

# RISKING LIVES TO PROMOTE CLIMATE CHANGE HYPE

*by Paul Driessen*

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SPPI ORIGINAL PAPER



January 16, 2014

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Will global warming alarmists ever set aside their hypotheses, hyperbole, models and ideologies long enough to acknowledge what is actually happening in the real world outside their windows? Will they at least do so before setting off on another misguided adventure? Before persuading like-minded or naïve people to join them? Before forcing others to risk life and limb to transport – and rescue – them? If history is any guide, the answer is: *Not likely*.

The absurd misadventures of University of New South Wales climate professor Chris Turney is but the latest example. He and 51 co-believers set out on the (diesel-powered) Russian charter ship *Akademik Shokalskiy* to prove manmade global warming is destroying the East Antarctic ice sheet. Perhaps they'd been reading Dr. Turney's website, which claims "an increasing body of evidence" shows "melting and collapse" across the area. (It is, after all, summer in Antarctica, albeit a rather cold, icy one thus far.)

Instead of finding open water, they [wound up trapped](#)<sup>1</sup> in record volumes of unforgiving ice, from Christmas Eve until January 2 – ensnared by Mother Nature's sense of humor and their own hubris. The 52 climate tourists were finally rescued by a helicopter sent from Chinese icebreaker *Xue Long*, which itself became locked in the ice. The misadventurers were transferred to Australian icebreaker *Aurora Australis*, but the *Shokalskiy* remains entombed, awaiting the arrival of US Coast Guard icebreaker *Polar Star*. (Meanwhile, Tourney hopes to get more grants to study manmade global warming, to help him make more money from his Carbonscape company, which makes "green" products from CO<sub>2</sub> recovered from the atmosphere.)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/editorials/stuck-on-a-ship-of-cold-fools/story-e6fgr71x-1226793309195>.

As to his expertise, Dr. Tourney couldn't even gauge the ice conditions the 74 crewmen and passengers were about to sail into. And yet we are supposed to believe his alarmist forecasts about Earth's climate.

NASA reports that Antarctic sea ice is now the [largest expanse since](#)<sup>2</sup> scientists began measuring its extent in 1979: 19.5 million square kilometers (4,806,000,000 acres) – 2.1 times the size of the entire United States. Another report says ocean melting of western Antarctica's huge Pine Island Glacier ice shelf is at the [lowest level ever](#)<sup>3</sup> recorded, and less than half of what it was in 2010. Reminding us of Monty Python's [pet store clerk](#)<sup>4</sup>, Turney nonetheless insists that the sea ice is actually melting, and his [communications director](#)<sup>5</sup> says the record sea ice is due to ... global warming! (As they say, *fiction* has to make sense.)

Equally amazing, the *Shokalskiy* was apparently not equipped with adequate wind and weather monitoring and forecasting capabilities. The expedition had to [contact climate realists](#)<sup>6</sup> John Coleman, Anthony Watts and Joe D'Aleo for information that would allow them to plan their helicopter rescue.

All of this raises serious questions that most media have ignored. How could Tourney put so many [lives and vessels at risk](#)<sup>7</sup> – people he persuaded to join this expedition, the ship and crew they hired, the ships and helicopter and crews that came to their rescue? How did he talk the Russian captain into sailing into these dangerous waters? [Who will pay](#)<sup>8</sup> for the rescue ships and their fuel and crews? What if one of the ships sinks – or someone dies? What is Tourney's personal liability?

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.thegwpf.org/nasa-announces-record-growth-arctic-sea-ice-extent/>.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2014/01/03/antarctic\\_ice\\_shelf\\_melt\\_lowest\\_ever\\_recorded\\_just\\_not\\_much\\_affected\\_by\\_global\\_warming/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2014/01/03/antarctic_ice_shelf_melt_lowest_ever_recorded_just_not_much_affected_by_global_warming/).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/jan/2/editorial-no-more-dead-parrots/>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://notrickszone.com/2014/01/03/expedition-communication-director-alvin-stone-climate-warming-led-to-the-vessels-awkward-predicament/>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/31/wuwt-and-weatherbell-help-kusi-tv-with-a-weather-forecasting-request-from-ice-trapped-ship-in-antarctica-akademik-shokalskiy/#more-100200>.

<sup>7</sup> <http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/31/expedition-on-the-cheap-did-organizers-recklessly-negligently-put-lives-and-property-at-risk/>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.theage.com.au/travel/travel-incidents/rescue-of-iced-in-ship-could-cost-owners-a-packet-20131229-301t1.html>.

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In 2007, Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen set off across the Arctic in the dead of winter, “to raise awareness about global warming,” by showcasing the wide expanses of open water they were certain they would encounter. Instead, temperatures inside their tent plummeted to -58 F (-50 C), while outside the nighttime air plunged to -103 F (-75 C). Facing frostbite, amputated fingers and toes or even death, the two were airlifted out a bare 18 miles into their 530-mile expedition.

The next winter it was British swimmer and ecologist Lewis Gordon Pugh, who planned to breast-stroke across open Arctic seas. Same story. Then fellow Brit Pen Hadow tried, and failed. In 2010 Aussie Tom Smitheringale set off to demonstrate “the effect that global warming is having on the polar ice caps.” He was rescued and flown out, after coming “very close to the grave,” he confessed.

Hopefully, all these rescue helicopters were solar-powered. Hardcore climate disaster adventurers should not be relegated to choppers fueled by evil fossil fuels. They may be guilty of believing their own alarmist press releases – but losing digits or ideological purity is a high price to pay.

All these intrepid explorers tried to put the best spin on their failures. “One of the things we see with global warming is unpredictability,” Bancroft-Arnesen expedition coordinator Anne Atwood insisted. “But global warming is real, and with it can come extreme unpredictable changes in temperature,” added Arnesen. “Global warming can mean colder. It can mean wetter. It can mean drier. That’s what we’re talking about,” Greenpeace activist Stephen Guilbeault chimed in.

It’s been said insanity is hitting your thumb repeatedly with a hammer, expecting it won’t hurt the next time. It’s also believing hype, models and delusions, instead of real world observations. Or thinking taxpayers are happy to pay for all the junk science behind claims that the world faces dangerous manmade global warming. Or that they are delighted that the EPA and IPCC are increasingly regulating our lives, livelihoods, liberties, living standards and life spans, in the name of preventing climate change.

The fact is, Antarctic ice shelves have broken up many times over the millennia. Arctic ice has rebounded since its latest low ebb around September 2007. Despite steadily rising atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, average global temperatures have been stable or declining since 1997.

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Seas are rising at barely seven inches per century. And periods of warmer or colder global and polar climates are nothing new.

Vikings built homes, grew crops and raised cattle in Greenland between 950 and 1300, before they were frozen out by the Little Ice Age and encroaching pack ice and glaciers. Many warm periods followed, marked by open seas and minimal southward extent of Arctic sea ice, as noted in ships' logs and discussed in scientific papers by Torgny Vinje and other experts. But warm periods of 1690-1710, 1750-1780 and 1918-1940, for instance, were often preceded and followed by colder temperatures, severe ice conditions and maximum southward ice packs, as during 1630-1660 and 1790-1830.

"Not only in the summer, but in the winter the ocean [in the Bering Sea region] was free of ice, sometimes with a wide strip of water up to at least 200 miles away from the shore," Swedish explorer Oscar Nordkvist reported in 1822, in a document rediscovered by astrophysicist Willie Soon.

"We were astonished by the total absence of ice in the Barrow Strait," [Francis McClintock](#)<sup>9</sup>, captain of the *Fox*, wrote in 1860. "I was here at this time in 1854 – still frozen up – and doubts were entertained as to the possibility of escape."

In 1903, during the first year of his three-year crossing of the Northwest Passage, Roald Amundsen noted that his party "had made headway with ease," because ice conditions had been "unusually favorable."

The 1918-1940 warming also resulted in Atlantic cod increasing in population and expanding their range some 800 miles, to the Upernavik area of Greenland, fisheries biologist Ken Drinkwater has reported.

Climate change is certainly real. It's been real throughout Earth and human history – including the Roman and Medieval Warm Periods, Little Ice Age and Dust Bowl, and through countless other cycles of warming and cooling, flood and drought, storm and calm, open polar seas and impassable ice.

*Despite steadily rising atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, average global temperatures have been stable or declining since 1997. Seas are rising at barely seven inches per century. And periods of warmer or colder global and polar climates are nothing new.*



*Are humans causing imminent, unprecedented, global climate change disasters? If you look at actual evidence – instead of computer model forecasts and "scenarios" – the answer is clearly: No.*

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/water-activities/sailing/Break-On-Through.html>.

Humans clearly influence weather and climate on a local scale – through heat and emissions from cities and cars, our clearing of forests and grasslands, our diversion of rivers. But that is not the issue. Nor is it enough to say – as President Obama has – that the climate is changing and mankind is contributing to it.

The fundamental issue is this: Are *humans* causing *imminent, unprecedented, global* climate change *disasters*? And can we *prevent* those alleged disasters, by drastically curtailing hydrocarbon use, slashing living standards, and imposing government control over industries and people’s lives? If you look at actual evidence – instead of computer model forecasts and “scenarios” – the answer is clearly: *No*.



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*Cover photo of the Riiser-Larsen Ice Shelf in Antarctica  
by NASA as posted to [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Riiser-Larsen_Ice_Shelf.jpg).*

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