

economics - greenest challenge:

AVERTING A CLIMATE APOCALYPSE

and panel discussion!



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Speakers

Moderator Rebecca Blumenstein: a journalist and newspaper editor; currently one of the highest-ranking women in the newsroom at The New York Times



Introduction from Greta Thunberg: a Swedish environmental activist who has gained international recognition for promoting the view that humanity is facing an existential crisis arising from climate change



Panelist Ma Jun: a Chinese environmentalist, environmental consultant, and journalist; director of the Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs



Panelist Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim: an environmental activist and geographer; coordinator of the Association of Peul Women and Autochthonous Peoples of Chad and served as the co-director of the pavilion of the World Indigenous Peoples' Initiative and Pavilion



Panelist Rajiv Shah: president of the Rockefeller Foundation.; a former American government official, physician and health economist



Panelist Oliver Bäte: German business executive who is the CEO of Allianz, a position he has held since October 2014.



Ideas Presented and Reaction

Takeaway 1: Seeing all of the environmental activists and business people inspired me. It made me realize the vast number of people that are helping in their own ways to stop the climate crisis, which I often lose sight of. Especially in America, climate action seems to feel like losses after losses because of the political climate, but this session gave me hope.

Takeaway 2: This session showed me all of the areas that the world can improve to stop the climate crisis. A list I compiled is helping and listening to indigenous peoples, fighting for policies to be implemented on the federal level, encouraging companies to make the switch to being sustainable, completely cutting our fossil fuel consumption, and aiding and investing in the commercialization of new green technologies.



Ideas Presented

- We need to completely stop emissions to get to real zero, not just net zero. This means holding investments in fossil fuels, divesting from fossil fuels, removing subsidies from fossil fuels. Divest from fossil fuels but then invest in green technologies.
- Americans should not blame all of the climate crisis on China (as some are doing right now). China must take the lead on the issue by reducing pollution and GHG emissions. However, that doesn't change the fact that most of the emissions come from countries around the world doing most of their manufacturing in China. People need to pay attention to the actual business action and target the private sector but still pay attention to Chinese government.
- Oliver Bäte sort of critiqued Greta and said we need to connect optimism and outrage to fight the climate crisis. He also hinted that we need to shift activism from stories and anecdotes to science and practicality, which I found kind of rude. It was like he was suggesting Greta's activism wasn't already centered around science and practicality. I also don't really agree with the whole optimism aspect. Definitely celebrate the wins, but a slow and optimistic approach is not going to solve the climate crisis. We need drastic, ground sweeping change.
- The commercialization of green technologies has happened at a phenomenal rate, which gives hope. Need to invest in the commercialization of green technologies. Raise indigenous people's voices in climate action.
- There are people dying right now, so there is no waiting for 2050 to make changes -- change needs to happen now.

Ideas Presented Continued and Reflection

- Planting trees is mostly greenwashing unless it is done to rehabilitate or restore preexisting ecosystems. Instead, most governments use it as a way to convince their citizens that they are being environmentally friendly by planting random trees, which is good but not enough.
- Climate change's effects harm the poorest two billion people of the world. We need to focus on them and not leave them behind. For example, we could provide affordable renewable electricity.
- We all have something valuable that we can do to fight the climate crisis. We all need to change our lifestyle to live more sustainably. Be apart of the solution, not the problem.

I completely agree with all of the ideas brought up during the panel (except for the one that I offered a little bit of my insight on). The panel was amazing. I was shocked by how well everyone could answer the questions. I loved how it covered a wide array of topics: from China's role to climate change's impacts on indigenous people. I also enjoyed seeing how diverse the panelists were from all walks of life. All of the ideas presented motivate me to keep working on changing the world to be more sustainable!



Application to Where I Live

I plan to share "Averting a Climate Apocalypse" with all of my friends and family. Then, I want to have a discussion with them about how we can implement these ideas into our community. Some ideas I think we could implement is fighting against environmental racism so BIPOC voices are heard, talking to local government to make the switch to renewables, and advocating for support for the poor community who will be most affected by the climate crisis.

I encourage you to watch "Averting a Climate Apocalypse" as well!



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ethan.pgc Today, I watched "Averting a Climate Apocalypse" and it was so good! I highly recommend checking it out to hear about various perspectives of the climate crisis and a wide array of solutions. 🌍📖