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**APRIL 2007
NEWSLETTER**

GLOBAL WARMING?

What to Do About It

By Jim Stavis

Whether or not you believe Al Gore's movie or drive a Toyota Prius, the topic of Global Warming is here to stay. Perhaps you are an alarmist and believe that we are doomed or maybe you are only passively concerned about the problem. The pressing question is "what are we going to do about it?" This question has been posed to the scientific community as well. A few months ago, billionaire Richard Branson of Virgin fame offered a prize of \$25 million to the first feasible technology to reduce carbon dioxide levels in the air.

So NASA commissioned a study on the problem and hopefully, will create

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Global Warming?

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some plausible solutions. They range from “possibly great” to “absurd and idiotic.” Up until now, scientists were reluctant to consider such concepts and some still are. Many fear that there would be unintended side effects while others believe such schemes might prevent the need to reduce greenhouse

gas emissions in the first place. Here are some examples of the solutions:

The Geritol Solution

A company called Planktos in Northern California recently launched a ship on a trip to the Pacific Ocean to dump 50 tons of iron dust. The iron would then grow plankton, creating an algae bloom that would drink up carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This has

been tried on a smaller scale with limited success. The concept gained some credibility when it was mentioned in a 2001 report by the Panel on Climate Change as a possible way to attack carbon emissions. The results showed that there were definite responses to the addition of iron, but also warned about ecological consequences of large scale fertilization of the ocean.

Man-made Volcano

When Mt. Pinatubo erupted 16 years ago in the Philippines it cooled the earth for about a year because the sulfate particles in the upper atmosphere reflected away some of the sunlight. So how do you create a volcano? Using jet engines, cannons or balloons to get sulfates in the air, we could reduce the amount of solar heat felt on Earth while increasing sulfur pollution only a small percentage. Scientists at the Center for Atmospheric Research put the idea into a computer climate model. The results were not particularly cheap or promising.

Artificial Trees

Scientifically it is known as “air capture.” The proposed instruments

have been dubbed “artificial trees” even though they don’t resemble real trees. Nearly a decade ago a Columbia University professor hit on an idea while helping his daughter on a science fair project. It was intended to create filters that grab carbon dioxide from the air and then compress it into a liquid or compressed gas that could be shipped elsewhere. When his daughter was able to do it on a small scale, an idea was born that it could possibly be done on a global basis.

Solar Umbrella

This one might be the wildest of them all. Last fall a University of Arizona astronomer proposed creating a sunshade between the earth and the sun. It would consist of 16 trillion small Frisbee-like spaceships that would act as a huge umbrella reducing heat levels from the sun. About 800,000 would be stacked into each rocket launch and it would take an estimated 20 million rocket launches. The cost: at least \$4 trillion over 30 years.

Is all this science or science fiction? You decide. If you excuse the pun, these ideas all provide FUEL for thought.

Quote of the Month

“There is no business to be done on a dead planet.”

-David Brower - Sierra Club

Paragon Steel Hires New VP Sales & Marketing



With 24 years of steel and fabrication background, Paragon Steel is pleased to announce the addition of Steven Kuznetz to their team. According to Paragon Steel

President Doug Carpenter, “Steve’s background should provide a wealth of knowledge and experience for our company. We are excited to have him aboard.” Should you wish to contact Steve for any reason, his e-mail address is skuznetz@paragonsteel.com.