

Vanessa Aldana

Sally Timmins

Natural Disasters

12/7/2015

Environmental Degradation: Urbanization

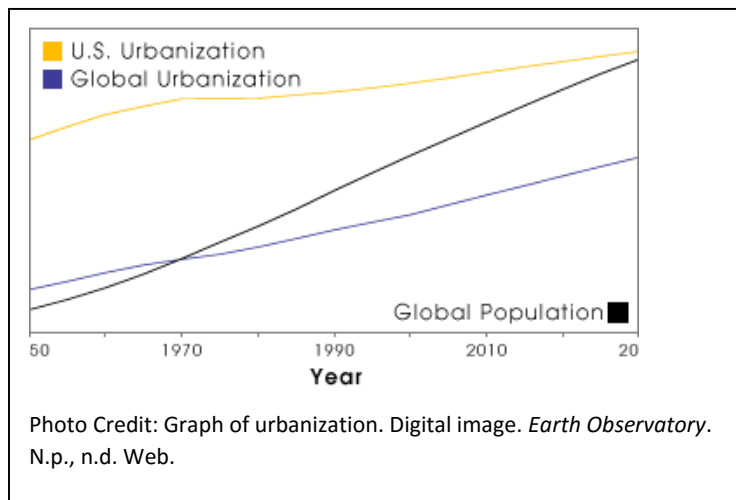
Urbanization, is becoming the way of life as population grows, is it positive or negative?

Urbanization is a population shift from rural to urban areas, "the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas", and the ways in which each society adapts to the change. Due to urban areas popping up it has impacted vegetation growth. We all know greenhouse gases are the cause for global warming, but at the root of it all, carbon is the obvious problem. Carbon dioxide and other carbon based greenhouse gases trap radiation and heat in the atmosphere, leading to higher temperature. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Earth's average surface temperature has increased between 0.4°C (0.7°F) to 0.8°C (1.4°F) over the last hundred years mainly in result of these gases. In the next 100 years it is expected to only go up 1.4°C (2.5°F) to 5.8°C (10°F), causing sea levels to rise, rainfall patterns to change, and ecosystems to shift (IPCC 2001).

A natural occurrence that reduces green house gases in the atmosphere is vegetation. How this occurs is through the process of photosynthesis. During the time when the Northern Hemisphere is experiencing spring is when the amount of greenhouse gases decreases significantly, but because we continue to deforest and destroy areas where vegetation is plentiful we only add to the problem of global warming. For instance, creating urban areas actually is bad for the environment, considering we destroyed areas with vegetation to make room for a sky

scraper. Therefore, keeping track of the amount of green areas on our planet is crucial if we want to predict carbon level.

Rural communities are actually better than urban ones considering we leave most of the vegetation alone and intact. However, when we build cities we deforest, shrubs are cut, and everything is paved over. In urban areas all we have of green is maybe some grass patches, a couple of trees, and a city park. Once an area becomes urbanized it is difficult to bring the natural order back. Today about 50% of the world live in urban areas and that number is only expected to rise. In result, that means we will deforest to make room for the urban areas. Adding to the fuel of global warming.



After knowing all the facts we can conclude urbanization is bad for the environment, but regardless we are planning to continue to urbanize, and urbanization now is occurring more rapidly than ever. Although, you can argue that there is much bigger problems with deforestation than just urbanizing, it still contributes greatly since half of the population lives in urban regions you must remember that is about 4 billion people. It is without a question that we need to consider the earths future rather than thinking of ours.

I chose to discuss urbanization and the negative affects it has on the world and its contribution to global warming because it has been ignored. We are entering an era of consequences because we chose to think of ourselves rather than the earth. Urbanization symbolizes in America first world status and it's hard to believe these progressive cities play a role in global warming. We can't turn back and correct these mistakes, but we can stop making cities like we do now. It's time for a change, we can still have our cities, but it needs to change in where nature is overall intact or stop deforesting.

Work Cited

"Urbanization's Aftermath : Feature Articles." *Urbanization's Aftermath : Feature Articles*. Earth Observatory, n.d. Web. 07 Dec. 2015.