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LINDENWOOD

Expert says focus should be on immediate concerns

By KRISTIN TROWER

Climate change is not the environment's biggest problem, according to environmental expert Indur Goklany. In a lecture Sept. 28 at Lindenwood University, Goklany suggested that society should focus on more immediate concerns, such as hunger, poverty, illness, and coastal flooding.

Over the past 30 years, Goklany has written several books concerning the environment and economic growth. He has a master's and doctorate degree in electrical engineering, has worked for federal and state governments, and has researched natural resource and environmental issues.

Goklany, who was a guest of Dr. Ken Chilton and Lindenwood's Institute for the Study of Economics and the Environment, discussed a variety of available ways of improving the environment. These include the Kyoto Protocol, an attempt to stabilize and reduce greenhouse gases, which would happen by 2085, mitigation, which would slow down the climate change, and reduce concentrations of greenhouse gases, and finally, adaptation.

Using charts, graphs, and research, Goklany showed that the Kyoto Protocol would cost upwards of \$125 million, and there would be little to no change in the environment. Studies show that Kyoto would only reduce climate change by 7 percent by 2085.

The results of mitigation are questionable, and would cost trillions of dollars, and take decades before any improvement is shown. However, research has indicated that it would reduce the population at risk of coastal flooding by 18 percent.

Adaptation would allow society to become stronger and more resilient, and results would be shown almost immediately. According to Goklany, "with adaptation, we can capture the benefits...and try to reduce the negative aspects of climate change."

Goklany said that society should solve current problems now, which would help to protect against environmental issues of the future. He also made his stance on other methods very clear.

"Kyoto Protocol and other mitigation schemes cost too much, and deliver too little, too late," he said.

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