

On the Reduction of Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Levels

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My understanding of the procedures in place to reduce atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide is that the concentration will reach a plateau by probably the year 2100. Meanwhile the quantity of carbon dioxide continues to increase. Recently, when putting these ideas across to some final-year students here at Aberdeen, I had the following idea.

Before a plateau can be attained the graph of carbon dioxide concentration against time will display a point of inflection where the second derivative is zero, that is:

$$\frac{d^2[\text{CO}_2]}{dt^2} = 0$$

It ought to be fairly elementary to fit the current graph, obtained from measurements, for carbon dioxide rise to a functional form and obtain from that the time into the future at which the point of inflection will occur. This will surely be a major step in achieving reductions as the first derivative has for a long period been positive. Therefore the awaited plateau cannot occur without there being a point of inflection. So when will 'point of inflection day' be? April 4th, 2052 will be the centenary of the birth of the author of this piece. Will the point of inflection be occurred by then?

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