



Study of Green House effect, global warming, consequences and significance

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Introduction : The exchange of incoming and outgoing radiation that warms the Earth is often referred to as the greenhouse effect because a greenhouse works in much



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the same way. Incoming UV radiation easily passes through the glass walls of a greenhouse and is absorbed by the plants and hard surfaces inside. Weaker IR radiation, however, has difficulty passing through the glass walls and is trapped inside, thus warming the greenhouse. This effect lets tropical plants thrive inside a greenhouse, even during a cold winter.

Earth is constantly bombarded with enormous amounts of radiation, primarily from the sun. This solar radiation strikes the Earth's atmosphere in the form of visible light, plus ultraviolet (UV), infrared (IR) and other types of radiation that are invisible to the human eye.

UV radiation has a shorter wavelength and a higher energy level than visible light, while IR radiation has a longer wavelength and a weaker energy level. About 30 percent of the radiation striking Earth's atmosphere is immediately reflected back out to space by clouds, ice, snow, sand and other reflective surfaces, according to NASA. The remaining 70 percent of incoming solar radiation is absorbed by the oceans, the land and the atmosphere. As they heat up, the oceans, land and atmosphere release heat in the form of IR thermal radiation, which passes out of the atmosphere and into space.

It's this equilibrium of incoming and outgoing radiation that makes the Earth habitable, with an average temperature of about 59 degrees Fahrenheit (15 degrees Celsius), according to NASA. Without this atmospheric equilibrium, Earth would be as cold and lifeless as its moon, or as blazing hot as Venus. The moon, which has almost no atmosphere, is about minus 243 F (minus 153 C) on its dark side. Venus, on the other hand, has a very dense atmosphere that traps solar radiation; the average temperature on Venus is about 864 F (462 C).

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