

The
Story
of

FOOD



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From the Desk of Dr R K Pachauri

We live in a world where our concept of a good life is defined largely by the extent to which we have access to and use of a range of goods and services. We also see all around us a substantial expansion of the means by which transportation and communication make it possible for us to achieve mobility across space and gain access to information and knowledge in very short periods of time which were unimaginable several decades ago. We are living in a period of unprecedented change with major implications for the environment.

A large range of human activities have resulted in damage and degradation of our ecosystems. The Working Group-I Report which forms part of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was released in September 2013 has clearly stated “Human influence has been detected in warming of the atmosphere and the ocean, in changes in the global water cycle, in reductions in snow and ice, in global mean sea level rise, and in changes in some climate extremes. This evidence for human influence has grown since recent past. It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-twentieth century”. The term extremely likely applies to a probability of over 95 percent, which should provide compelling evidence to human society that we need to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases in order to stabilize Earth’s climate.

In particular, the youth of the world who have their lives ahead of them need to take the lead in ensuring that firstly we create awareness on the scientific reality of climate change and secondly in mobilizing action to deal with this challenge. “The story of” series deals with subjects like food, paper, cloth, computers, home, and transport. Essentially we human beings have become addicted to consuming a range of products and then throwing them away for a variety of reasons, often not even dictated by the economic life of the product involved, but for other reasons which essentially constitute our current lifestyles and are part of the inertia in our systems which inhibit change and the adoption of new directions. The youth of the world are in a unique position to make use of existing knowledge and make contributions to the protection of our ecosystems throughout their future. They have to become agents of change by conquering the inertia in our minds and established systems.



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