

In what seemed like the blink of an eye, the majestic, ostensibly invincible dinosaurs completely vanished from the face of the Earth. As the looming threat of climate change continues to ravage our planet, and disease resistance gets ever more threatening, the hazards facing humanity cause scholars to speculate 65 million years later that we could soon follow the same fate in our very own mass extinction. The causes of this 6th mass extinction are similar to the effect of volcanoes in the pre-human past in that we will do the only thing that is in our hands to do: 'panic like the house is on fire', as Greta Thunberg urges us to, or face its wrath.

The damage that we have inflicted upon the planet is, many may argue, irreversible, much like the effect of volcanoes in the pre-human past. The current rate of carbon being emitted into the atmosphere condemns us to most likely reach a mass extinction threshold as soon as 2100, when we are expected to reach 310 gigatons of carbon. According to the World Economic Forum, air pollution was found to be the largest current environmental threat to public health. Due to the greenhouse effect, it will cause unbearable heat, turning the world into an incinerator, much like the volcanoes did in the pre-human past. Power plant emissions alone are responsible for the deaths of up to 52,000 people each year in the United States only, again resembling how volcanic ash suffocated many. However, if humans are the ones that are damaging the planet, humans can be the ones to reverse this damage.

Humans' evolution after the five past mass extinction shows that this damage can be reversed. There are two forms of panic. One where we succumb to the chaos, and another more productive form, where we act. There are many straightforward things people can do as individuals to prevent mass extinction, such as using reusable bags, declining default plastic or buying organic produce. Urban air quality is the greatest threat. In the past several decades, humanity has been solely responsible for annihilation of more than half of Earth's flora and fauna. Only 15% of the land and 4% of the world's oceans are protected even though humans have used up more than 40% of land for raising livestock and farms. Through conservation projects and initiatives to release less carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it is possible to take steps to reverse our mass extinction. Therefore, although there is still a long way to go, it is possible to save our species and prevent this mass extinction, but only if we make quick and drastic changes.

If we carry on in the same manner that we are now, we are set to race towards the 6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction on Planet Earth, worse than the effects of volcanoes. If we start now to act about the fact that 'our house is on fire', we do not have to face the same fate as the dinosaurs.