Data collected by both the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration and Scripps Institution of Oceanography, two leading meteorological research organizations, found that atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have risen above 400 parts per million. To give a little context, our parent’s generation grew up with concentrations around 330 ppm, levels far lower than our and our children’s generations will probably ever experience.

Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is a natural thing, and levels fluctuate over time just like global temperatures. Yes, the climate does cyclically warm and cool itself. The oceans do naturally acidify and alkalinize on their own, too, but these global shifts occur over periods of thousands and millions of years. Human activity is altering the trends of that cycle, and the long term results of these abrupt shifts are terrifying to consider.

The only thing about all this that is comforting for me is that the Earth will probably be alright no matter what. For all our technological advancement, I honestly believe that humans are incapable of destroying life on Earth. It’s been around a lot longer than we have, and it’s seen far worse days too.

The planet’s going to be fine. It’s only our great-grandchildren’s habitat and lives we’re destroying.