



Greta Thunberg: You Can't Simply Make Up Your Own Facts

Talare

Greta Thunberg
Aktivist

Datum

23 juli 2019

Plats

French National Assembly, Paris

I have some good and some bad news regarding the climate emergency. I will start with the good news. The world – as a small number people have been saying lately – will not end in eleven years.

The bad news however is that around the year 2030, if we continue with business as usual, we will likely be in a position where we may pass a number of tipping points. And then we might no longer be able to undo the irreversible climate breakdown.

A lot of people, a lot of politicians, business leaders, journalists say that they don't 'agree' with what we children are saying. They say we are exaggerating, that we are alarmists.

To answer this I would like to refer to page 108, chapter 2, in the latest IPCC report.

There you will find all our 'opinions' summarized. Because there you find our remaining carbon-dioxide budget.

Right there it says that if we are to have a 67 per cent chance of limiting the global temperature rise to below 1.5°C, we had, on 1 January 2018, 420 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide left in our CO₂ budget. And of course that number is much lower today. We emit about 42 gigatonnes of CO₂ every year.

At current emissions levels, that remaining budget is gone within roughly 8.5 years.

These numbers are as real as it gets. Though a great number of scientists suggest they are too generous, these are the ones that have been accepted by all nations

through the IPCC.

And not once, not one single time, have I heard any politician, journalist or business leader even mention these numbers. It is almost like you don't even know they exist, as if you haven't even read the latest IPCC report, on which the future of our civilization is depending.

Or maybe you are simply not mature enough to tell it like it is.

Because even that burden you leave to us children.

We become the bad guys who have to tell people these uncomfortable things, because no one else wants to, or dares to.

And just for quoting and acting on these numbers – these scientific facts – we receive unimaginable amounts of hate and threats. We are being mocked and lied about by elected officials, members of parliaments, business leaders, journalists.

What I really would like to ask all of those who question our so-called 'opinions', or think that we are extreme: Do you have a different budget for at least a reasonable chance of staying below 1.5°C of warming? Is there another intergovernmental panel on climate change? Is there a secret Paris agreement that we don't know about? One that does not include the aspect of equity?

Because these are the numbers that count. This is the current best available science. You can't simply make up your own facts, just because you don't like what you hear. There is no middle ground when it comes to the climate and ecological emergency.

Of course you could argue that we should go for a more risky pathway, such as the alternative of 580 gigatonnes of CO₂ from 1 January 2018, which gives us a 50:50 chance of limiting the global temperature rise to below 1.5°C. That amount of carbon dioxide will run out in about twelve years of current business as usual. But why should we do that? Why should we accept taking that risk? Leaving the future living conditions for humankind to a 50:50 flip of a coin?

Four hundred and twenty gigatonnes left of CO₂ to emit. And now that

number is down to less than 360 gigatonnes.

And please note that these figures are global and therefore do not say anything about the aspect of equity, clearly stated throughout the Paris Agreement, which is absolutely necessary to make it work on a global scale. That means that richer countries need to get down to zero emissions faster – so that people in poorer parts of the world can heighten their standard of living by building some of the infrastructure that we have already built. Such as roads, hospitals, electricity, schools and providing clean drinking water.

And because you have ignored these facts, because you and pretty much all of the media, to this very minute keep ignoring them – people do not know what is going on.

If you respect the science, if you understand the science, then this is it. Four hundred and twenty gigatonnes of CO₂ left to emit on 1 January 2018 to have a 67 per cent chance of staying below a 1.5°C global temperature rise, according to the IPCC.

In the Paris Agreement, we have only signed up for staying below 1.5–2°C of temperature rise. And that of course gives us a bigger remaining carbon-dioxide budget. But the latest IPCC report shows that aiming instead for below 1.5°C would significantly reduce the climate impacts, and that would most certainly save countless human lives.

This is what it's all about. This is all that we are saying. But I will also tell you this, you cannot solve a crisis without treating it like a crisis, without seeing the full picture. You cannot leave the responsibility to individuals, politicians, the market or other parts of the world to take. This has to include everything and everyone.

Once you realize how painfully small the size of our remaining carbon-dioxide budget is; once you realize how fast it is disappearing; once you realize that basically nothing is being done about it; and once you realize that almost no one is even aware of the fact that CO₂ budget even exists ... then tell me – just exactly what do you do? And how do you do it without sounding alarmist?

That is the question we must ask ourselves, and the people in power.

The science is clear. And all we children are doing is communicating and acting on that united science.

Now political leaders in some countries are starting to talk. They are starting to declare climate emergencies and announcing dates for so-called 'climate neutrality'. And declaring a climate emergency is good.

But only setting up these vague distant dates, and saying things which give the impression that things are being done and that action is underway will most likely do more harm than good. Because the changes required are still nowhere in sight. Not in France, not in the EU. Nowhere.

And I believe that the biggest danger is not our inaction. The real danger is when companies and politicians are making it look like real action is happening, when in fact almost nothing is being done, apart from clever accounting and creative PR.

The climate and ecological emergency is right here, right now. But it has only just begun. It will get worse.

Four hundred and twenty gigatonnes of CO₂ left to emit on 1 January 2018 to have a 67 per cent chance of staying below a 1.5°C global temperature rise.

And now that figure is already down to less than 360 gigatonnes.

At current emission levels, that remaining budget is gone within roughly 8.5 years.

In fact, since I started this speech the world has emitted about 800,000 tonnes of CO₂.

And if anyone still has excuses – not to listen, not to act, not to care – I ask you once again: Is there another intergovernmental panel on climate change? Is there a secret Paris agreement that we don't know about? One that does not include the aspect of equity? Do you have a different budget for at least a reasonable chance of staying below 1.5°C of global temperature rise?

Some people have chosen not to come here today, some people have chosen not to listen to us. And that is fine, we are after all just children. You don't have to listen to us. But you have to listen to the united science. The scientists. And that is all we ask – unite behind the science.

Taggar

2010-tal, 2019, Fridays for future, Kvinna, Miljö och klimat

URI

<https://www.svenskatal.se/tale/greta-thunberg-you-can-t-simply-make-up-your-own-facts>