

The Economist

Discussion Questions for Climate Change Issue September 21, 2019

A Warming World: The Climate Issue

Explain the cover of this issue of *The Economist*.

Does addressing climate change mean the end of capitalism? Explain.

Do we already know what to do to solve climate change? If we do nothing to solve global warming, what happens the more climate changes in the future?

Briefing, Climate Change, What Goes Up

Explain why the title (What Goes Up) is fitting for this article. Cite from the text to discuss.

Who were some scientists that discovered gasses in our atmosphere?

When were the gases discovered?

Was the information immediately proven and accepted? Why or why not?

Discuss what you notice about the ice age chart.

What does the article say about room for doubt about climate change today?

Discuss the “Four Futures” charts. What do each of the four possible futures mean for what we might need to do today?

United States: Green New Deals

What country is the largest contributor to global warming?

Is the largest contributor to global warming ready to address the issues?

What does the fact global warming is a presidential election campaign issue mean?

How many Americans believe in climate change?

What do you think of coal miners being retrained as beekeepers? Why?

The Americas

Drought threatens the Panama Canal

Why is water important to the Panama Canal?

What happens if the water level in the canal falls below 24.4 meters?

Why is the water level in the canal dropping?

What will happen to Caribbean Islands of San Blas if sea levels continue to rise?

When have the worst droughts happened in Panama?

What problems would drought proofing the canal cause?

Bello: The Left's Love of Petroleum

What does Jair Bolsonaro, president of Brazil, think about climate change?

Why are oil refineries being upgraded?

What is one fundamental national symbol in Mexico?

Do you think being an environmentalist is a luxury not all can afford?

What are three reasons AMLO doesn't have a renewables policy?

Asia

Planning for Rising Seas

Discuss the emergency picture on page 41.

Where are thirteen of the twenty cities predicted to have the biggest increases in annual losses caused by flooding located?

Besides rising seas, what else is happening to the sea level of the cities?

How much of Jakarta is now below sea level?

Haze in South-East Asia

Where else in the world are fires besides the ones in the Amazon burning?

How is Jokowi's government dealing with the people who burn forests?

Banyan Democrats, Disasters and Climate

Asian countries are among the top 12 for carbon emissions. What else is true about the same countries?

How is Australia responding to climate change?

Have China and India made some progress in addressing global warming? Could they try even harder?

Discuss the statement: "If governments don't go after climate change, climate change will go after them."

Drought in Malawi

How does climate change make it harder to reduce poverty in Malawi?

How many Malawians earn less than the international poverty level of \$1.90 per day?

How does a temperature over thirty degrees Celsius affect maize? Why would this be so destructive to the small farmers in Malawi?

How much would irrigation help the farmers? What are other possible adaptations being considered, and are they sure to help the country?

Europe

Climate Change in Russia

Why do some Russians look forward to climate change?

Why would some new Russian shipping routes open as the world warms?

How fast is Russia warming compared to the world's average rate?

What possible benefits could Russia see from global warming?

German Coal

Germany is trying to stop using coal. Will Germany probably reach their emission reduction targets?

Why are their attempts at green energy such as solar power meeting difficulties?

Charlemagne: The Plight of the Olive

What did locals rename their olive groves today?

When did spittlebugs arrive in Gallipoli? How do they affect olive trees?

How is climate change not the root cause but the explanation of the drastic spread of the tree disease?

Britain: Lessons in Wind Power

Britain is the largest world offshore wind marketer. Will this continue?

Offshore wind capacity is about how much of onshore wind or solar power? Why?

What are some of the drawback of offshore wind farms?

International: Small Islands and Climate Diplomacy

Why are small island states especially vulnerable to climate change?

What are they doing to become a voice in global warming issues?

What do they have to say to larger countries with huge emissions? Do they speak their minds? Is moving populations discussed, happening, or requested?

How many more degrees of global warming Celsius are the island states willing to accept?

Business: Climate Capitalists

Who are some tycoons spending money to find climate change solutions?

Do they want to do good for the planet? Themselves?

What are some of their projects? How are they doing?

How is climate change threatening business?

What did a study in 2008 find regarding Electricity producers?

How might climate lawsuits affect some businesses?

What happened when a lawsuit was brought by residents of Mississippi against 34 big carbon emitters for harm from Hurricane Katrina? They were arguing climate change made the hurricane more destructive.

Science and Technology: Climate Uncertainties

What is the biggest source of uncertainty in predicting how climate change will evolve?

How does the analogy of boiling water compare to when climate change will make the world uninhabitable? (Water heats and continues to become hotter until it boils.)

What are some of the problems scientists face when trying to make climate change predictions or build models?

Political, economic, technological, and social efforts will all be needed to solve global warming. What does the article say about the prospect for a possible solution?

Books and Arts: Art and Climate Change

What is “Cooking Sections” and where have they performed? What is their point regarding food and climate change? Would you like to attend a show?

Who is the world’s best known climate change artist?

What was the first large-scale effort to deal with climate change in contemporary art?

Who are some of the current climate change artists and what are their displays like? Do you find this interesting? Have you heard of any of these kind of events?

Graphic Detail: The effect of a warming Arctic Will Be Felt Far Afield

Discuss the graphic on page 93. It shows the arctic as the epicenter of global warming. What do you notice?

Obituary: Okjökull , a Glacier Remembered

How old was Okjökull in western Iceland when it was pronounced dead?

Was it the smallest and most remote glacier? What was its size in 1890? 2012?

What other kinds of obituaries could be written about the changes in climate?