Hotter weather and higher atmospheric CO2 levels will have profound effects on plants. Crops such as corn and soybeans, have critical temperature thresholds above which yields fall precipitously. High CO2 levels will foster the growth of many weeds over crops, threatening yields. Stimulated growth and release of ragweed allergens will threaten hay fever sufferers and asthmatics. The nutrient content of many crops falls in a high CO2 environment. As crop yields fall, prices rise, and undernutrition increases, particularly among children who fail to develop normally who, as a result, may not achieve normal intelligence. In many nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, childhood undernutrition already approaches 50%. Feeding the increasing population of the world may become problematic.

This chapter examines the relationships between the Panama Canal administration and the nearby rural communities sometimes called “pueblos perdidos” (lost towns). Canal administrators resettled these communities in the early twentieth century when the Chagres River was dammed and Gatun Lake was flooded for navigation purposes. Drawing on ethnography and oral history, the chapter shows how “lost towns” has
remained an apt characterization of canal-community relations a century later. An increasingly mechanized and intermodal global transportation infrastructure less dependent on manual labor has left some people and places behind. In the pueblos perdidos, residents interpret local landscapes to make sense of their changing and ambivalent relationships with the Panama Canal administration. In particular, community members highlight a shift from “clean” (maintained) to “dirty” (weedy) landscapes around the canal, describing weediness as an abdication of responsibility.