

# Climate change:

blah... blah... blah...

## What is climate change?

First of all, let's remind the basics. What is climate change? It is an ecological phenomenon by which a region or the entire planet warms up, causing modifications in its climate. This warming can have a natural origin or, like the one we are currently experiencing, be caused by man.

## For as long as we've been talking about it...

We've been talking about it for quite some time. There is no precise date but, in 1971, the first Earth Summit took place, a large international conference where, for the first time, the definition of climate change and its possible consequences were discussed. However, some scientists were already making assumptions about the existence of the phenomenon much earlier, like Jacques Fourier in 1824.

## Slow collective realisation

It took almost a century and a half for some people to realise the problem. It was in the mid-1980s that the United Nations created a group of experts to look into the issue and, in 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created. This group published its first report on the phenomenon of climate change in 1990. Climate change awareness developed itself in parallel with the advent of social networks. Thus, for the first time, a major scientific issue of common interest could be followed, commented, analysed and relayed by the public almost in real time.

## Conferences over conferences

Scientific research was followed by talks: conferences were held between many countries to decide what could be done to prevent and stop the phenomenon. The purpose was to find solutions in order to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change. The most important of these conferences are called the Conference of Parties (COPs) and they are organised once a year. The first one took place in 1995. Currently, their objective is to limit the rise in temperature to 2 degrees, and ideally 1.5 degrees, compared to the pre-industrial era. However, since the beginning of the COPs, greenhouse gas concentrations kept increasing. Their usefulness can therefore easily be questioned.

## The Greta effect

Beyond political and scientific circles, the broader public also became progressively sensitised to the issue. Until around 2010, the public debate focused mostly on the cause of climate change. At the time, the question was whether climate change was due to human activities or whether it was of natural origin. Later on, this question was relegated to the background, and the human origin of climate change now seems to be widely accepted. Around 2010, the debate therefore focused more on the measures to be taken to minimise the negative consequences of the phenomenon. However, after 30 years of more or less public debate, the speeches had become more and more humming and repetitive.

It was not until 2018 that Greta Thunberg, a young Swedish student who was 15 years old at the time, spoke out on behalf of the younger generations, protesting against inaction in the face of climate change. Her fight and her speeches rapidly spread across the world, and millions of young people rallied behind her.

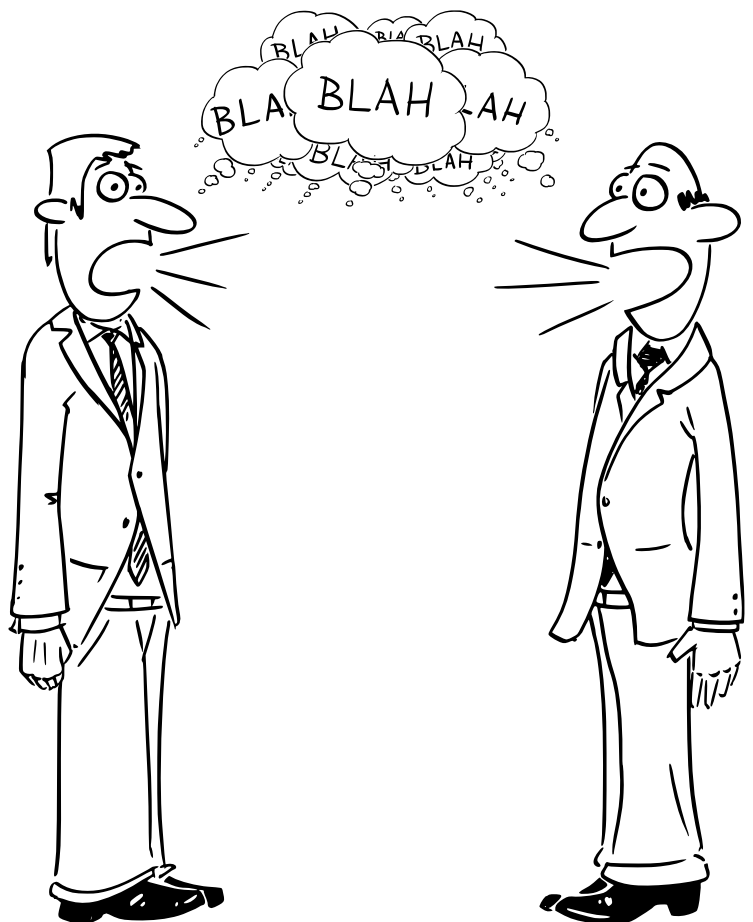
## The disillusion of Greta's fight

Social networks can give everyone the illusion of being able to express themselves, but this freedom of expression does not mean that anyone is listening. Indeed, for all those who are interested in the issue of climate change, the impression that emerges is that the actions decided by world leaders are not up to the challenge and that, despite the great speeches, the actions do not follow. This can lead to a great sense of frustration, and it is undoubtedly what led Greta Thunberg to make her famous "blah blah blah" speech on September 28, 2021, which sounds like a renunciation to continue debating with inconsistent leaders. This same vanity of "words without deeds" was also magnificently illustrated by Simon Kofe, the Foreign Minister of the Tuvalu archipelago, during a recent speech he made with his feet in the water and of which here is a particularly eloquent extract: "In Tuvalu, we are living the reality of climate change, the sea level rises as you watch me today at the COP26. We cannot wait for speeches when the sea is rising around us all the time".



## The irony of this article and all the others

It is funny to notice that this article only follows the same logic of talking without acting, like most of the articles or posts that have been published on social networks in recent years. For example, this text that you are reading required a lot of research on the Internet, a tool that pollutes a lot. It will also require a lot of energy to be sent to our teacher and to GoodPlanet, to be stored on servers, and even printed. The same goes for all the other articles already written on the subject and all the speeches made by the world leaders. By being constantly repeated, aren't all these speeches and all these questions counter-productive? Don't they end up numbing our minds and our ability to act? After all, aren't the people who talk the most about climate change the same ones who fight it the least? We might ask ourselves this question.



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