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Air Pollution as a Contributing Factor to Global Warming

Institution

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### Introduction

In recent decades, air pollution has remained a controversy. International meetings have been held to discuss the contributions to and the long-term effects of global warming. Scientific research clearly indicates that air pollution should be the concern for all industrialized countries. Countries will have to work both independently and collaboratively in strategizing on how to reduce air pollution on a national and international levels. Unfortunately, as underdeveloped countries become more advanced, and as technology continues to expand, air pollution continues to worsen. This is because of the inappropriate disposal of waste materials associated with the operation of factories. The purpose of this paper is to examine global warming as a major concern globally, and factors that contribute to this phenomenon. Further analysis of the issue will include a close look at air pollution as a contributing factor to global warming, as well as a discussion of the Clean Air Act in reference to air pollution.

Global warming has been an international concern for some time. It refers to the overall idea of the earth's atmosphere slowly becoming warmer. The implication is that global warming is not a natural phenomenon, but rather one that is man-made. It refers to the green-house effect that introduces poisonous gases, mainly carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere. Air pollution is considered by many authorities to be a contributing factor to global warming. Because the devastating effects of global warming are felt world-wide, it is considered to be a global issue of astronomical size (Dart, 2004). For one, air pollution is not limited by international boundaries. Everyone, worldwide, shares the same air. Even though air pollution may be concentrated in certain cities, it eventually rises and spreads, affecting all people in all places, making it a global concern.

### **Contributors to Global Warming**

Contributing factors to global warming includes the continued industrialization of countries. Moreover, technology advancements have included the use of complex chemicals, such as used in the fields of medicine and agriculture, as well as other industries. Gases generated by factories using these chemicals have unceasingly been released into the atmosphere. In addition, they are dumped into surrounding rivers, lakes, streams, and even the ocean. The natural cycle of water evaporation and rain then absorbs this waste and distributes it in the form of acid rain. Clouds containing this acid rain travel for hundreds of miles before being dispersed over many areas world-wide.

### **Effects of Air Pollution on Global Warming**

The negative effects of air pollution on global warming are considerable and diverse. One obvious concern is acid rains. Air pollution interferes with nature's water cycle and that causes harm to the Earth, rather than replenishing it with the needed nutrients in clean water (Dart, 2004). Acid rain has been recorded in a number of locations in various parts of the world. The results in most countries experiencing acid rain have included the loss of fertile soil and the onset of droughts. The increase in humidity has also been noted in a number of geographic locations, increasing local temperatures to the point of record highs. These high temperatures have, in turn, affected people's livelihoods. The unusually hot temperatures have also resulted in more incidents of diseases. The resulting epidemics of disease have taken their toll within and among countries.

### **Analysis of the Clean Air Act**

Because the issue of air pollution remains a contributor to global warming, regulations are needed to address the problem. The purpose of the Clean Air Act is to hold industries

accountable for how they dispose of their chemical waste products. Concern has arisen, though, that the Clean Air Act is ineffective, that it has had very little influence on how industries worldwide continue to dispose of their waste products. Possibly, corruption interferes with the enforcement of the mandates provided by the law. One possible solution to this might be harsher penalties for those who break the law or otherwise impede the enforcement of the Clean Air Act.

References

Dart, R. (2004). *Medical Toxicology*. Washington: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.