

You are going to read four extracts from articles in which experts give their views on climate change. For questions 37–40, choose from the experts A–D. The experts may be chosen more than once.

Can We Reduce Climate Change?

Four experts give their views on whether it is possible to mitigate the effects of global climate change.

- A** The extreme weather conditions experienced in recent years are a clear indication that global warming is underway, and that future climate patterns will certainly follow the trajectory predicted unless measures are taken to lessen the impact of fossil fuel use. And yet the scenario is not as hopeless as many fear. Figures show that nations which are undergoing rapid economic growth are indeed causing a sizeable upsurge in global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the present time. However, the GHG per person of these regions is currently still far below that of much of the world, and with their adoption of increasingly efficient technologies, it is unlikely that their GHG per person will ever equal that of Europe or North America. Indeed, my view is that the growing pace of scientific advancement will eventually find the means to mitigate and even reverse the consequences of climate change.
- B** There is no doubt that increasing industrialisation has had a measurable impact on GHG emissions, with consequences for climate and the environment. As for the future, however, even the most expert calculations are no more than speculation. What is more, even if the situation were to reach the catastrophic proportions that some foresee, this will not herald the end of life on earth as we know it. There have been many great climatic variations throughout history, and life forms have always adapted and survived. I see no reason why this period of change should be any different. And in the shorter term, it seems likely that GHG emissions will soon stabilise. The technologies to harness wind, wave and solar power have been in place for many years now, and as oil and gas become ever scarcer, markets will inevitably switch to more efficient and renewable resources.
- C** Despite recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, only a handful of countries have achieved any reduction in GHG emissions in recent years, while many developing countries have massively increased their fossil fuel use and hence their GHG emissions. It also seems probable that these levels will go on rising for decades, eclipsing any potential reductions elsewhere in the world. And while some sceptics question the accuracy of climate change forecasting, one cannot ignore the fact that most models produce strikingly similar results. This, to my mind, is evidence enough that something should be done. The potential consequences of failing to heed the warning signs is another question entirely. Even if it is too late to reverse the effects of global warming, I believe that the natural environment, and all its complex relationships, may eventually modify to cope with the changes. The earth is more resilient than we think.
- D** One only has to look at the world's GHG levels to realise that climate change is a real and urgent issue. Forecasts made in previous decades – anticipating hurricanes, floods and record temperatures – have proved correct, indicating that models of future trends are also likely to be accurate. Countries becoming newly industrialised are producing GHG emissions to such an extent as to erode all other countries' efforts to stabilise the world's temperature. This situation is likely to continue for some years yet. Thus, from melting polar caps to devastated rainforests and rising sea levels, our environment and the ecosystems they support are in grave danger. The key to averting potential catastrophe, I feel, lies in human ingenuity. For example, more efficient coal power stations already generate a third less emissions than conventional ones. Man has engineered this situation, and has the capacity – and incentive – to devise inventions to confront it.

Which expert

expresses a different opinion from C about the extent to which fossil fuels will continue to be used?

37

has a different view from D on the contribution of developing countries to climate change?

38

holds a different view from all the other experts on the reliability of climate change predictions?

39

has the same view as B about whether ecosystems will adjust to the consequences of climate change?

40