

Supreme Master Ching Hai Speaks with the Press

December 18, 2010

Hallo, noble media members of Mexico and especially here in Quintana Roo Province. I'd really like to convey my appreciation and respect, first of all, for your courageous efforts and commitment to report all the truth and all the important news, to provide accurate information to the public.

We are here today to talk about the dangerous situation of our planet. First of all, together we thank Heaven for protecting us thus far. We are still alive here in order to make such a discussion today. This is due to Heaven's grace, also of course the physical and spiritual efforts of Earthly beings and all the saints on Earth and above, that our world is still existing. We thank them all.

And through the media's caring concern for this subject as well, we can speak together about the solution. I have come to lend my humble support to your great endeavor and in the hope that you can save our world, through your noble and powerful work, from further destructive causes that are threatening our world. All this is so that we will live to see our future generations, our children, thrive in better conditions than we do now.

These conditions, I'm sorry to say, are getting worse and extremely urgent. For example, we are losing the world's inland glaciers that provide water to over a billion and a half people. Drought-afflicted regions have more than doubled in the past three decades. And fires, floods, and category-5 hurricanes are more frequent and fiercer than ever. There are now about 25-40 million climate refugees, which could easily become a billion within the next few decades. Where will they go?

Meanwhile, potent methane gas once frozen beneath the earth has become a ticking time bomb due to rising temperatures in the Arctic and is now set to trigger runaway climate change. We are living the worst-case scenario and the scientists are crying out for us to hit the emergency brake now, and hard.

However, the solution that we are proposing, like focusing on reducing fossil fuels, won't give fast enough results for us because carbon dioxide, once released into the atmosphere, stays for centuries or more. Scientists are now saying that we must take advantage of shorter-lived emissions like methane—which heats the atmosphere 100 times more than CO₂ but disappears quickly, in 9 or 12 years, and black carbon (or soot)—which generates 4,470 times more warming potential than CO₂ but disappears within a few weeks. These are very, very dangerous heat trapping gases but they disappear quickly. If we eliminate them we will cool the planet in a few years. So it's the emergency brake that we need, and the place to start is the livestock industry. Because livestock industry, animal raising, generates the largest human-made source of methane; it is also a very large source of black carbon, or soot, and accounts for at least 51% of all greenhouse gas emissions that heat up our planet.

So if we stop the livestock industry then we will stop global warming – fast and simple. Furthermore, if we use all the tillable land on the planet to plant organic vegetables, then we will absorb 40% carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. So stop livestock industry, then consequently we have stopped like 91% of the heat, of the warming effect.

But there are even more compelling reasons to stop the livestock industry and meat production, which I'm sure we all would welcome because it is a very inexpensive but major solution to many serious problems that we are facing right now on our planet. Livestock farming is like producing food in reverse. In fact, the "product" is hunger, war, death and destruction, and maybe even destroying the

whole planet, the whole life on this planet. The way we are going looks that way. The many by-products are water shortages, food crisis, water, air, and soil pollution, deforestation, desertification, ocean dead zones, and biodiversity loss. We use almost half of the world's grain supply to pour into the meat and dairy industry; most of our water supply; almost half the global fish caught to feed chickens and pigs; and 30% of the planet's ice-free land. With two hectares of land, we can support either 1 meat eater or 80 healthy vegans.

The good news is that if we all stop eating meat and dairy, we can regain our all protective ecosystems, stop over 60% of the biodiversity loss, save four-fifths of the economic cost to mitigate emissions within 50 years, and much, much, much more. Of course, we save lives, human lives, by stopping all the sickness due to animal consumption, and stop the global warming to save our planet.

And we should stop eating fish also because the fish industry has caused the astounding loss of 90% of the large fish in our oceans. We have to stop it in order to revive marine life from its current brink of collapse. We could also enhance public health and stop all the deadly meat-related disease, chronic diseases, fatal diseases, all kinds of disease, from heart disease, cancer, to viral flu pandemics.

Anything less than the vegan solution will not work for our situation right now. For example, improving fish farming, even with the best methods, still has failed to stop the large-scale polluting of the oceans. And when we say we raise the animals "organically" or capture methane from manure to reduce emissions—these methods also fall exceedingly short of expectation. Even in the case of capturing methane from animal manures, three times that amount is still being released from the livestock digestive process. Plus, this technique cannot be considered clean energy at all, when the same factory farm is destroying the environment in a dozen other ways.

But all these things that I have reported to you, I think you know them all or you know some of them already. And we thank all the kind scientists and diligent researchers of the world. But now, it is the urgent time to bring these emergency facts that we know into constructive, life-sustaining actions. We must help to end all the mass killings of the tens of billions of animals a year, not only to stop catastrophic climate change consequence, but also to save the original goodness of our own humanity in our heart.

We have to save our loving kindness, by live and let live, by protecting the weak and defenseless, because we are humane, we are the children of God. We should act like God: merciful, compassionate, protective, loving and kind. All the religions have taught us the same anyway, like non-violence, harmony with nature. The world needs not only food and money, but also spiritual infusion. In truth, positive spiritual energy is what has sustained our world up till now, helping us to progress and evolve in many ways.

Therefore, respected journalists, ladies and gentlemen, your noble mission is not only to save this planet but also to restore the benevolence of the humans' heart. Because after all, what is more worth saving than the best qualities that we have within ourselves? We must shape our future on virtue and compassion. Then, all generations hereafter shall thrive and flourish.

You have my heartfelt best wishes and full support. May Heaven bless you and protect you, especially while on duty. Thank you for coming. Gracias.