

Climate Change & Poverty: What Can be done



Manitoba Modern
Economics,
Technology and the
Environment

By Adam Johnston

March 21, 2010

An Overview

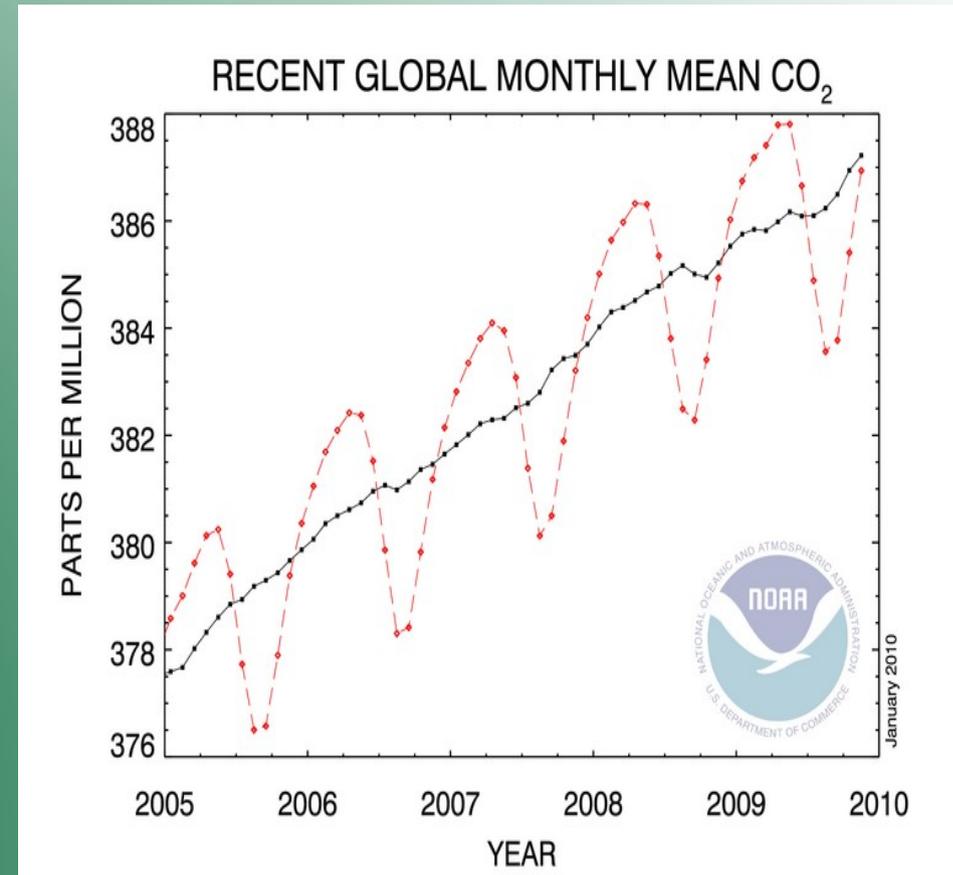
- Earth is being used as a disposal system for consumer by-products
- The **Greenhouse effect** is the result of these by-products released, trapped in the atmosphere, warming the surface temperature
- Poverty refers to not having enough to afford the basic necessities to survive

Causes of Climate Change

- Fossil Fuels (carbon emissions) are released into the Atmosphere and trapped in the lower part
- Surface temperatures rise
- Increase of carbon emissions due in large part to the increase of man made production and consumption of goods and services
- Carbon Emissions have risen steadily since the start of the Industrial Revolution

Climate Change: Continued

- Pre Industrial emissions were at 250 ppm (parts per million)
- 2008 emissions were 386.5 ppm
- Scientist have estimated that by 2100 that level could be between 500 to 1300 ppm



Source: NOAA (2008)

Causes of Poverty

- Lack of job opportunities
- Working more, but receiving less after taxes
- Not enough wealth creation
- Unskilled workforce
- No training and education opportunities

Poverty Continued

According to the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (SPCW), homeless shelter use has increased by 41% from February 2007 to December 2008.

Manitoba was named the child poverty capital of Canada, based from a report done by the SPCW, mentioned in a cbc.ca article in November 2009.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives mentions that 80 percent of Canadian work force are putting in longer hours, yet are getting less income compared to previous years.



Photo Source:
<https://www.hkpr.on.ca/>

Solutions

What can be done to clean our environment and reduce poverty?

Environmental Solutions



Implement a carbon tax. Tax fossil fuels at various rates.

Use the tax revenue from the carbon tax to put towards new market based initiatives, which include:

- Research and development into green technology.
- An environmental community entrepreneurship tax credit that encourages low income people to invest in small green local businesses (i.e. Recycling, wind mill creation).
- Lower income tax rates for lower and middle income people.

Photo Source: Smurfit.com

Environmental Solutions

Create an Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) type deduction to allow citizens to use retirement savings in green municipal projects like mixed commercial/rental property, small local businesses.

Implement a 2% road tax and use that for the invention of a Sustainable Transportation Fund, which the province of Manitoba can allocate to public transportation, bicycle paths, etc.

Work with First Nations, Metis and Environmental groups to promote sustainable hunting in Manitoba, which will allow species to not be harmed.



Photo

Source: Cyclingmountainbikes.com/

Environmental Solutions



Photo Source: Treehugger.com

Work with Manitoba Credit Unions and Caisse Populaires to provide loans for small scale green business projects.

The province of Manitoba investigate the cost-benefit analysis of creating a green jobs training program that will allow people to work in various environmental sectors including: alternative energy, recycling.

Open up alternative energy competition in Manitoba to consumer/worker owned co-operatives, municipalities, and small private businesses to offer alternative energy services.

Poverty Solutions

Increase the basic personal provincial credit to \$205. Currently it is at \$195.

Encourage the Credit Union system to lend micro credit to lower income people, which will allow them to start their own small enterprises.

A worker & micro entrepreneurship tax credit which will encourage the creation of worker owned businesses.

Work closely with non government organizations like SEED Winnipeg and the United Way to expand asset building and micro credit loan programs for low income citizens.



Photo Source: Solid-ground.org

Poverty Solutions



Invest in social entrepreneurship in Manitoba via a social entrepreneurship tax credit which would allow for social enterprises (example: community health clinic) to flourish.

Freeze tuition for University and college students while increasing investment.

Encourage more bursaries and scholarships to low income people.

Have a green jobs training program (see Environmental Solutions).

Tax credits for lower income people to invest in green small businesses (see Environmental Solutions).

Photo source: Developing8.org

Poverty Solutions

Incentives for low income earners to build up assets. This includes eliminating any claw backs that recipients on social assistance may receive in building assets, or those working who make a certain income level.

Decrease the lower income bracket from 10.7% to 10.2 %.



Photo Source: Realtor.ca

Examples that worked

Here are some examples of which similar strategies worked:

Curitiba, Brazil

Curitiba was a fast growing city. This caused traffic congestion, and also poverty concerns.

With Brazil under military control in 1971, the state of Parana, hired Jaime Lerner, a 33 year-old planner and engineer.

Government hired him because of his lack of political experience.

Built a bus system that allowed express bus carriers to hold 20,000 people/hour. This helped decrease pollution.

Used older buses for job training facilities, food market, day care centres are some examples



Photo Source: Treehugger.com

For more on Curitiba, Brazil, read Chapter 14 of Natural Capitalism at

<http://www.natcap.org/images/other/NCchapter14.pdf>

Bologna, Italy



Photo Source: Savory.tv

- One point, one of the most impoverished agriculture areas of Italy.
- Now one of the highest ranked economic areas of the European Union.
- The Democrats of the Left (formally the Italian Communist Party) ditched the state welfare system. They switched to a decentralized market based system.
- 1800 co-ops and over 60,000 people employed by them.
- Non profits, small business run essential services like day care and health.

For more on Bologna, go to: <http://www.uwcc.wisc.edu/info/bologna.html>

In conclusion

Environmental issues and Poverty issues are
linked hand & hand

Neither can solved without the other

Innovative ideas, using the power of small
business and entrepreneurship are the way out
of environmental damage and poverty

Bologna, Italy and Curitiba, Brazil give examples
of strong market based, socially just solutions