

# Day 24 Greenest

ClimateCrew2020

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# What's at Stake: The Arctic

- The speakers were Sanna Marin, Scott Minerd, Gabriel O'Donnell, Gail Whiteman, Elena Cherney, Al Gore.
- Sanna Martin is the current Prime Minister of Finland as the leader of the Social Democratic Party and is known for being the youngest-ever prime minister of Finland.
- Scott Minerd is a founder of Guggenheim, an investment banking firm, and contributes writing about finance and economics to the Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, Bloomberg, and CNBC.
- Gabriel O'Donnell is the Principal Research Programmer/Analyst and founder of the CREATE Lab at Carnegie Mellon University. O'Donnell is known for having created EarthTime, a website that allows users to visualize the effect of climate change, economic inequality, and air pollution on a map of the planet.

- Gail Whiteman is a Professor at Lancaster University's Pentland Center for Sustainability in Business. She is known for research in roles that companies can take to increase their sustainability and reduce their carbon footprint.
- Elena Cherney is the Wall Street Journal Canada Bureau Chief and Global Resources Editor. Prior to holding this position, she was also an editor for the Report on Business at the Globe and Mail and managing editor of the Globe.
- Al Gore is a former vice president of the United States under the Clinton Administration and was the Democratic nominee for the 2000 presidential election. Apart from being a politician, Gore is known for being an advocate for environmentalism and climate change action.

# Takeaways

- The loss of Arctic ice is a huge problem: We have lost 50% of the ice in the last 50 years as it is fracturing and now only 75% of the volume of Arctic summer sea glaciers remains. This leads to a positive feedback loop, in which the loss of white, Arctic ice speeds up the progression of global warming and climate change because less sunlight is reflected and instead is absorbed by the darker sea water, thus leading to even more Arctic ice melting. Additionally, as global temperatures are rising the permafrost of the Arctic is also thawing, releasing methane, a greenhouse gas more potent than carbon dioxide, that was stored in the soil.

- In order for companies to act to reduce their carbon footprints to address climate change in a meaningful way, there needs to be financial incentives given to them by governments. Because of the nature of capitalism, companies will always only act in their own best interests, which is to increase their bottom line. So, government plans like the Green New Deal and other climate action proposals must be put into place so that countries can invest in green energy and provide these incentives for companies to innovate.

# Reactions

- I was extremely horrified at all the statistics Dr. Gail Whiteman provided information about the melting Arctic ice caps at the beginning of the discussion, it's so hard to believe that climate change is such a large issue that is destroying our environment and entire planet in more ways than one, even causing itself to accelerate. But that is the reality, and it makes me disgusted and disappointed that because of some corporate interests and neoliberal politicians there has been very little global action to stop climate change (especially in America).

- I absolutely agree with most of the speakers on this issue (except for Scott Minerd, I don't believe that we shouldn't work to address climate change because it might affect some companies negatively). Prime Minister Sanna Marin especially resonated with me. She said that many climate change skeptics are just turning a blind eye on the issue and ignoring it because they want to make profit off of all fossil fuels even though it is accelerating global warming and all the issues that it changes. Marin says that she believes that this mindset is way too short term, and instead Finland is committed to developing clean energy technology to become carbon neutral by as early as 2035 as a way to benefit the economy in the long-term. Marin addresses exactly the problem that I think is causing American inaction about climate change: corporations that make their fortunes off of oil don't want to see progress or the survival of our planet since all they care about is profit. However, investments into solutions that combat climate change can revitalize the American economy as well as make the world a clean, safe place for our country's future generations.

# Application

- Well, I do think that the best way to make a significant impact on reducing climate emissions is for our country's environmental policies to be changed. I especially believe in the implementation of the Green New Deal, since it proposes a comprehensive plan to bring American into carbon neutrality as early as possible so that our planet doesn't suffer even worse consequences from climate change. The best way to do this, of course, is to make sure our local, state, and federal representatives hear our voices and support the Green New Deal and other beneficial environmental policies. This can be achieved through voting (although I am not old enough to vote yet), protesting, and environmental activism on social media.

# Post

