



Written by [James Heiser](#) on February 18, 2010

Bill Gates Warns of Climate Change

Microsoft mogul Bill Gates appears to be continuing his bid to become Al Gore 2.0.

Gates generated some attention several weeks ago with his public prognostications regarding an imminent "end of the world as we know it." [As the previous jeremiad was reported at InformationWeek.](#)



Bill Gates said he fears Earth might become a post-industrial wasteland plagued by heat, chronic food and energy shortages, and rampant disease unless governments and private organizations invest more time and money solving what the Microsoft chairman believes are the world's most pressing problems.

"If we project what the world will be like 10 years from now without innovation in health, education, energy, or food, the picture is quite bleak," said Gates, in his annual letter from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, published earlier this week.

To his credit, Gates' Foundation did back up the rhetoric with action, providing [\\$10 billion for inoculations](#). But Gates' latest pronouncement appears to signal his intention to become a climate change fanboy at the very moment when the theory appears to have achieved obsolescence. Of course, Microsoft's critics may find this to be nothing new for Bill Gates.

[According to an article at CNN.com,](#)

Gates called climate change the world's most vexing problem, and added that finding a cheap and clean energy source is more important than creating new vaccines and improving farming techniques, causes into which he has invested billion of dollars.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation last month pledged \$10 billion to help deploy and develop vaccines for children in the developing world.

The world must eliminate all of its carbon emissions and cut energy costs in half in order to prevent a climate catastrophe, which will hit the world's poor hardest, he said.

"We have to drive full speed and get a miracle in a pretty tight timeline," he said.

Gates said the deadline for the world to cut all of its carbon emissions is 2050. He suggested that researchers spend the next 20 years inventing and perfecting clean-energy technologies, and then the next 20 years implementing them.

The world's energy portfolio should not include coal or natural gas, he said, and must include



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carbon capture and storage technology as well as nuclear, wind and both solar photovoltaics and solar thermal power.

"We're going to have to work on each of these five [areas] and we can't give up on any of them because they look daunting," he said. "They all have significant challenges."

Certainly billionaires have a very different understanding of the term "daunting" than the rest of us; exotic energy technologies are a lot more interesting when you have the money to afford [a 30-car garage](#).

Fortunately for Mr. Gates, he is quickly catching on to the intricacies of proclamations of climate change doom. For example, the earlier declaration of a mere ten years before "the end" has now been extended all the way out to 2050 — in keeping with the proclamations of Al Gore and other prophets of eco-doom.

There is nothing wrong with pursuing alternative energy technologies — but Mr. Gates should certainly understand that if such technologies are actually economically viable, then private industry will pursue their development — and not because of fear, but because some entrepreneur wants to be "the next Bill Gates."

Photo of Bill Gates and his spouse Melinda Gates at the 2010 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland: AP Images



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