
GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: WHOM TO BLAME? AND WHAT TO DO?

Alexander B. Veber

Institute of Sociology of RAS, Moscow

By now the world expert community has got irrefutable evidence of the age-long trend of global warming which serves as an indicator of climate change on the Earth.

The intergovernmental group of experts in climate change (IPCC) in their fourth report (2007) maintains: the global warming is *indisputable* and already *irreversible*. To the most important results of IPCC's research one can refer the conclusion that the climate change observed after the beginning of the industrial revolution is *induced by the humankind*. It is proved that at the present stage the role of anthropogenic factor outweighs the 'contribution' of the natural sources of global warming.

The main cause of global warming is the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere as a consequence of the large-scale usage of hydrocarbons as a source of energy. Global warming is the evidence of 'the huge market breakdown the world has ever seen' (Stern's Report). But this is also the evidence of the 'collapse of policy'. The rivalry of the Great Powers and especially the world wars of the 20th century, which besides the colossal direct damage to the nature meant a huge waste spending of physical and raw material resources, made their large contribution to the ecological situation formed on the planet. Not less and maybe even larger damage and waste of resources was produced by the Cold War that lasted for decades with its absurd nuclear arms race.

The situation became so worse that today the humanity faces the challenge of 'double catastrophe' – the one that in the nearest future threatens the most vulnerable to climate change poorest part of the world population and another one which threatens the whole world – the regress in human development. By the middle of the current century the economic losses from hurricanes, tornados, floods, landslides, droughts and forest fires can exceed the losses caused by the world wars and crises of the first half of the 20th century.

Global scale of the problem, inertia of climatic processes and connected with it ambiguity of prospects – all these requires the necessity of urgent actions. The overcoming of contradictions in this question between developed and developing countries, the coordination of international program of action, decision-making and their realization – these are political tasks confronting national governments and whole world community.