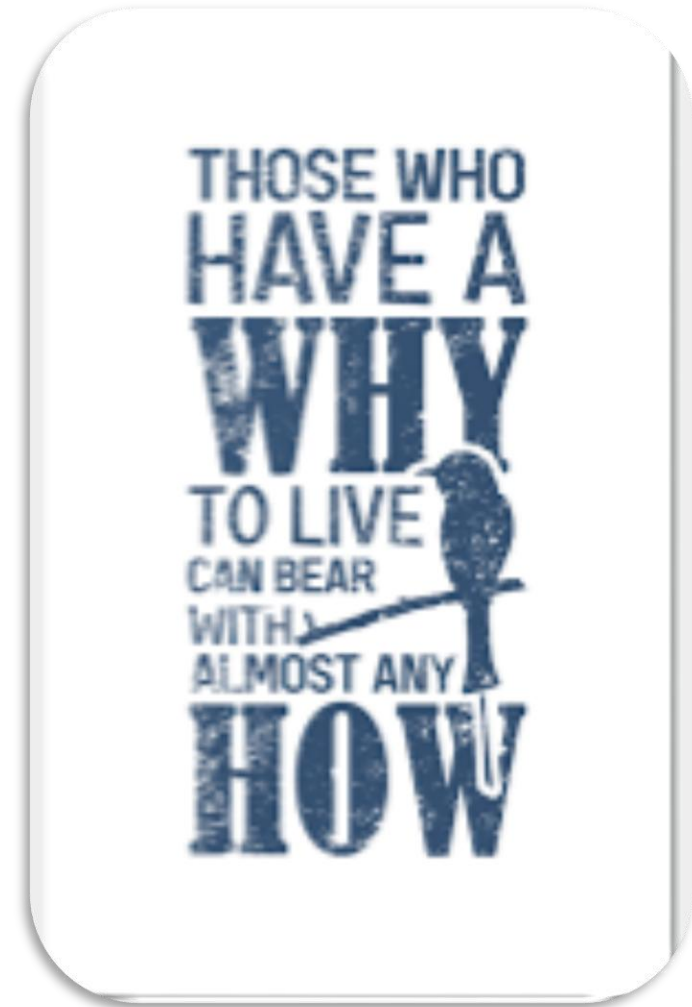
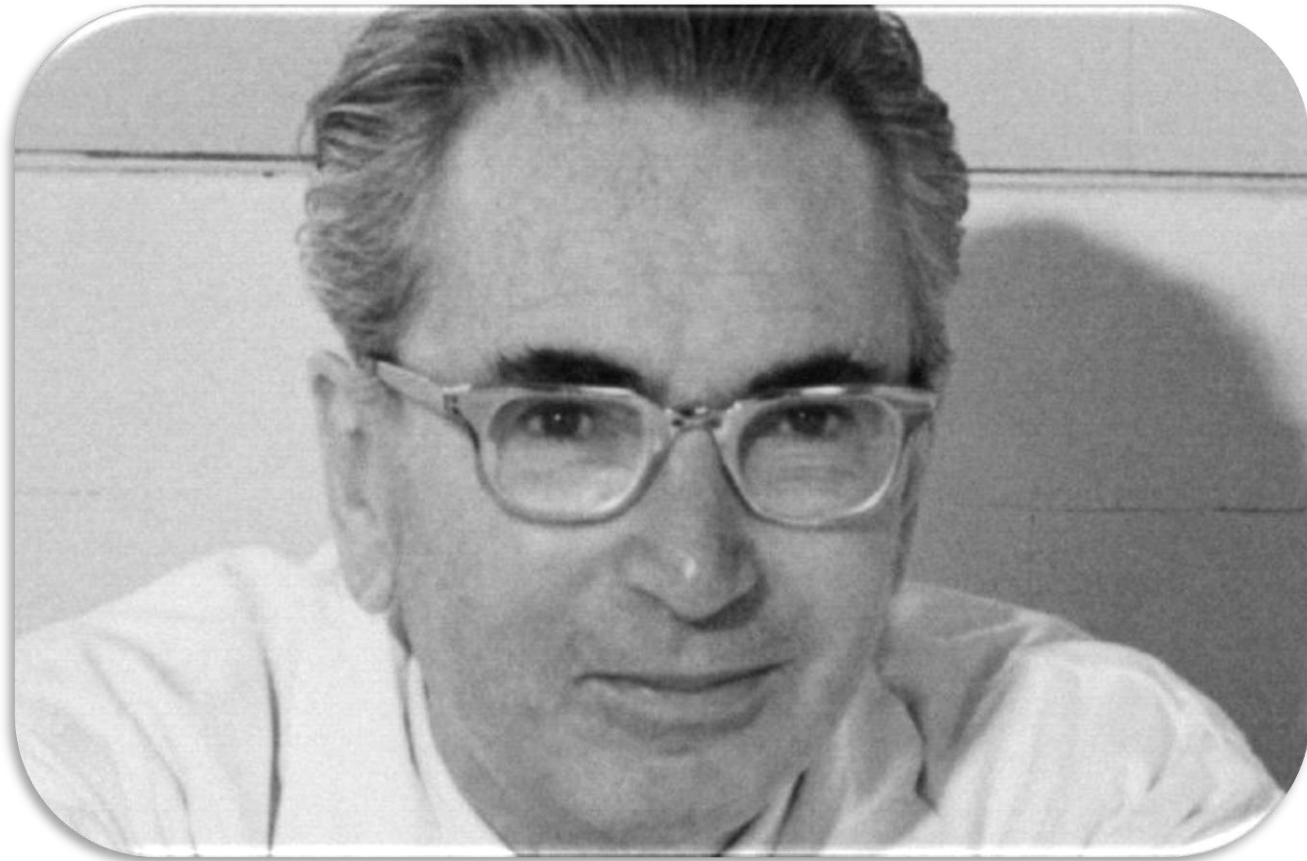
To succeed in our PCS 3.0 sprint, we **must have significant impact**. You are expected to **measure** results as well as **achieve required outcomes**.

The Five Competencies Critical for Our Sprint

Competencies are a collection of related **knowledge, skills and abilities**, that enable a **person, team** or an **organization** to achieve desired **outcomes**.

- Entrepreneurial Mindset
- Financial & Business Acumen
- Collaboration & Communication
- Creative Problem Solving
- Bias for Action





Viktor Frankl, quoting Nietzsche in *Man's Search for Meaning*

Remarks



Dr. Alexander Gates
Distinguished Service Professor,
Rutgers University
Author

How Past Victories Over Pollution Can Help Us Defeat the Climate Crisis

ALEXANDER GATES

EARTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY- NEWARK



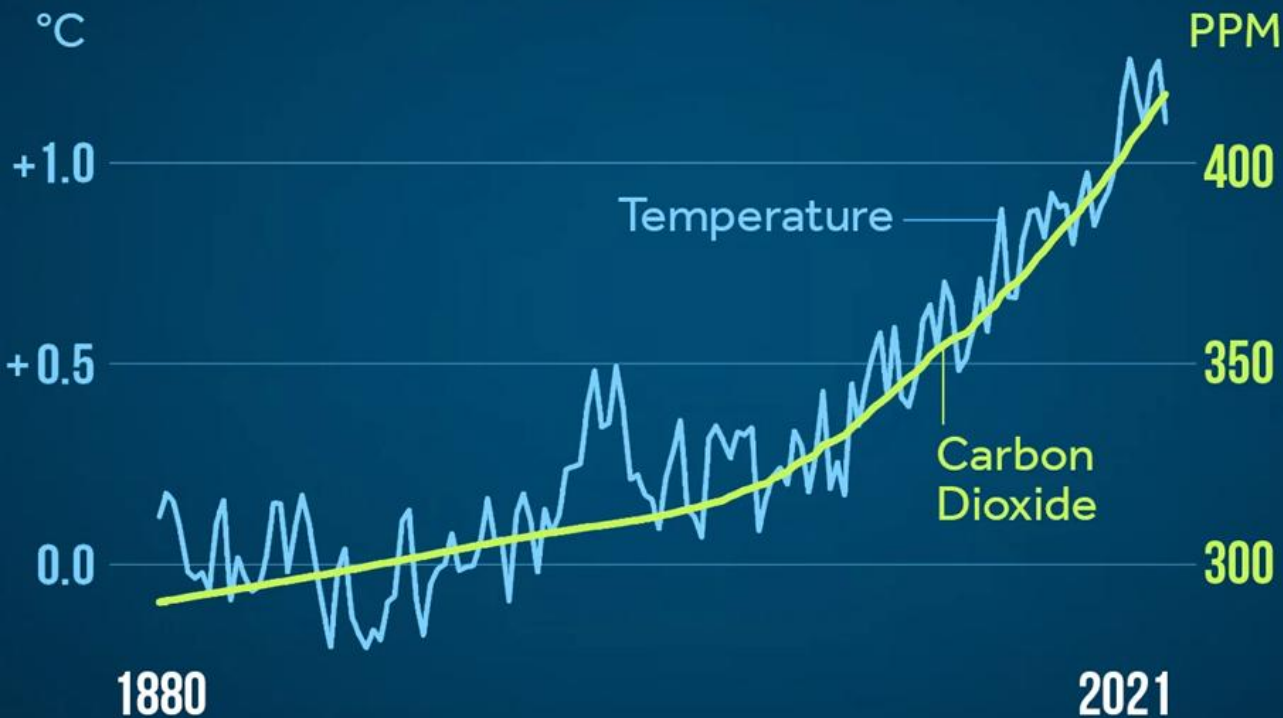
CONFUSION OVER CLIMATE CHANGE

MISINFORMATION, DISINFORMATION, UNDIGESTED SCIENCE

- DENIAL
- CLIMATE CHANGE IS NATURAL SO NO WORRY
- CLIMATE CHANGE IS ANTHROPOGENIC BUT NO WORRY
- CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL BUT ALL WE CAN DO IS SLOW IT DOWN
- WE ARE ALL DOOMED

CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL AND IT IS FROM FOSSIL FUEL USAGE

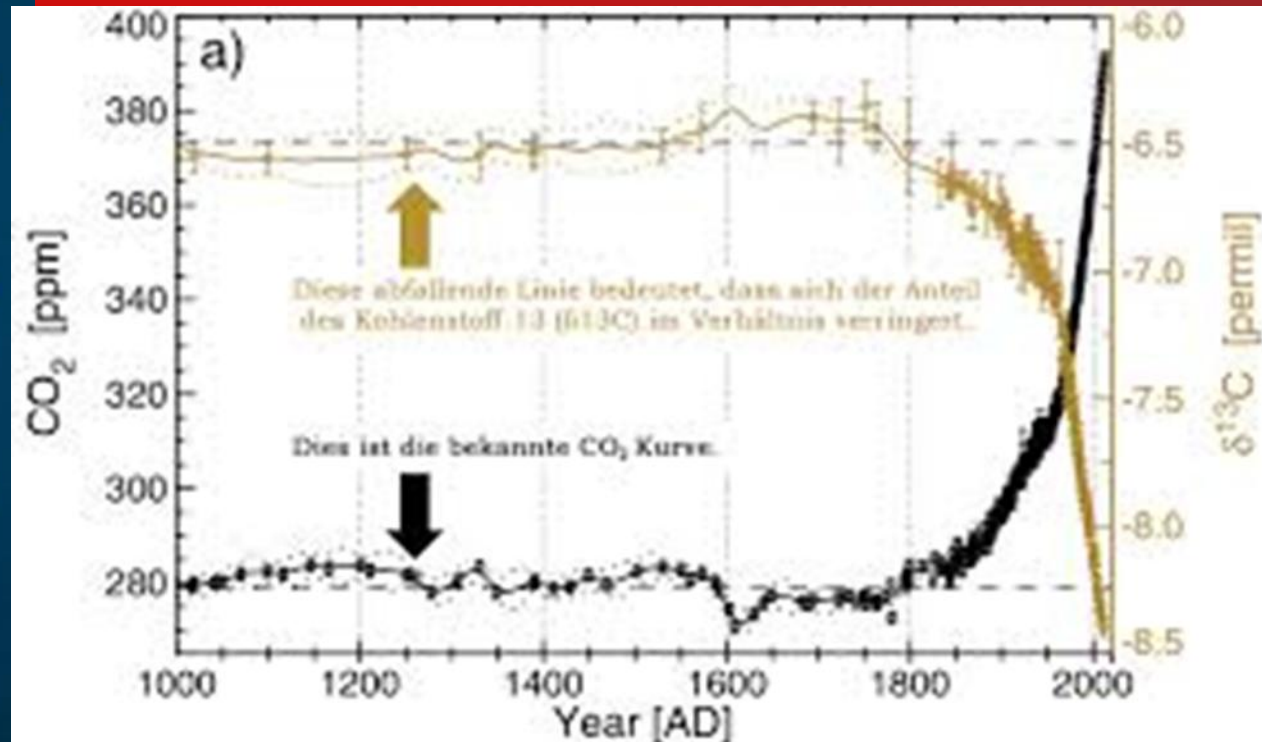
TEMPERATURE & CARBON DIOXIDE



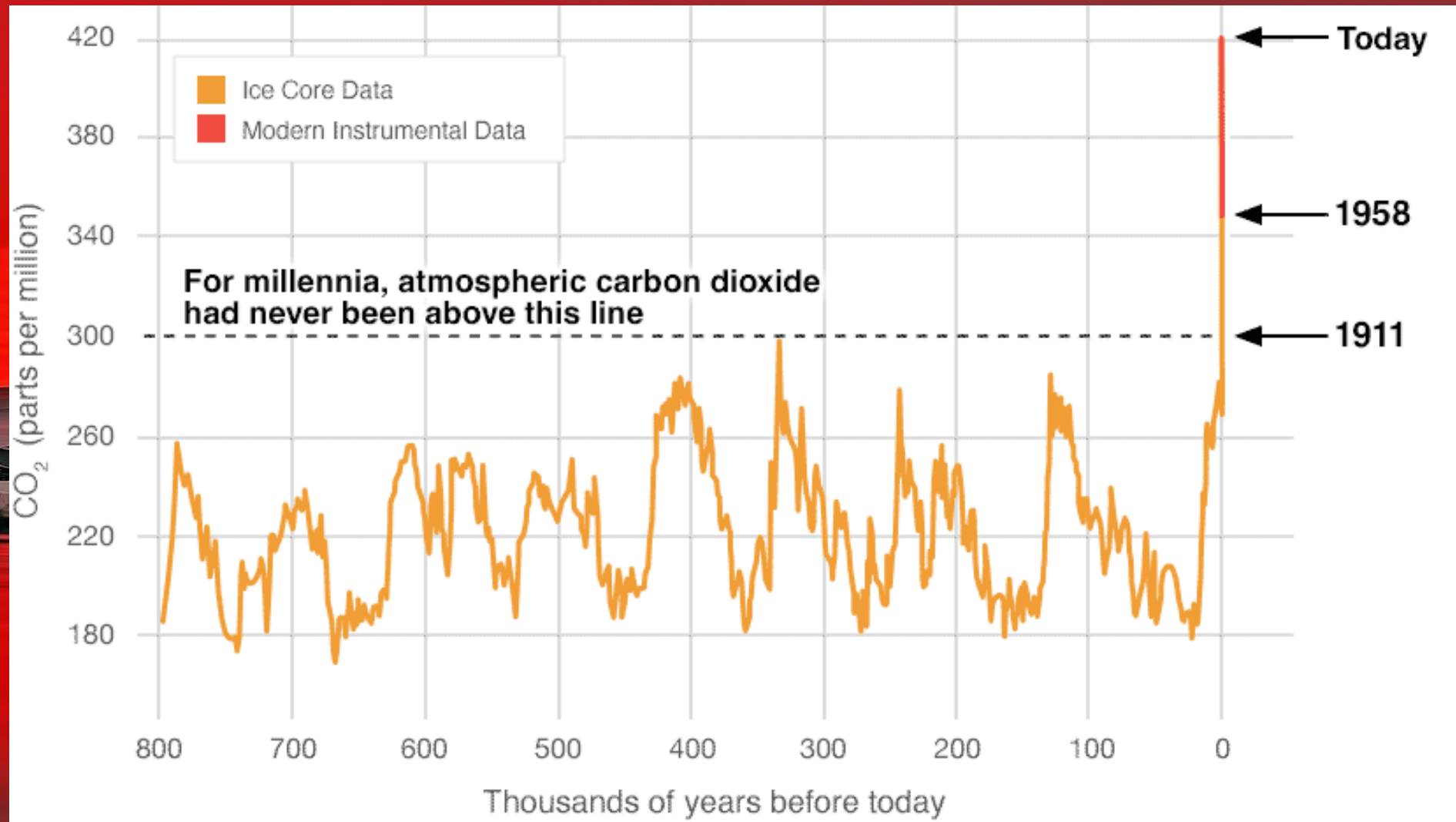
Global temperature anomalies averaged and adjusted to early industrial baseline (1881-1910)
Source: NASA GISS, NOAA NCEI, ESRL

CLIMATE CENTRAL

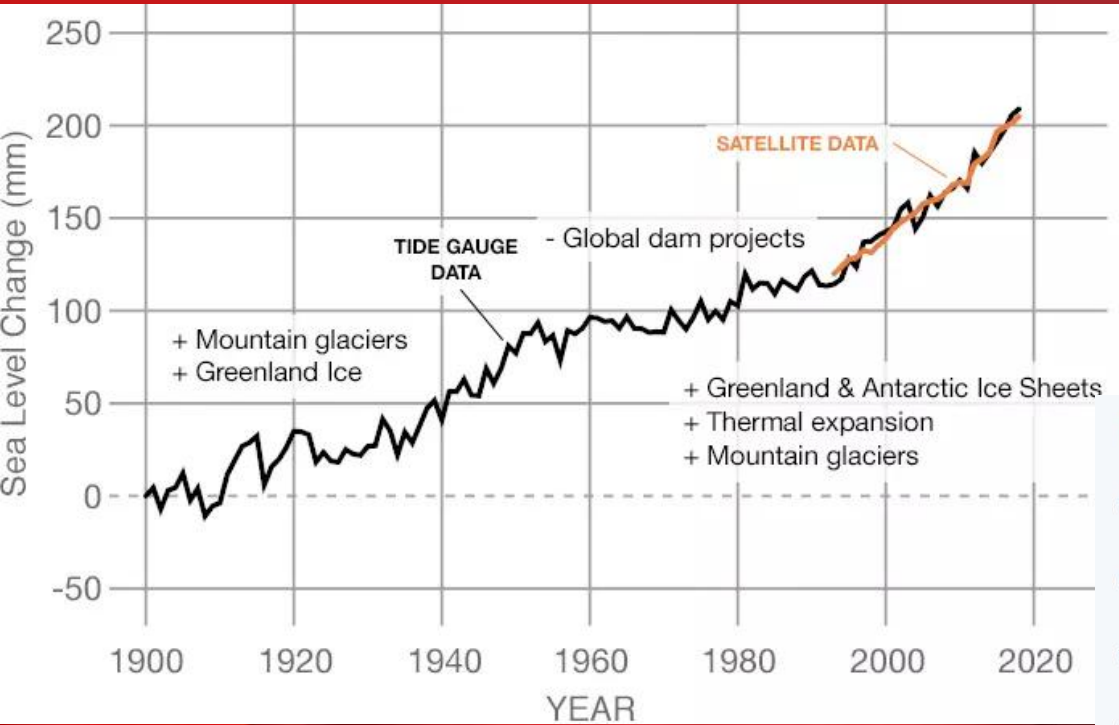
C13/C14 RATIOS SHOW IT IS FROM FOSSIL FUEL



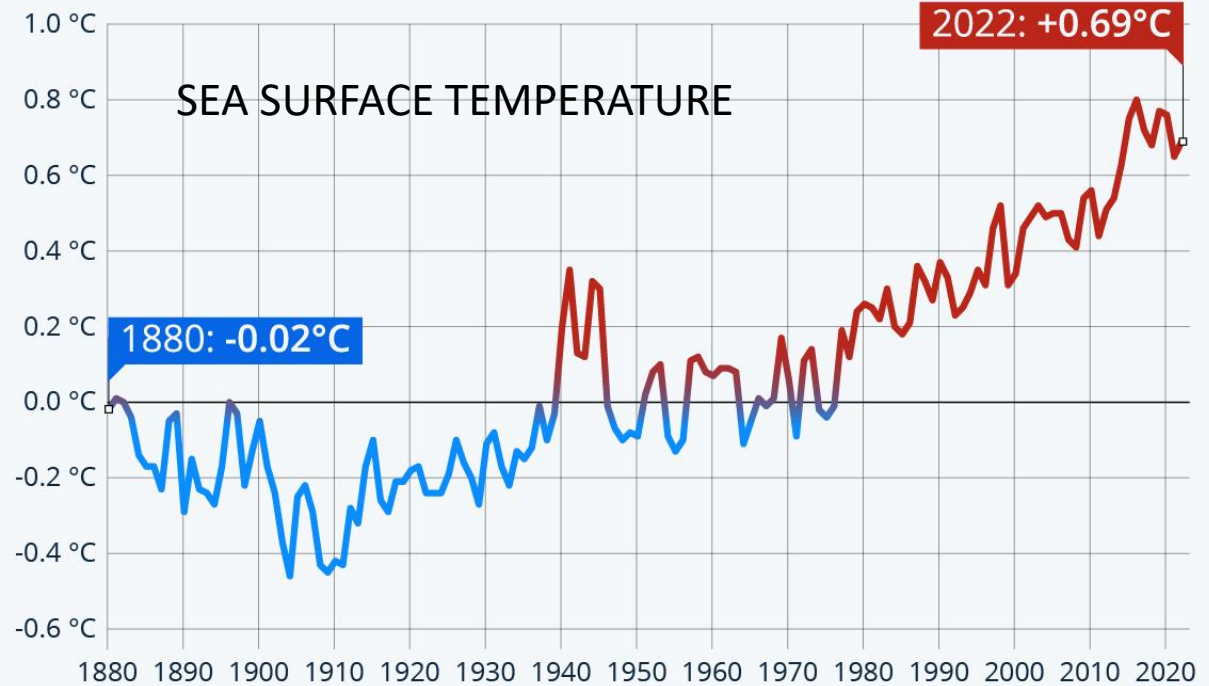
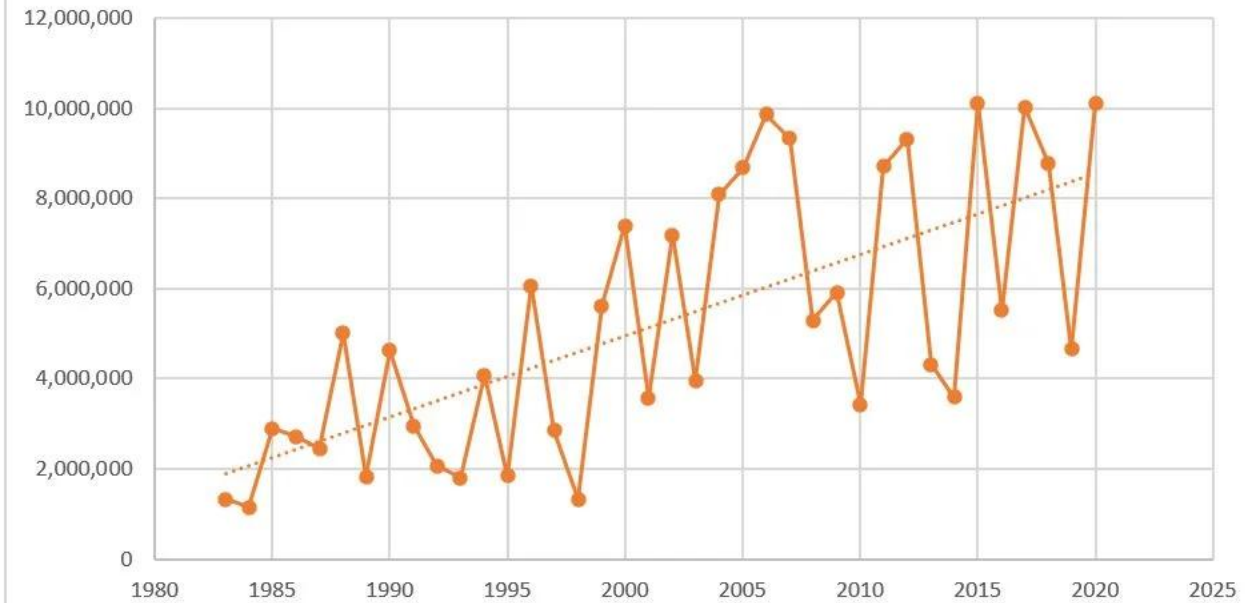
IS IT ABNORMAL? CO₂ FOR THE PAST 800,000 YEARS



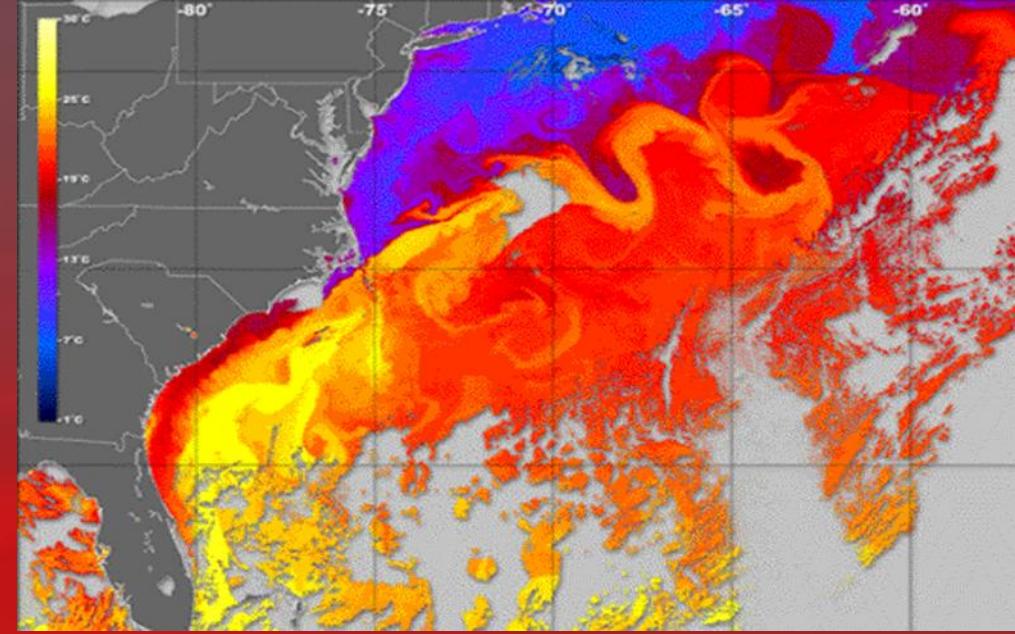
WHAT CAN GO WRONG?



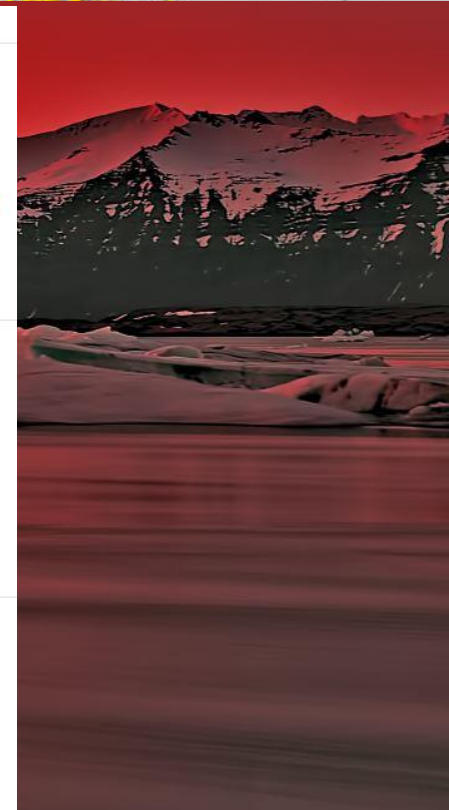
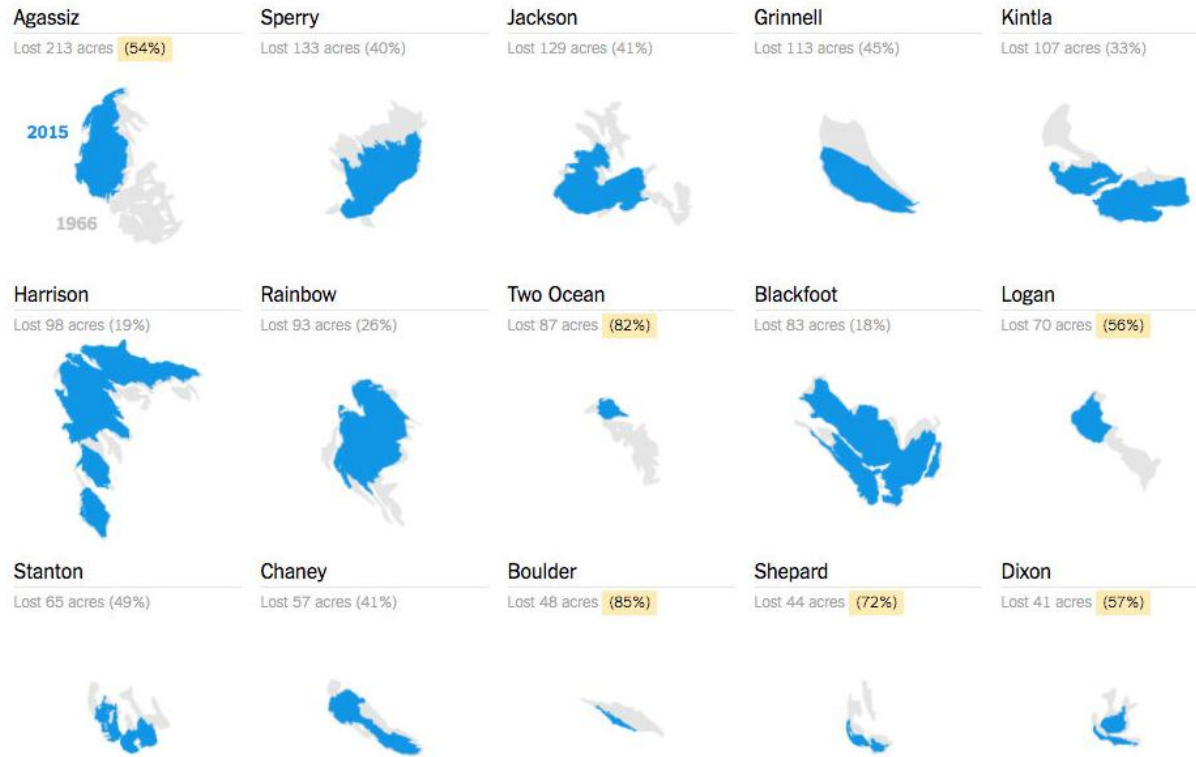
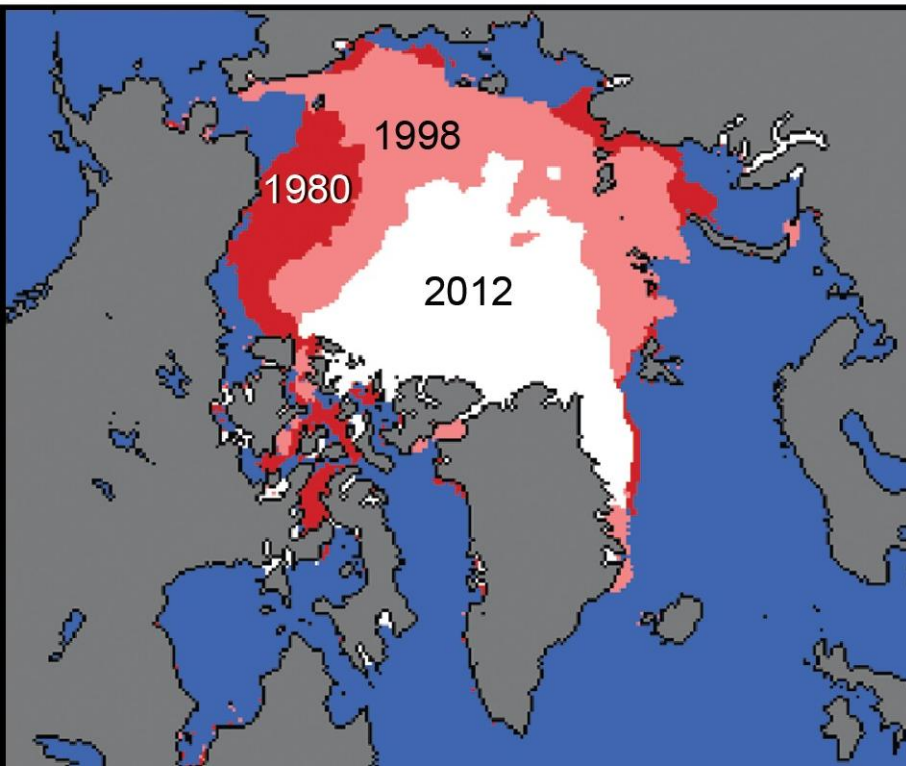
Number of Acres Affected by Wildfires in the US Since 1983



MELTING GLACIERS CONTINENTAL AND ALPINE INCREASE HURRICANES



Arctic Sea Ice Loss



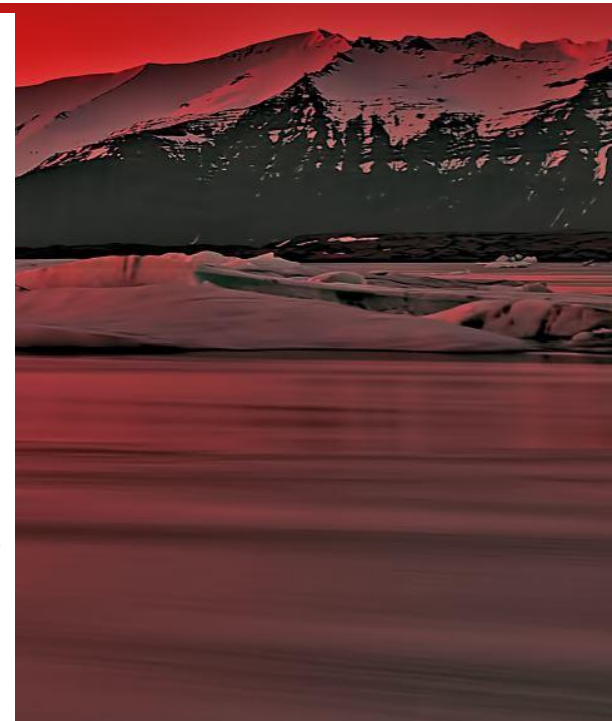
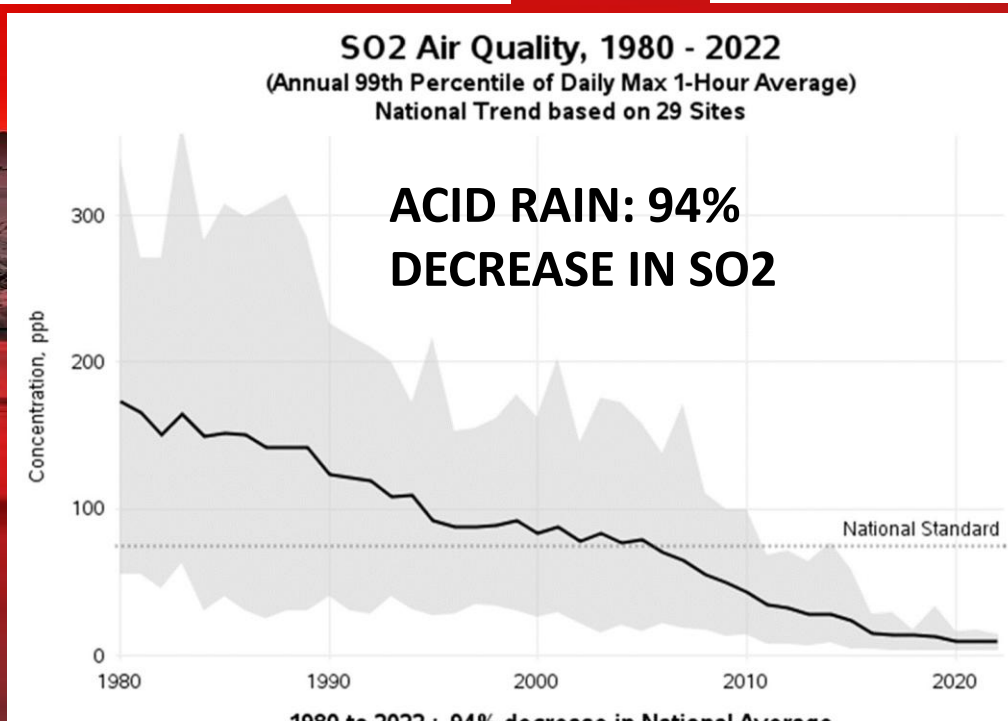
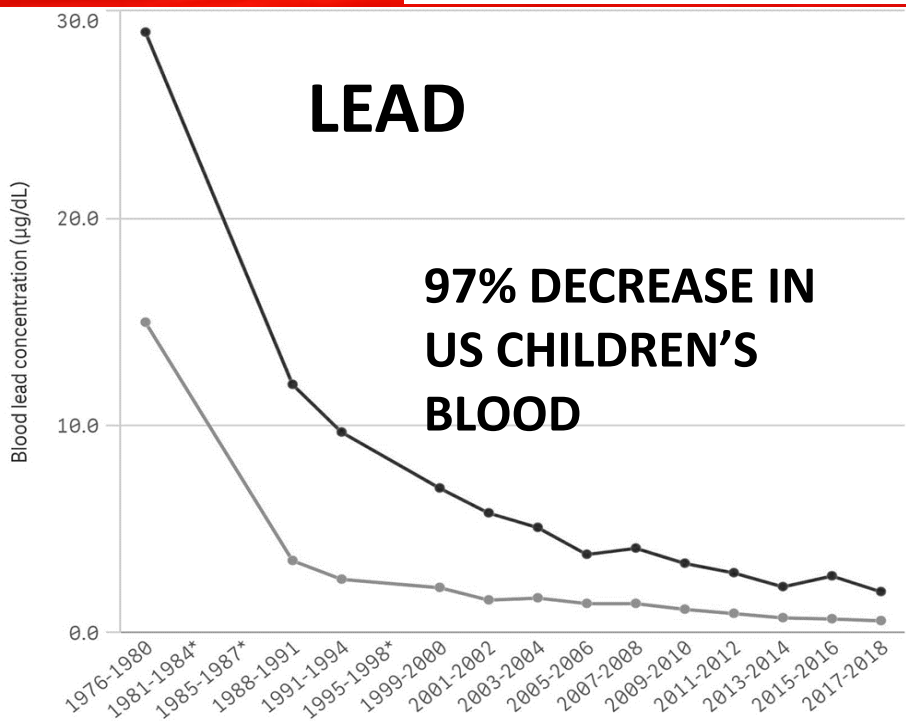
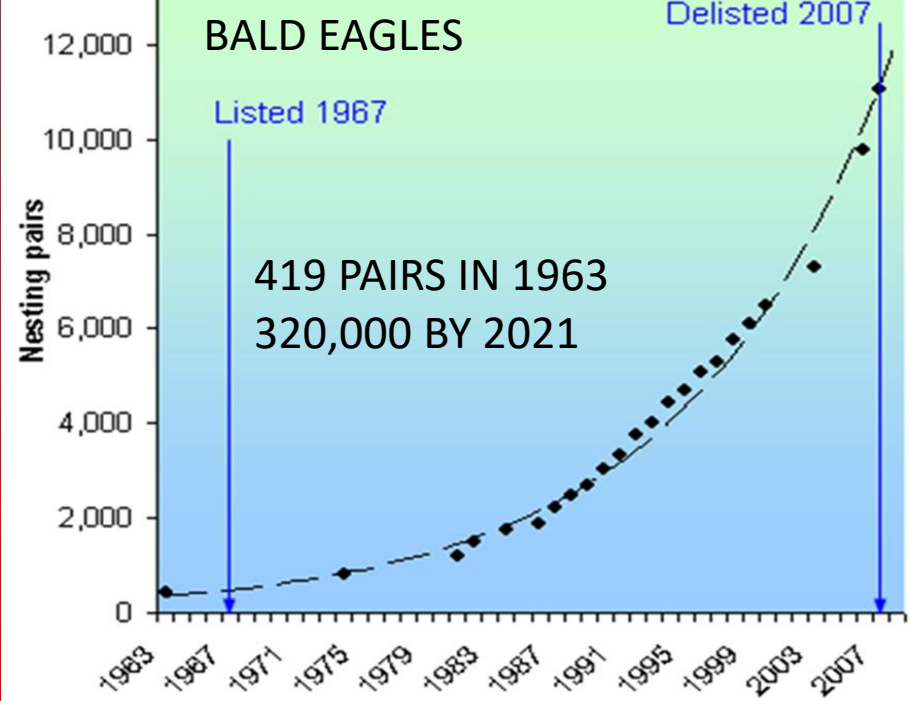
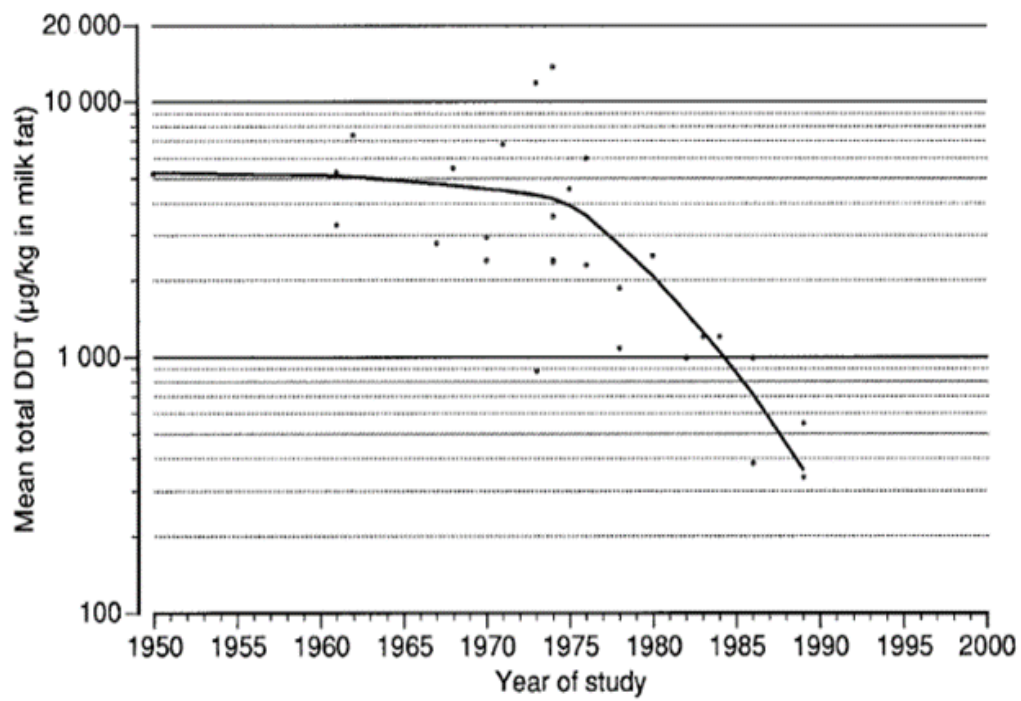
DANGEROUS POLLUTION ISSUES WE DEFEATED

CO2 IS A POLLUTANT

- DDT, RACHEL CARSON
- LEAD, PAT PATTERSON
- SO2 AND ACID RAIN



**DDT IN MILK (LOG SCALE)
94% DECREASE**

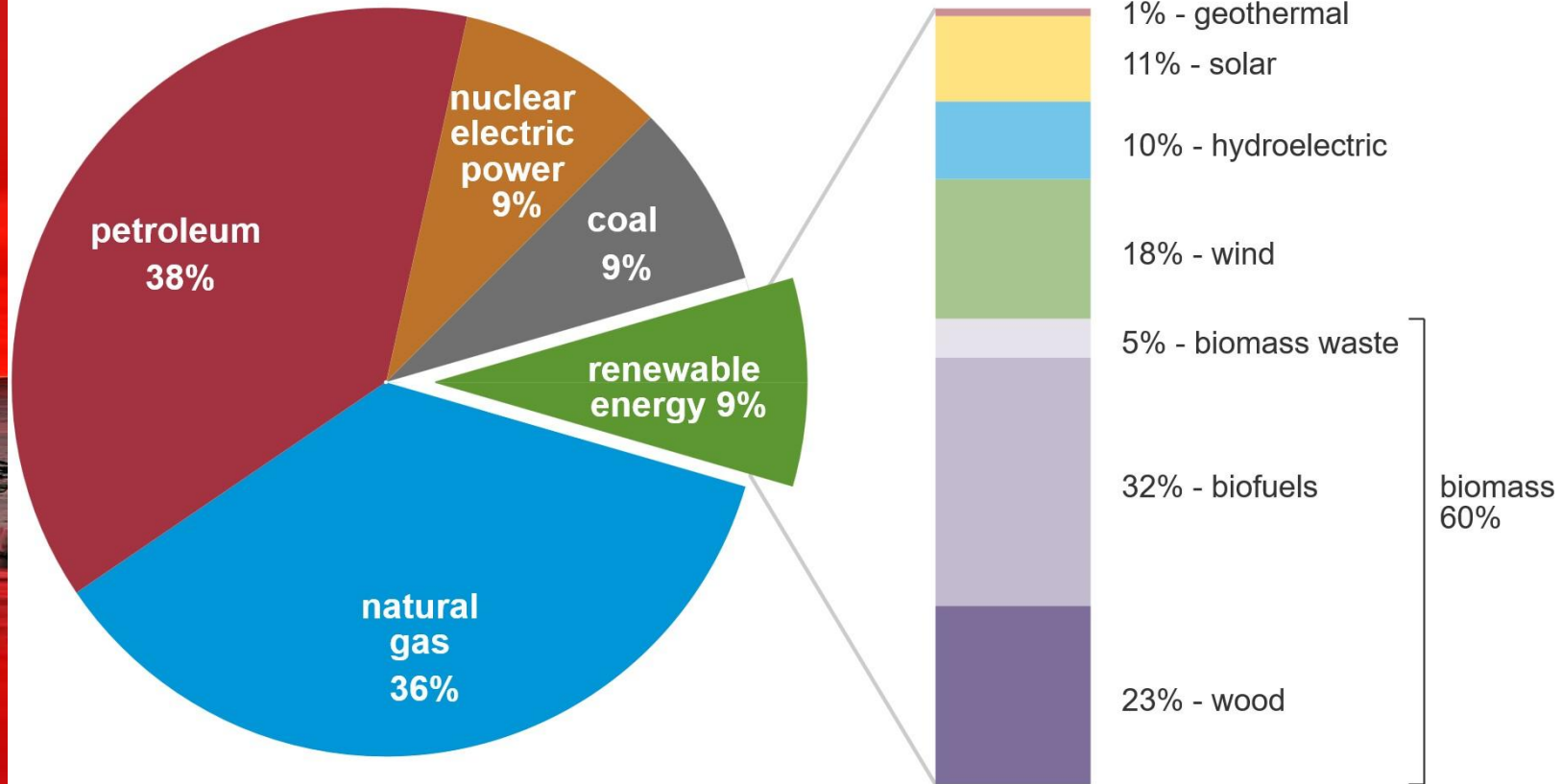


WHAT IS THE STARTING POINT?

U.S. primary energy consumption by energy source, 2023

total = 93.59 quadrillion
British thermal units

total = 8.24 quadrillion British thermal units



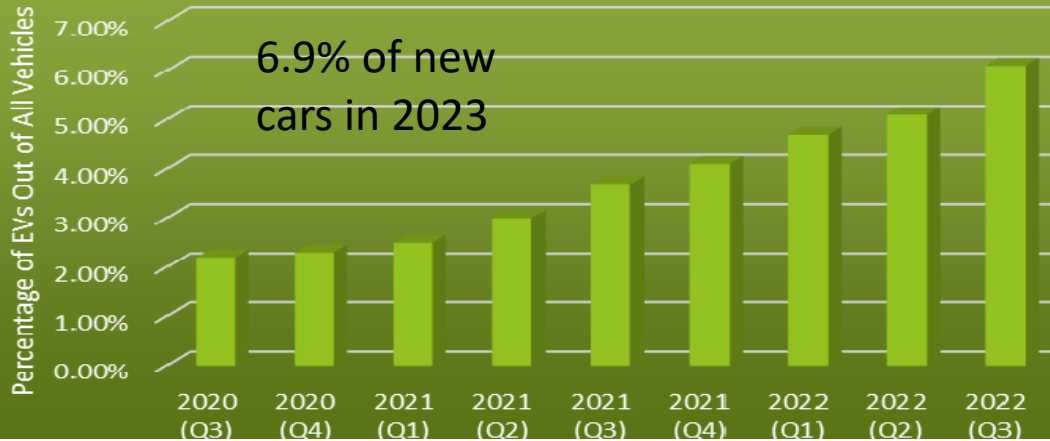
Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, Table 1.3 and 10.1, April 2024, preliminary data



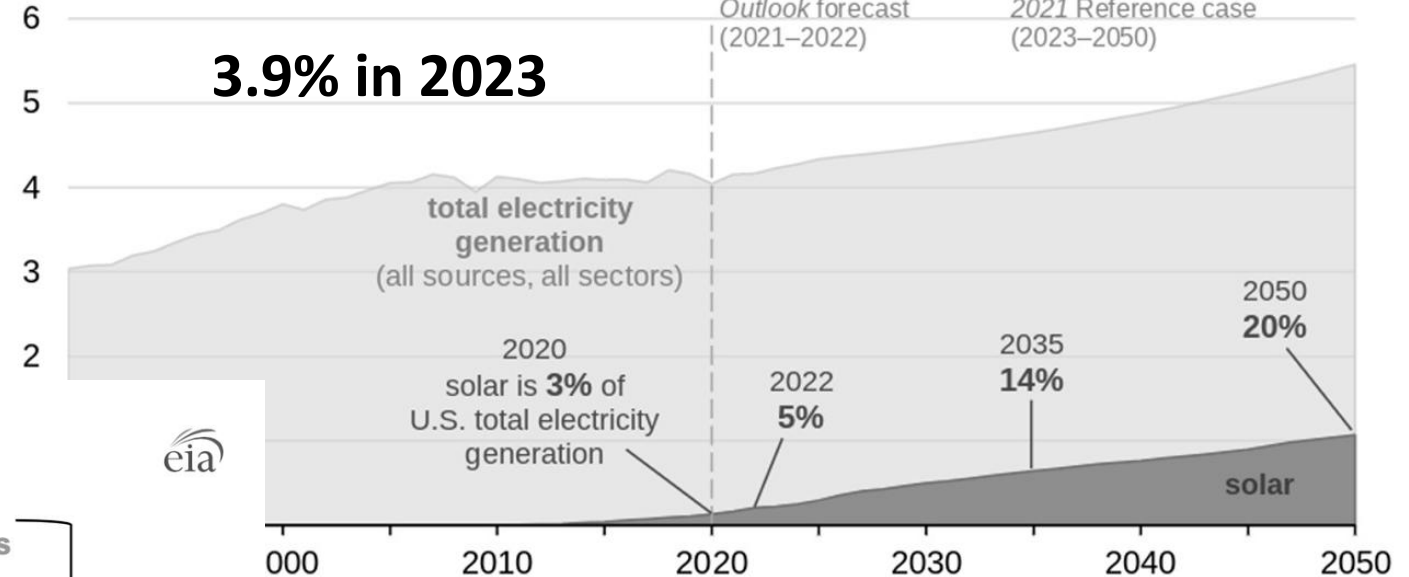
Note: Sum of components may not equal 100% because of independent rounding.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

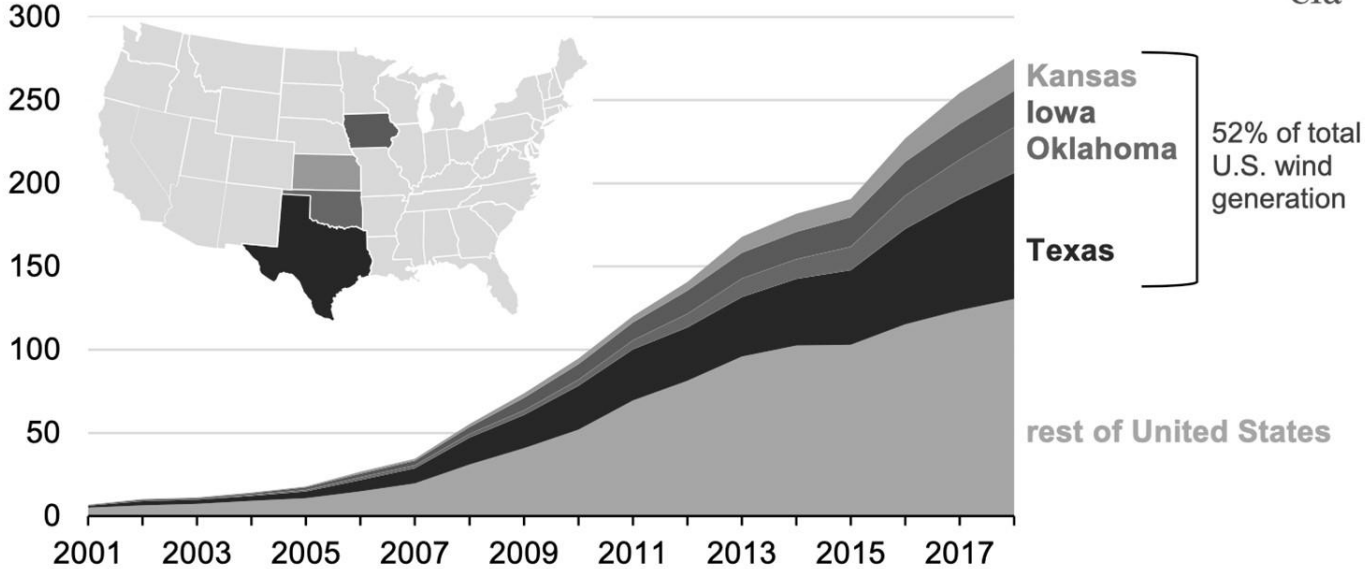
Percentage of Electric Cars in US



Annual U.S. electricity net generation from all sectors (1990–2050)
trillion kilowatthours

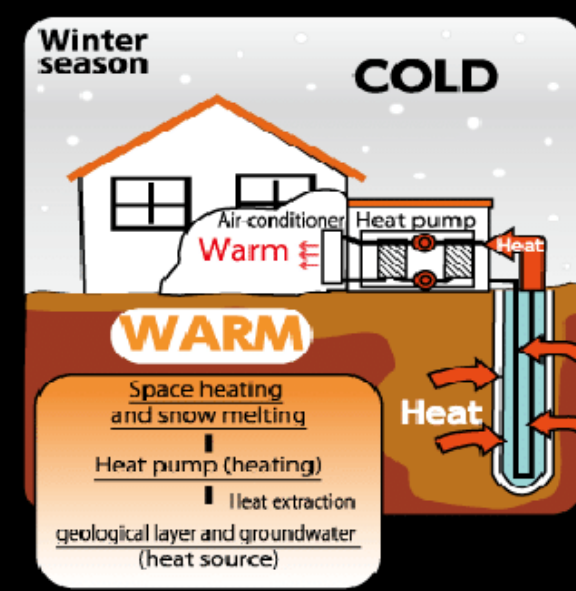
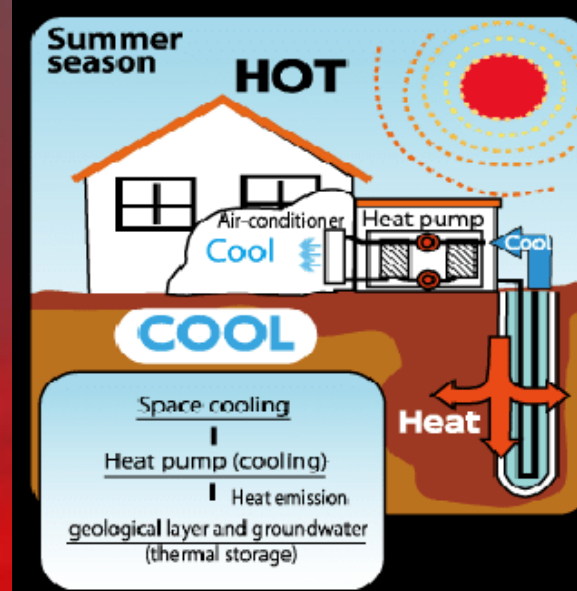
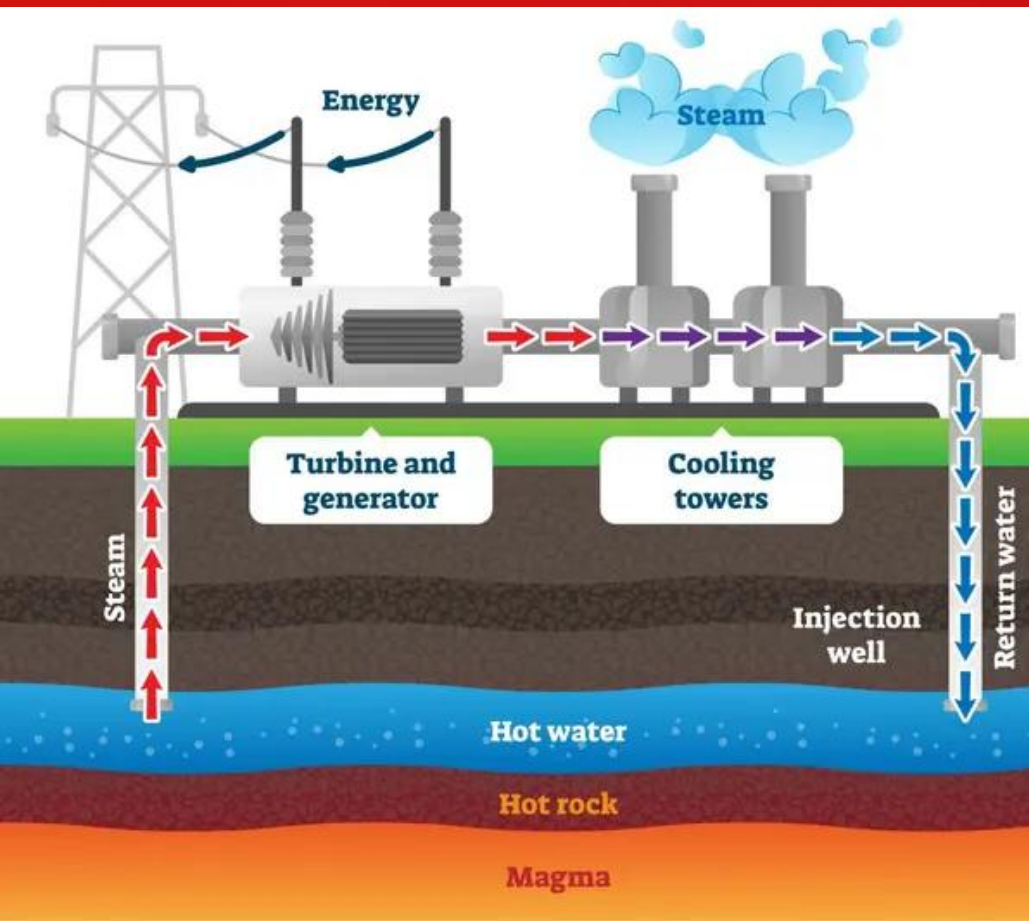


Wind electricity generation in the United States (2001-2018)
million megawatthours



WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

HOT DRY GEOTHERMAL

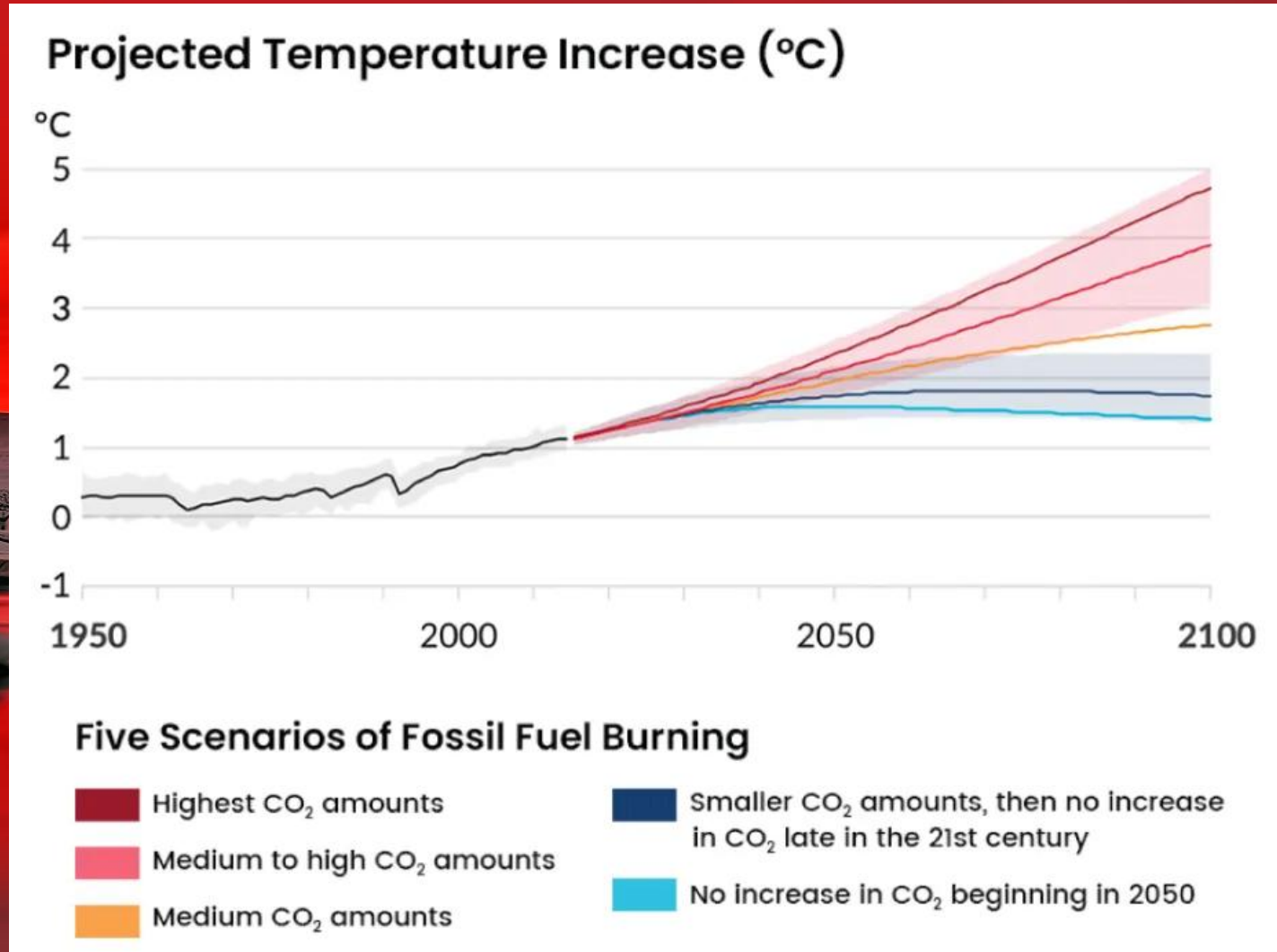


COLD WET GEOTHERMAL

Algae Biofuel Production Process

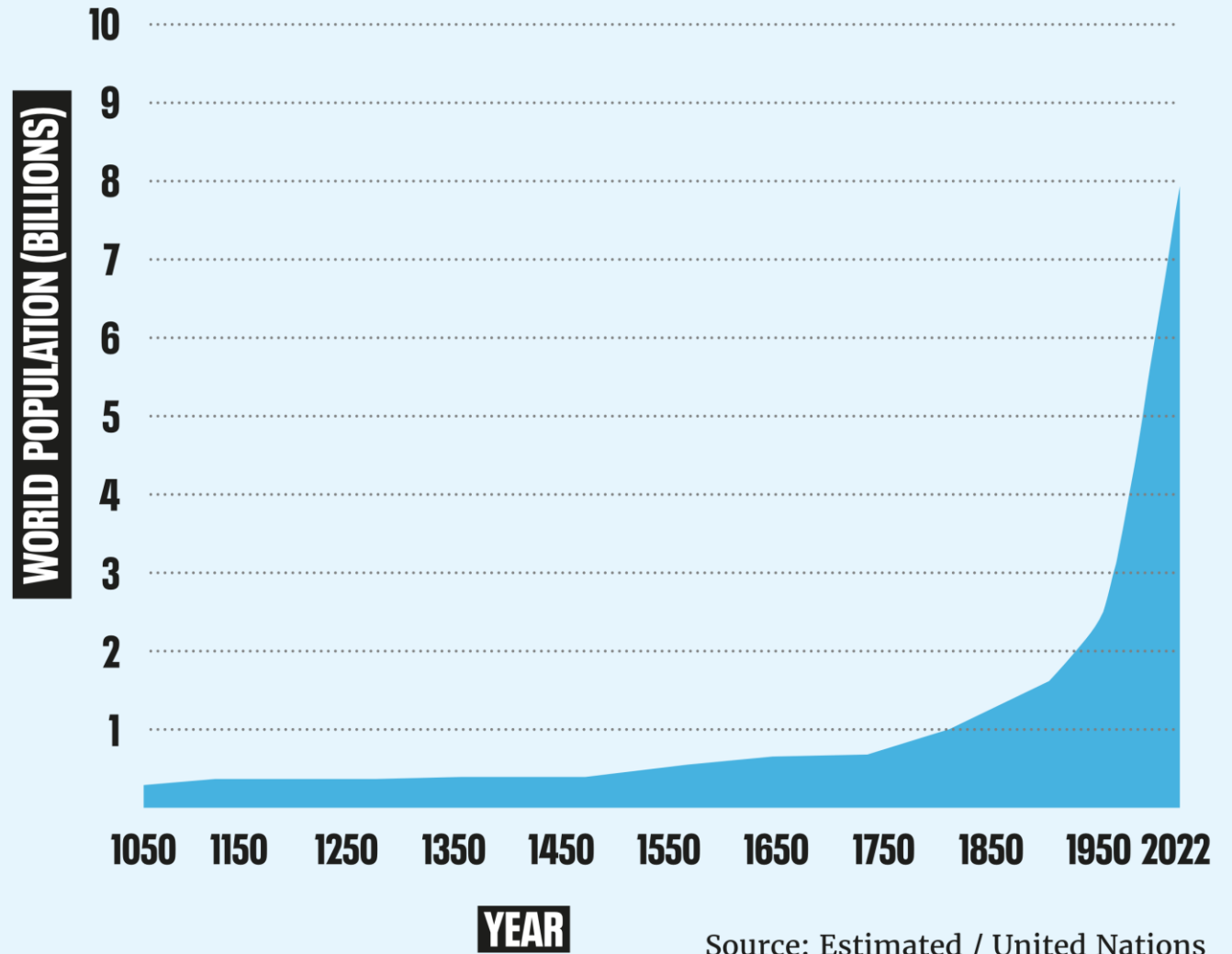


WHAT IF WE DON'T DO ANYTHING?



THE REAL PROBLEM

HUMAN POPULATION GROWTH



Source: Estimated / United Nations

THANK YOU!

Alexander Gates
Distinguished Service Professor
Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences
Rutgers University
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 353-5034
AGATES@RUTGERS.EDU



RECLAIMING OUR PLANET

HOW ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY CAN
HELP SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS

ALEXANDER GATES

Corporate Social Innovation Excellence Awards

On May 1, 2025, we will host our inaugural Corporate Social Innovation Excellence Awards.

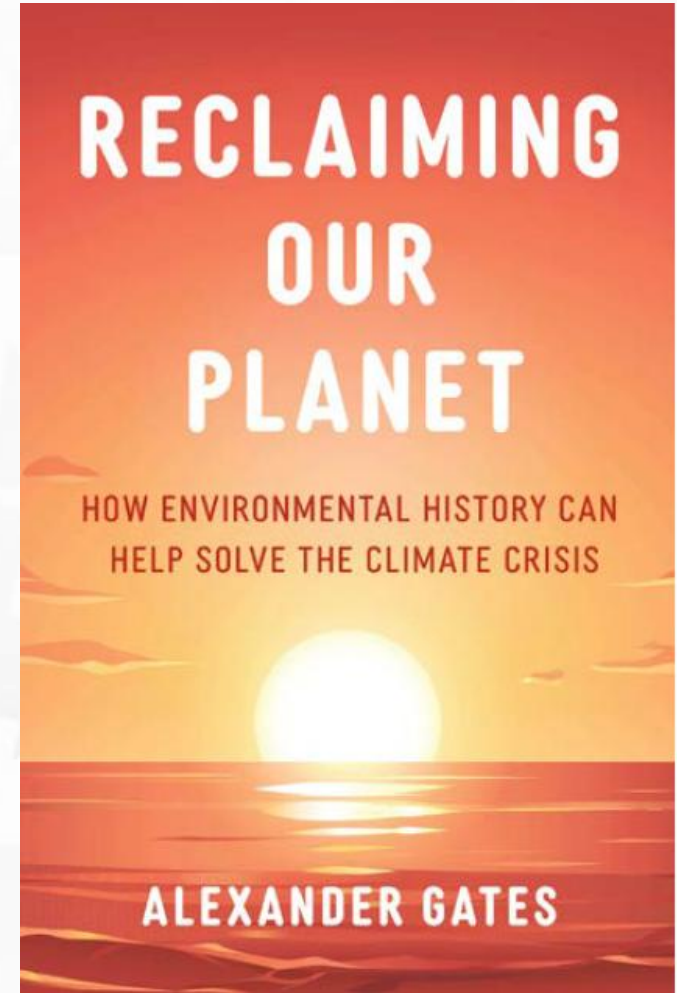
At this event, we will recognize organizations, groups, and individuals that are demonstrating the potential for business to achieve social good.

Possible Awards:

- Company/Nonprofit Awards:
 - Corporate Social Innovation Excellence Award
 - Giving Back to Society Award
 - Aligning Profit & Purpose Award
 - Engaging in Responsible Business Practices Award
 - Advocating for Social Issues Award
- Individual/Group Awards:
 - Corporate Social Innovation Pioneer Award
 - Corporate Social Innovation Emerging Leader
 - Corporate Social Innovation student Award

For more information, please visit ricsi.business.rutgers.edu/our-outreach/corporate-social-innovation-excellence-awards.

Scan the QR code and begin the nomination process for a company or individual who is doing great work in the area of Corporate Social Innovation and enter for a chance to win a copy of Dr. Alexander Gates' new book!



Practitioner Panel



Panel Moderator:

Erin Byrne

Distinguished Executive in Residence,
Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation

Practitioner Panelists



Sam Caucci
CEO and Founder
1Huddle

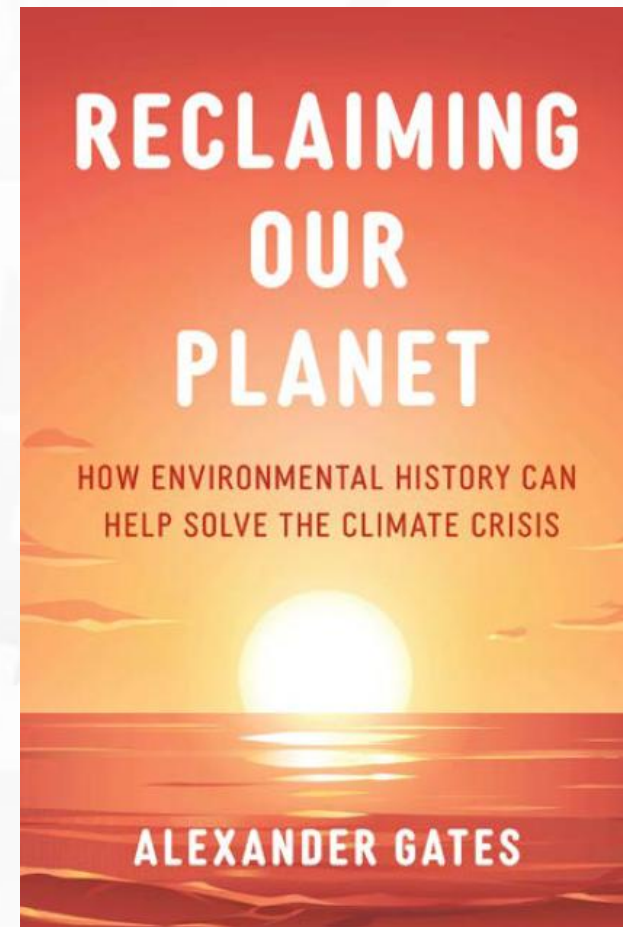
Francine Chew
Head of Corporate
Impact
The Guardian Life
Insurance Company of
America

Ben Glowacki
Sustainability Strategy
& Market Insights
BASF Corporation

Dr. Rebecca Lubot
CEO and Founder
Lubot Strategies

Mark Malek
Chief Investment
Officer
Muriel Siebert & Co.

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Post-Event Surveys

Students Post-Event Survey



Professionals Post-Event Survey



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

