

6th World Conference on Climate Change

September 02-03, 2019 | Berlin, Germany

Climate change: Myths, realities and prospects of a global deal to curb climate change

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Climate change has been a hot topic during the past few years. Although scientific factors play a vital role in understanding climate change and implementing appropriate actions to reduce its impact, it is also marred by political and business related issues. The effort at the present time is to contain the global average temperature increase to within 1.5°C by the turn of the century. It is a fact that the earth system has been undergoing changes and will continue to change with time due to a number of factors. Climate change is one of them and there are discernible changes in some parts of the earth system as evidenced from melting of glaciers, abnormal weather etc. However, it is premature to conclude that it is a global phenomenon and that talking about a global average temperature has no conceptual meaning. The temperature on earth has temporal variations from about -50 to 50 spatially and temporally. There are also uncertainties associated with projections made into the future with data from a short window of observations. Two important factors that have not received their due attention in this context are that anthropogenic climate change which many climatologists associate with global warming depends upon the per capita consumption of energy and the world (or regional) population. No concrete action to reduce either of these has been taken on a global scale. The objective of this paper is to highlight the uncertainties associated with the science of climate change, the realities of the past, and the insurmountable problems associated with finding a global solution to a seemingly local or regional problem.

Recent Publications

1. Jayawardena, A. W. (2004): Flood and typhoon related disasters in South China, Proceedings, Tenth International Symposium on Natural and Human Induced Hazards and Third Workshop of the IUGG Commission on Geophysical Risk and Sustainability, Hazards 2004, December 2-4, 2004, National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad, India, p. 64
2. Jayawardena A. W. (2006): Data driven approaches of real-time flood forecasting, Proceedings of Asia Oceania Geosciences Society 3rd Annual Meeting, AOGS 2006, 10-14 July 2006, Singapore (Abstracts in CD ROM; p. 182/1202).
3. Jayawardena A. W. (2009): Challenges in catchment hydrological modeling, Proceedings of Asia Oceania Geosciences Society 6th Annual Meeting, AOGS 2009, 11-15 August 2009, Singapore (Abstracts in CD ROM; Session HS-06-A011).
4. Jayawardena, A. W. (2009): Challenges in coping with water problems in the 21st century, Proceedings of the World City Water Forum (WCWF2009), August 18-21, 2009, Incheon, Korea. Abstract in Volume 1, p 3; Full Paper (TC-A2-2) in CD ROM. pp. 57-63.
5. Jayawardena, A. W. (2011): Dynamics of Hydro-Meteorological and Environmental Hazards, Asia Pacific Mathematics Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 4, October 2011, pp. 7-11.

Biography

A. W. Jayawardena, a retired professor with over 40 years of experience in the fields of hydrology, water resources and environmental engineering in academia, government, consulting engineers and international organizations. He is a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow of the UK Institution of Civil Engineers, a Fellow of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers and a Life Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. At present, he is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) where he has been teaching for many years, and a Visiting Professor of the Department of Civil Engineering of Chu Hai College of Higher Education, Hong Kong, has in the past been a Technical Advisor to the Research and Development Centre of Nippon Koei Co. Ltd (Consulting Engineers), Japan, Research and Training Advisor to the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM) under the auspices of UNESCO, Japan, and concurrently a Professor in the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Japan, a Guest Professor of Beijing Normal University, China, a Visiting Professor of Hohai University, China, Honorary Professor in the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, a Visiting Professor in Tsinghua University of China, and an Adjunct Professor of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) in India.