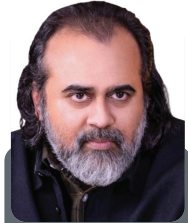


The Climate Crisis Within: Rethinking Global Warming

The climate crisis isn't just an environmental emergency — it's a reflection of our restless, consumption-driven lives. Operation 2030 urges a radical shift: from chasing more to choosing wisely, from outer accumulation to inner clarity, before irreversible damage becomes our new normal

FIRST
Column



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Something unprecedented is happening in our times. The planet is changing for the worse, and we are the ones pushing it to the brink. The climate crisis isn't the result of a single disaster but the outcome of millions of decisions made every day. It's not an accident. It's a mirror.

We've grown up in a world that told us to chase more: more material growth, more speed, more comfort. And now, those very pursuits are catching up with us. The Earth is warning us through record heatwaves, floods, and vanishing wildlife. But perhaps the loudest warning is the one we're failing to hear — the desensitisation within, the part of us that no longer feels disturbed by any of this.

Everywhere we look, the Earth is speaking: the heat is rising, animals are vanishing, forests are falling silent. But it seems we have become so used to environmental chaos that it barely registers. Floods, droughts, fires that were once shocking, now feel routine.

The more we see, the less we seem to feel the urgency to change. And that's the deeper crisis. It's not just about vanishing wildlife or broken weather patterns. It's about how we've adjusted inwardly, how our sensitivity to what truly matters has faded. Gradually, the abnormal starts to feel ordinary. That's when the real damage begins.

It's becoming clear that no law, conference, or fancy new technology can fix this by itself. Because this isn't just about the environment. It's about us. It's about a restless mind that's always chasing more and is never truly satisfied.

You see it all around: in swelling populations, growing material demands, and the quiet assumption that more stuff means more happiness. But has it ever truly delivered? If we want to act wisely, we first have to see clearly.

More Consumption, More Carbon

That's why the PrashantAdvait Foundation has launched Operation 2030 — not to offer another policy fix, but to ask deeper questions. What if the real climate crisis isn't just outside us, but within us?

In our need to compete for more material, to hoard, to constantly want more? This inner agitation is mirrored in the rising carbon in our skies.

Back in 1750, carbon dioxide levels were around 270 parts per million. By 1900, they crept up to 300. But after that, everything changed.

The 20th century brought rapid industrialisation, and emissions shot up. By the 1950s, carbon levels were rising about 10 ppm per decade. Scientists began saying what was becoming obvious: the planet was heating up alongside our emissions.

By the early 2000s, concern turned into a quiet



panic. That unease led to the 2015 Paris Agreement, where the world agreed that warming beyond 1.5°C could trigger runaway changes: melting ice, leaking methane, shifting ocean currents. So, countries pledged to cut emissions by 43 per cent by 2030, using 2019 as the baseline.

But here we are. That promise hasn't held. We've already crossed the 1.5°C mark, years before we were supposed to. The warnings were there. We just didn't listen through all the noise.

What does this moment ask of us? That we look past the numbers and ask: what do they really mean?

Message Behind the Rising Alarm

When we hear "disaster," we think of floods, wars, pandemics. But what's quietly unfolding could be even more serious, and far more permanent.

Crossing 1.5°C isn't just a number on a chart. It means something irreversible has begun. Ice sheets are melting. Frozen grounds are releasing methane. Ocean currents are shifting. These aren't things we can pause or rewind. They have momentum now.

Despite all the talk, emissions have stayed at about 58 gigatons a year since 2019. The Paris Agreement laid out three futures: the green path (cut emissions

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to 33 gigatons by 2030), the yellow path (allow some rise to 39, but with risk), and the red path, the one we're on, where emissions keep rising and temperatures cross 3°C.

It's 2025, and emissions are still above 58 giga-

tons. We're still on the red path, despite everything we know. And here's the thing: this crisis rarely shows up in our daily conversations. And when we stop talking about what matters, we stop noticing it altogether.

Unseen Cost of Climate Injustice

So who's really driving this crisis? To stay within targets, each person on Earth should emit no more than 2.1 tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2030. By 2050, that needs to drop to about 0.7 tons. That doesn't mean zero emissions, but it does mean balance: what we emit must match what the Earth can absorb.

But the world isn't equal. India's emissions, for instance, is around 1.9 tons per person, which is within range. The EU emits at 7. The US hovers around 16. For Saudi Arabia and the UAE, it is between 20 and 25.

And the strange part is that the biggest polluters are often the slowest to change. The richest nations, those with the most money and science, still emit the most. And act the least. In the last ten years, the top 1 per cent of emitters have caused roughly 1.3 million early deaths. They've used over

20 times their fair share, while the damage has mostly hit the global South, including India.

The ultra-wealthy 0.1 per cent emit over 1,000 tons per capita every year. Meanwhile, the bottom half of the world, about 4 billion people, contribute just 5 per cent of emissions. Yet they face the worst: hunger, heat, floods, migration. This isn't just about carbon. It's about justice. A few get comfort. Billions pay the price. So we must ask: what are we really chasing in the name of success?

Toward a Wiser Way

● Rethinking Success, Reawakening the Self

The climate crisis reflects a deep void within which we try to fill with endless consumption. But the void will be filled with inner clarity, not outer accumulation. Operation 2030 calls for a redefinition of success, from chasing material to choosing wisdom. This isn't just something impractical. Millions of people have already reshaped their lives through timeless teachings of Vedanta, and living with more clarity.

● Unmasking the Real Culprits

We've been taught to idolise those who excel in power and consumption, but these very people often carry the deepest climate footprints. Operation 2030 challenges this cultural illusion. It demands that we put a spotlight on emissions data. Public figures and corporations must disclose their carbon footprints, so we can see through the facade of success.

● Shifting Demand by Pricing Rightly

The price of a short flight or consuming beef does not reflect their real carbon footprint. Operation 2030 will push for product costing that reflects the true environmental toll. When people know what they're truly paying for, their choices change. And when demand shifts, so does the market.

● Letting the People Lead

Political will rarely leads. It follows the public mood. That's why Operation 2030 puts the citizen first. Every purchase, every click, every conversation is a political act. We aim to equip individuals with awareness and agency, so that climate becomes not just a policy point but a people's movement.

These may be our final years: not only to restore some of the ecological balance, but to reflect on what truly matters.

We've grown up in a world that told us to chase more: more material growth, more speed, more comfort. And now, those very pursuits are catching up with us.

The Earth is warning us through record heatwaves, floods, and vanishing wildlife. But perhaps the loudest warning is the one we're failing to hear — the desensitisation within, the part of us that no longer feels disturbed by any of this.

It's not just about saving the planet, it's about returning to clarity.

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