

Simply climate

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People without a science background appear to struggle with climate change. Even, as someone with a science degree and training in the sustainable space, the actual science behind climate change can be difficult to understand.

During the last mass extinction trees died and as they fell gradually became fossils. These fossils are brown and black coal. When the oceans died again under great pressures they were buried and formed oil and gas. Coal is found on land, with oil and gas generally beneath the ocean or beneath great oceans of sand in the Middle East.

Mankind has dug out this coal and burned it in great furnaces to produce steam, heat homes, and create electricity over the last few centuries. Giant oil wells have pierced into deep reservoirs to release oil and gas. The petrol through the mini explosions in our car engines makes a car move. The gas can be burned for heat and the coal is now used to drive turbines that generate electricity. Through mass drilling and syphoning, mankind has captured the energy from the life that died before and has released into the atmosphere on a massive scale products that impact on climate change.

At the same time as we are burning the old trees and making plastic products, the Earth is having to deal with more carbon dioxide. We are reducing the capacity of the Earth's forests to take back that carbon we release because we are bulldozing them so rapidly.

I hope I have offered a relatable scientific explanation, but also would like to note that in the Pope's Encyclical *Laudate Si*, 'our common home', is a wonderful text about how we have been treating the Earth and what we need to do to bring our planet back into balance. We all need to share in the journey of improving the balance on Earth and I hope that this short explanation has been helpful.