# **Rectify 2035**

By Sage Mitchell

The year is 2035. Undoubtedly, we’ve made remarkable strides in the fields of technology, science, and business, just to name a few. Yet, the protection and recovery of our environment remained of little concern to us, the common folk, alongside those holding positions of power: Presidents, Ministers, and CEOs. Finally, we are heading to work in flying cars or by way of jetpacks, but these developments came storming with enormous consequences, inclusive of catastrophic carbon emissions, which have further assisted in the development of global warming, loss of biodiversity and so much more. A glance around my environment is a truly tearful experience and it’s with a heavy heart I begin describing the image before me to you.

Organizations such as the European Union have enlightened us time and time again on the horrendous and majorly irreversible damage that our lackadaisical attitudes towards the betterment of our climate conditions would one day reap. In 2025, a report published on an official EU website outlined the consequences of climate change to readers. Without a doubt, the researchers and scientists spoke from informed positions as they reported repercussions to include threats to the weather as we know it, our oceans, wildlife and frighteningly human health. An irrefutable feeling of déjà-vu struck me instantly as I reflected on that article and the conditions of today, undeniably parallel.

The ice caps are melting! The figures reported for average annual ice loss have continually increased and as of right now, exceed ten times those disclosed in the 1990s. In 2021, the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets averaged a loss of roughly 465 tons of ice each year. This year, less than two decades later, nearly 550 tons were lost. Today, environmental protection activist and reporter Sage Mitchell has announced that over 50% of the ice sheets are near complete dissolution. Earth as we once knew it is becoming a distant memory with each passing day. Regrettably, individuals are pushing for betterment now, but it may be too late.

Alongside this, the weather is ever-changing. Unquestionably, there is global warming — the long-term heating of the Earth's climate system. We’ve proceeded in our pattern of poor decision-making with regard to the emission of greenhouse gases and as such, within the last decade, we have seen a general temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius. The change sounds less than drastic, but new reports are signalling a further 3 degrees Celsius increase by 2050. If the weather crisis proceeds in its steady climb, a century from today the planet faces the possibility of being deemed unfit to support human life.

Recall Earth being our only livable planet? Currently, much of our revenue is streamed into NASA and other space-focused organizations in hopes of facilitating survival on alternative planets. This research stemmed from the development that within a decade, 5-10% of the currently habitable regions in the hemisphere will be inhospitable to humans, because of the vastly deteriorating weather conditions. At the beginning of the year, a group of 500 volunteers began a trek to Mars on an experimental trip to determine how feasible the introduction of human life will be in that atmosphere. Citizens of the world await their return eagerly as the feedback provided on completion of this mission will signal life-changing modifications to the world as a whole. Daily, conversations are progressing on the potential of relocating a substantial portion of the residents of Earth.

In addition to warming, forecasts have revealed that precipitation has seen a 2 percent increase. This phenomenon is easily explained by the higher rate of evaporation resulting from the aforementioned melting glaciers and ice sheets. What has been the general impact? Flooding and other natural disasters are at an all-time high and with little hope for the regeneration of our lands, it seems that the future only holds further catastrophe and devastation.

Another consequence of our complacence is the extinction of several species on the planet. We rely on biodiversity majorly in our daily lives as our health and security are dependent on ecosystem products such as oxygen, fresh water and food. At present, one-quarter of the animal and plant species are facing extinction. Notably, the monarch butterfly, leatherback sea turtle and polar bear are some of the many animals no longer roaming the world. Beyond the absence of their beauty for us to freely behold, a loss in biodiversity is extremely impactful for a variety of reasons. Biodiversity is important for human health, as natural products are incorporated in the development of medication. For reference, 25% of the drugs used in modern medicine are derived from rainforest plants and 70% of cancer drugs are natural or nature inspired. As such, we have been exposed to the unfortunate reality that changes in biodiversity both directly and indirectly affect our lives.

Naturally, the developing nations of the Caribbean Community, CAICOM, have taken catastrophic hits to their economies, with widespread escalation in reported disasters. Over the past decade, the poverty level in Trinidad & Tobago has seen a daunting escalation from 20% to 35%, largely as a result of flooding, landslides and hurricanes, among other natural disasters. Sadly, many victims of these disasters are unable to receive needed assistance as the government is placed in sticky positions as they attempt to manage scarce resources amidst disasters happening simultaneously within short timespans.

For centuries, the small islands making up the Caribbean Community have been famed for thriving tourism sectors. The tourism sectors in the Caribbean flourished as a result of the charming sandy beaches and welcoming weather. Where has our tourism sector stood in the presence of climate change? Rising sea levels, frequent tropical storms, droughts and coastal flooding are some of the repercussions faced due to the decaying climate conditions. Subsequently, vacationing within our marvellous corner of the world has been deemed less attractive and even risky to a multitude of foreigners. Such a reality has proven detrimental to our tourism industry and consequently downturned economic revenue from tourist activity to an all-time low regionally.

With our economy in no position to absorb more damage, the agricultural sector has also taken a hit. The production of the cocoa crop has seen a substantial decline, as some of the plantations were unable to provide adequate irrigation, resulting in a lower quantity and quality of crop yield. A significant chunk of land previously presumed to be well-suited for tomato planting has proven to be less than ideal, with minuscule returns. These developments have not only reduced the currency inflows attached to exports, but additionally increased outflows as importation is intensified to meet the needs of citizens.

The National Geographic Channel recently published a documentary entitled, “The Climate Is Changing, Why Aren’t We? Revisited”. It discussed at great lengths the reality that has come to pass due to a failure to oblige with positive environmental change campaigns presented decades ago. Ironically, humans exist within the ecosystem we appear intent on annihilating. As such, the degradation of the environment from climate change is proving to be a significant deterrent to human health. It seems that more and more frequently illnesses are emerging and attacking individuals, and the introduction and spread of these diseases threaten the longevity of the human population. The unavailability of clean air, safe drinking water and sufficient food are now resulting in rampant spread of Hepatitis B, Polio and Typhoid, among a plethora of other diseases.

Furthermore, it is of no surprise that dengue, malaria, malnutrition and pneumonia are rampant. Yet, the threat creeping up on us all, Santo Respirator, surpasses all other conditions. The infection was discovered in 2034 in India. Researchers have determined the cause of the infection as inhalation of polluted air which contains the toxic emissions released by jetpack smoke. Within six months of discovery, it had been identified within all nations of the world and is capable of massacre. As of now over one million deaths have been reported. Worldwide, leaders are abolishing the use of these transportation devices, but the damage is already done. Much of the population assumed the subsiding of the COVID-19 virus to be the death of mask-wearing by the general public. Ironically, one year into nose and mouth exposure, mask-wearing is at a similar high as individuals avoid the inhalation of toxic emissions in the air via the use of gas masks. Regardless of age and status, precautions must be taken. Hearts go out to the young ones, babies and toddlers who irritably fuss as their parents strap their faces with masks and blanket them in layers of protective gear. Little do they know that discomfort is the only way to protect their susceptible bodies from deadly contaminators.

The upcoming generations are venturing into a harsh reality because of the lack of appreciation expressed for the planet by the tenants before them. For this reason, it is a colossal relief that this piece is drafted in 2021. Let us modify our thinking patterns and poor environmental approach. This evolution is the sole technique which can be implemented to curtail the revelation of this horrific chronicle in swiftly approaching years. Make impactful strides, rectify twenty thirty-five!