GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

The atmosphere, the air we breath, is naturally made up of several gases, including carbon dioxide, oxygen and nitrogen. Burning carbon (the carbon in wood, charcoal, fossil fuels, etc) creates carbon dioxide and other carbon gases that collect in the atmosphere, high in the sky. There they act like a glass roof around the earth, trapping in heat that would otherwise escape into space. This is referred to as the 'greenhouse effect' and is explained in the **Energy and Climate Change booklet.**

This is a good thing, because it keeps the heat in. If it wasn't for gases like carbon dioxide, the temperature of our planet would be on average -18°C, very cold! A big source of greenhouse gases is the smoke from fires when we burn trees, crops and fuelwood. This along with burning more and more fossil fuels, is making the planet warmer and warmer.

The climate is changing and climate change is affecting the whole planet, not just Africa.

Weather is becoming unpredictable; droughts, heatwaves, floods and cyclones are now more frequent. Extreme changes in temperatures create health problems for people and animals. Drought and floods disrupt farming, creating food insecurity.

Humans, plants and animals will perish if temperatures become too hot or too cold. We all need to adapt to the changes and we need to reduce our carbon emissions. Which of the ideas in this book could you use? There are many more in the **Energy & Climate Change booklet.**

Learning how to use fire was one of the discoveries that set humans on their path of development. Another brilliant human invention was using the combustion of fossil fuels to drive engines. Sadly, they could destroy our own planet if we are not careful.