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Opinion: How Pragmatism Brings Us Back to Nature

By Bruce Missig, Board Member, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

We are starting a new year with a new Administration that is more aligned with the thoughts and feelings of most of the population of the U.S. and the world about climate change. It is time we take hold of our future. There are more people who believe in environmental conservation than do not.¹ With the proper information and a willingness to change, we can prove once again that many small actions add up to big change for the sustainability of the planet. We have to shift our mindsets and accept the consequential toll of climate change. As Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said in 1826, “There is nothing more frightful than ignorance in action.”

And there is a difference between ignorance and stupidity. Being ignorant is to make an actionable choice to deny the effects of climate change; stupidity, is to disregard scientific findings and further, fail to apply deductive reasoning to imagine possible shared, sustainable futures.²

We have to wake up and face the facts that we control the future and it is only us who can make a difference. We created the problem and we have an obligation to fix it. Remember your science: nature never loses, it has adapted to thrive over and over again to catastrophic disruptions during the last 4.5

¹ See, [UN global climate poll: ‘The people’s voice is clear – they want action’ | Environment | The Guardian](#)

² See, climate deniers <https://www.americanprogressaction.org/issues/green/news/2019/01/28/172944/climate-deniers-116th-congress/> and [Chart: Where Climate Change Deniers Live | Statista](#)

billion years. If you decide not to take action for yourself, take action for your children, your grandchildren and our children's children's children.

When I was growing up there was a comedy album called, "Everything You Know Is Wrong" - which seems to be very true. As we learn more about science and how nature works, a lot of what we were taught became outdated, and eventually, time strips away more and more of our misunderstandings. With today's technology and in the nanoseconds required to disperse information, each of us needs to be able to make good decisions informed by researching what is true and what is false. If you are looking only at the far right or the far left for answers you will most likely be getting information that only fits a polarized narrative.

Let's get back to science, math, and medicine and follow what the experts are telling us, rather than being influenced by the often unfounded polarized beliefs of groups that may be driven by extreme philosophies. If the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) or the military tells you that climate change is real, believe them! NASA professionals are dedicated scientists - 'King of the Nerds' - and they know their stuff! Learn how to decipher the media ads you may be watching or hearing. A large percentage of media today is shaped by masters of spin who manipulate statistics and the words they say. Beware of such statements as, "No. 1", "clinically proven ingredients", "9 out of 10 doctors..." and so on.

Scientifically based statistics and proof need to be provided in simple to understand language if climate change and its effects on the human species is going to be understood by the public. Remember, unless you are provided with the explicit context of quoted statistics, you cannot know the parameters of what is being claimed and may need to further research the claim at credible sources yourself.

You may ask, "What is this author ranting about and what is his point?" The point is there is a lot of information in the media representing every degree of truth and falsity, but with the right information we can make informed decisions for best outcomes. Remember most companies want to make money and are working in their own best interest, not the individual's.

It is healthier to live following the examples of nature and as a case in point, lemons are a great natural oil and calcium cleaner. Wouldn't you rather have fields of lemons - grown to organic, sustainable farming standards - producing fruit and giving off oxygen instead of tearing up the planet to find toxic chemicals to make cleaners?

Hopefully with the soon to be rolled out Junior Guardians of Nature program and other activities hosted by Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society (WCAS), we will be able to explore exactly how and why the planet is in a symbiotic relationship with everything on it. We need everything on this planet to thrive, but to put something out of whack in our natural ecosystems causes unmanageable problems all the way up - and down - the chain of living organisms.

Resources:

- [Evidence | Facts – Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet \(nasa.gov\)](#)

- [Tree planting may buy more time to fight climate change than thought | Science News](#)
- [Here are 5 ways people are speeding up the extinction of species | Science News](#)
- [Oceans that are warming due to climate change yield fewer fish | Science News](#)
- Watch, #Film4Climate 1st Prize Short Film Winner - “Three Seconds”
<https://vimeo.com/208145716>