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12-01-08

President-elect Barack Obama proposes economic suicide for US

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2008/11/30/d03010.xml>

By Christopher Booker

If the holder of the most powerful office in the world proposed a policy guaranteed to inflict untold damage on his own country and many others, on the basis of claims so demonstrably fallacious that they amount to a string of self-deluding lies, we might well be concerned. The relevance of this is not to President Bush, as some might imagine, but to a recent policy statement by President-elect Obama.

Tomorrow, delegates from 190 countries will meet in Poznan, Poland, to pave the way for next year's UN conference in Copenhagen at which the world will agree a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. They will see a video of Mr Obama, in only his second major policy commitment, pledging that America is now about to play the leading role in the fight to "save the planet" from global warming.

Mr. Obama begins by saying that "the science is beyond dispute and the facts are clear". "Sea levels," he claims, "are rising, coastlines are shrinking, we've seen record drought, spreading famine and storms that are growing stronger with each passing hurricane season."

Far from the science being "beyond dispute", we can only deduce from this that Mr Obama has believed all he was told by Al Gore's wondrously batty film *An Inconvenient Truth* without bothering to check the facts. Each of these four statements is so wildly at odds with the truth that on this score alone we should be seriously worried.

It is true that average sea levels are modestly rising, but no faster than they have been doing for three centuries. Gore's film may predict a rise this century of 20 feet, but even the UN's International Panel on Climate Change only predicts a rise of between four and 17 inches. The main focus of alarm here has been the fate of low-lying coral islands such as the Maldives and Tuvalu.

Around each of these tiny countries, according to the international Commission on Sea Level Changes and other studies, sea levels in recent decades have actually fallen. The Indian Ocean was higher between 1900 and 1970 than it has been since. Satellite measurements show that since 1993 the sea level around Tuvalu has gone down by four inches.

Coastlines are not "shrinking" except where land is subsiding, as on the east coast of England, where it has been doing so for thousands of years. Gore became particularly muddled by this, pointing to how many times the Thames Barrier has had to be closed in recent years, unaware that this was more often to keep river water in during droughts than to stop the sea coming in.

Far from global warming having increased the number of droughts, the very opposite is the case. The most comprehensive study (Narisma et al, 2007) showed that, of the 20th century's 30 major drought episodes, 22 were in the first six decades, with only five between 1961 and 1980. The most recent two decades produced just three.

Mr Obama has again been taken in over hurricanes. Despite a recent press release from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration claiming that 2008's North Atlantic hurricane season "set records", even its own release later admits that it only tied as "the fifth most active" since 1944. NOAA's own graphs show hurricane activity higher in the 1950s than recently. A recent Florida State University study of tropical cyclone activity across the world (see the Watts Up With That? website) shows a steady reduction over the past four years.

Alarming though it may be that the next US President should have fallen for all this claptrap, much more worrying is what he proposes to do on the basis of such grotesque misinformation. For a start he plans to introduce a "federal cap and trade system", a massive "carbon tax", designed to reduce America's CO₂ emissions "to their 1990 levels by 2020 and reduce them an additional 80 per cent by 2050". Such a target, which would put America ahead of any other country in the world, could only be achieved by closing down a large part of the US economy.

Mr. Obama floats off still further from reality when he proposes spending \$15 billion a year to encourage "clean energy" sources, such as thousands more wind turbines. He is clearly unaware that wind energy is so hopelessly ineffective that the 10,000 turbines America already has, representing "18 gigawatts of installed capacity", only generate 4.5GW of power, less than that supplied by a single giant coal-fired power station.

He talks blithely of allowing only "clean" coal-fired power plants, using "carbon capture" - burying the CO₂ in holes in the ground - which would double the price of electricity, but the technology for which hasn't even yet been developed. He then babbles on about "generating five million new green jobs". This will presumably consist of hiring millions of Americans to generate power by running around on treadmills, to replace all those "dirty" coal-fired power stations which currently supply the US with half its electricity.

If this sounds like an elaborate economic suicide note, for what is still the earth's richest nation, it is still not enough for many environmentalists. Positively foaming at the mouth in The Guardian last week, George Monbiot claimed that the plight of the planet is now so grave that even "sensible programmes of the kind Obama proposes are now irrelevant". The only way to avert the "collapse of human civilisation", according to the Great Moonbat, would be "the complete decarbonisation of the global economy soon after 2050".

For 300 years science helped to turn Western civilisation into the richest and most comfortable the world has ever seen. Now it seems we have suddenly been plunged into a new age of superstition, where scientific evidence no longer counts for anything. The fact that America will soon be ruled by a man wholly under the spell of this post-scientific hysteria may leave us in wondering despair.

The man who decoded stonehenge

An excellent Daily Telegraph obituary of the scholar Professor John North, who has died aged 74, made mention of his most important discovery without noting its fascinating implications. It was his calculations that showed that Stonehenge was aligned, not with the sun's rising at midsummer as hippies and druids imagine, but with its setting at midwinter.

In other words, Stonehenge was built to mark the dying moment of the northern year, when nature turns back again towards new life – that same symbolic moment which so many cultures have celebrated with midwinter festivals such as the Roman Saturnalia and our own Christmas.

When, a year or two back, I paid tribute here to Prof North's highly significant finding, an imaginative sub-editor gave it the memorably neat headline "Have yourself a megalithic Christmas".

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When the Warmest in History Isn't

by Debra J. Saunders

http://townhall.com/columnists/DebraJSaunders/2008/12/01/when_the_warmest_in_history_isnt?page=full&comments=true

December 01, 2008

Here's another reason why people don't trust newspapers. When science reporters write about, say, hormone therapy or drinking red wine, they report on studies that find that hormones or red wine can be good for you, as well as studies that suggest otherwise. Any science involving complex organisms is rarely black and white.



When it comes to global warming, newspapers play up stories that reinforce the prevalent the-sky-is-falling belief that global warming is human-caused and catastrophic. But if a study or scientist does not portend the end of the world as we know it, it rarely rates as news.

In that spirit, many papers (including The Chronicle) have reported on a UC San Diego science historian who reviewed 928 abstracts of peer-reviewed articles on global warming published between 1993 and 2003, and concluded, "Remarkably, none of the papers disagreed with the consensus position."

Over 10 years, not one study challenged the orthodoxy -- does that sound right to you? If that were true, it would strongly suggest that, despite conflicting evidence in this wide and changing world, no scientist dares challenge the politically correct position on the issue.

No wonder, David Bellamy -- an Australian botanist who was involved in some 400 TV productions, only to see his TV career go south after he questioned global warming orthodoxy -- wrote in The Australian last week, "It's not even science anymore; it's anti-science." Bellamy notes that official data show that "in every year since 1998, world temperatures have been getting colder, and in 2002 Arctic ice actually increased." Exhibit B: Richard S. Lindzen, the MIT Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, recently wrote, "There has been no warming since 1997 and no statistically significant warming since 1995."

Such findings rarely are reported, even as, Marc Morano, communications director for the Republicans on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee told me, "Scientists keep coming out of the woodwork" to challenge the so-called consensus. "It's almost like a bandwagon effect."

The Global Warming Petition Project urges Washington to reject the Kyoto international global warming pact as there is "no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate." So far, The Politico reports, more than 31,000 scientists have signed it.

The latest skirmish in the global warming war -- barely reported in America -- occurred after two bloggers found that the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies data wrongly cast this October as the warmest in recorded history. It turns out that the mistake was due to an error that wrongly tapped September temperature records from Russia. Christopher Booker of The Sunday Telegraph of London found the mistake "startling" in light of other contrary climate statistics,

including National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration findings of 63 local snowfall records and 115 lowest-ever temperatures for the month.

In an e-mail, Goddard researcher Gavin Schmidt explained, "The incorrect analysis was online for less than 24 hours." (Thank bloggers Anthony Watts, an American meteorologist, and Canadian computer analyst Steve McIntyre for catching the mistake.) The error occurred because a report "had the wrong month label attached. There is quality control at NOAA and GISS but this particular problem had not been noticed before and the existing QC procedures didn't catch it. These have now been amended."

As for the snowfall records and low temperatures cited by Booker, Schmidt chalked them up to "cherry picking" data. He added, "Far more important are the long-term trends."

Now, honest mistakes happen -- even in high-powered, well-funded research facilities. Just last year -- again thanks to the vigilance of Watts and McIntyre -- Goddard had to reconfigure its findings and recognize 1934 -- not 1998, as it had figured -- as the hottest year on record in American history.

Alas, it is hard to see Goddard as objective when its director, James Hansen, testified in a London court in September in support of six eco-vandals. A jury then acquitted the six Greenpeace activists on charges of vandalizing a British coal-fired power plant based on the "lawful excuse" defense that their use of force would prevent greater damage to the environment after Hansen predicted the one Kingsnorth plant could push "400 species" into extinction.

Of course, he could be wrong.

Alarmists Still Heated Even As World Cools

<http://www.ibdeditorials.com/IBDArticles.aspx?id=310695037962525#>

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | Posted Tuesday, November 04, 2008 4:20 PM PT

Climate Change: It's been a bad year for global warming alarmists. Record cold periods and snowfalls are occurring around the globe. The hell that the radicals have promised is freezing over.

As the British House of Commons debated a climate-change bill that pledged the United Kingdom to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050, London was hit by its first October snow since 1922.

Apparently Mother Nature wasn't paying attention. The British people, however, are paying attention — to reality. A poll found that 60% of them doubt the claims that global warming is both man-made and urgent.

Elsewhere, the Swiss lowlands last month received the most snow for any October since records began. Zurich got 20 centimeters, breaking the record of 14 centimeters set in 1939. Ocala, Fla., experienced its second-lowest October temperature since 1850.

October temperatures fell to record lows in Oregon as well. On Oct. 10, Boise, Idaho, got the earliest snow in its history — 1.7 inches. That beat the old record by seven-tenths of an inch and one day on the calendar.

In the Southern Hemisphere, where winter was winding down, Durban, South Africa, had its coldest September night in history in the middle of the month. Some regions of the country had unusual late-winter snows. A month earlier, New Zealand officials reported that Mount Ruapehu had its largest snow base ever.

At the top of the world, the International Arctic Research Center reported last month, there was 29% more Arctic sea ice this year than last.

None of this matters, of course, to the warming zealots. It doesn't matter if it's too dry or too wet, too hot or too cold. All of it, they say, is caused by global warming.

We believe, however, as do many reputable scientists, that the warming and cooling of the Earth is a natural phenomenon dictated by forces beyond our control, from ocean currents to solar activity.

The latest warming trend, which appears to have ended in 1998, is the result of the end of the Little Ice Age, which extended from roughly the 16th century to the 19th. During that period, Muir Glacier in Alaska filled Glacier Bay. In fact, when the first Russian explorers arrived in Alaska in the 1740s, there was no Glacier Bay — just a wall of ice where the entrance would be.

As the Earth warmed, long before SUVs roamed the globe, Alaska's glaciers also warmed and began to recede, starting in the 1800s. All that may be changing. During the winter and summer of 2007-2008, unusually large amounts of winter snow were followed by unusually cold temperatures in June, July and August.

"In June, I was surprised to see snow still at sea level in Prince William Sound," says U.S. Geological Survey glaciologist Bruce Molnia. "On the Juneau Icefield, there was still 20 feet of new snow on the surface of the Taku Glacier in late July."

It was the worst summer he'd seen in two decades.

As the Anchorage Daily News reports, "Never before in the history of a research project dating back to 1946 had the Juneau Icefield witnessed the kind of snow buildup that came this year. It was similar on a lot of other glaciers too."

It's been "a long time on most glaciers," Molnia says, "where they've actually had positive mass balance." In other words, more snow is falling in the winter than melts in the summer, making the glaciers thicker in the middle.

Glaciers can appear to be shrinking even as they are growing. Photos taken from ships can record receding edges even as mass is building inland. When they get thick enough, the weight forces the glacier to advance.

The U.S. may owe its ascension to a global power on the global warming that began with the end of the Little Ice Age, which almost doomed the American Revolution. George Washington's famous winter at Valley Forge was part of that natural phenomenon.

As the climate warmed from 1800 to 1900, the U.S. tripled in size, spreading westward to straddle a continent. The population of the windy and very cold trading post known as Chicago grew from 4,000 in 1800 to 1.5 million by 1900, sitting on a great lake carved by glaciers long since receded.

Due to a decline in solar activity and other factors, the Earth is cooling and has been since 1998. And a peer-reviewed study published in April by Nature predicts the world will continue cooling at least through 2015.

Now, if only we could get the warming alarmists to face facts and cool it as well.

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Climate change targets could push up household bills to £500 a year, says Government chief

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1090846/Climate-change-targets-push-household-bills-500-year-says-Government-chief.html>

By [David Derbyshire](#)

Last updated at 2:06 AM on 02nd December 2008

Warning: Lord Turner said the UK must cut carbon emissions by 34% by 2020

Tough new targets on tackling climate change will cost Britain £500 a year per household, push up utility bills and force 1.7million Britons into fuel poverty by 2020.

The grim predictions came from independent Government advisers yesterday as they set targets for slashing greenhouse gas emissions.



The influential panel led by millionaire business guru Adair Turner wants the UK to cut levels by up to 42 per cent within 12 years.

A report from the Committee on Climate Change said the sacrifice would be worth it 'given the consequences and higher costs of not acting'.

It admitted that shifting to a 'low carbon economy' could cost 1 per cent of gross domestic product - the equivalent of £14billion a year or £500 per household - by 2020.

But the committee insisted the target was essential to prevent dangerous global warming.

The cuts could be met by more wind turbines, improved energy efficiency, electric cars and new nuclear power stations, said the advisers.

But electricity and gas bills would soar as renewable energy costs more than gas and coal.

THE BRITAIN OF 2020?

HERE'S how a low-carbon Britain could look in 2020:

- Four out of ten new cars are battery-powered or electric-petrol hybrids.
- Charging points are fixed to parking meters so drivers can top up cars.
- There are no budget flights and air fares are up.
- A third of electricity is

generated by wind with 7,000 new turbines and thousands of miles of new pylons.

- Schools, businesses and communities can generate energy from large turbines.
- Homes have smart meters to reveal energy use.
- Everyone has a notional amount of carbon to use and can trade unused credits.

[Enlarge](#)

Lord Turner said: 'Climate change poses a grave threat to human welfare, the environment and economy. We need to act now, in the UK and as part of a global agreement.'

'It is not too late to tackle climate change but it will be unless the world takes action soon. Developed countries need to lead the way.'

However, expert Bjorn Lomborg described the targets as 'wishful thinking' as the UK has managed to reduce emissions by just 3.6 per cent since 1990. He also questioned whether other countries would follow Britain's lead.

Costly: More wind farms like this one at Ardrossan, Scotland, and the closure of dirtier old power plants could cause energy bills to rise in order to meet the cost

Mr Lomborg, a Danish academic and author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, said: 'The price tag by the committee's own estimate could reach £14 billion annually but the effect would be minuscule.'



'Climate models show that the impact up to 2030 would mean the UK would help reduce the global temperature increase by about one three thousandth of a degree Celsius by the end of the century.'

'An economic analysis would indicate that the UK, for every pound spent, would only do about 4p worth of good for the climate. By any standard, this appears to be a gigantic waste.'

FROM RED TO GREEN

WITH two homes, heated pool and a CV that includes oil giant BP, 'Red' Adair Turner makes an unlikely green guru.

But the Left-leaning peer, 53, was chief of the CBI and has inside knowledge of economics and business with an envi-

able contacts book. He has a huge appetite for work and his current posts also include being chairman of the Financial Services Authority.

Dubbed 'Red Adair' for his closeness to Labour, he has a hybrid car and no longer takes domestic flights.



[Enlarge](#)

Green groups and mainstream political parties broadly welcomed the report.

But Friends of the Earth's executive director Andy Atkins said: 'The committee has fudged the question of what the Government must do.'

'Ministers must scrap plans to allow airports to expand and not allow any coal-fired power stations to be built without carbon capture and storage.

Water world: Venice suffered its worst flooding in more than two decades today

'The Government must get on with the urgent task of making the UK a low-carbon economy.'

John Sauven, executive director of Greenpeace, said the report could kill off controversial plans for a coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth, Kent.



Lord Turner's committee said coal-fired power stations - the most polluting way of generating energy - should be fitted with technology to capture and store carbon dioxide after 2020.

The report called for a 34 per cent cut in emissions by 2020, rising to 42 per cent if an international deal on climate change is signed next year.

By 2020, it said a third of electricity should come from wind turbines and 40 per cent of new cars should have electric or petrol-electric hybrid engines.

Ministers will decide next year whether to make the targets in the 480-page report official.

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CCNet 176/2008 - 2 December 2008 -- Audiatur et altera pars

EU CLIMATE POLICY IN DISARRAY: ITALY HARDENS VETO THREAT

Italy will veto ambitious European Union plans to tackle climate change unless changes are made to make the package less costly to industry and consumers, a minister warned Monday. "We think the package is a mistake. As it stands, it penalises our industry, increases costs for citizens, threatens jobs and makes Italy poorer."

--AFP, 1 December 2008

European Union negotiators eased planned caps on carbon dioxide from cars by excluding part of the fleet for three years to reduce costs for automakers such as Daimler AG and Porsche SE.

--Jonathan Stearns, Bloomberg, 2 December 2008

There is one thing on which we can find instruction from Europe: Not having Washington headquarters, their trade unions are still close to the worker, and so haven't decided to restyle themselves with the fashion as environmental groups. So at least Europe's taxpayers have an institution still fighting on their behalf. For now.

--ClimateWire, 1 December 2008

United Nations talks that began today to devise a new global-warming treaty for limiting carbon-dioxide emissions probably won't yield concrete results, German environment minister Sigmar Gabriel said.

--Jeremy van Loon, Bloomberg, 1 December 2008

We enter the Poznan conference with the European Union's climate policy holed and sinking, but with the emergence elsewhere than in Europe of the principles of what a viable climate policy might actually look like.

--Gwyn Prins, London School of Economics, 1 December 2008

The top US delegate at world climate talks here said Monday he saw no likelihood of discord with the incoming administration of Barack Obama, who has vowed to overturn US policies on global warming. "I would say, don't look so much at the differences domestically. On the international scene, there's broad-based agreement," Harlan Watson told a press conference.

--AFP, 1 December 2008

By tapping General James Jones as his national security adviser, President-elect Barack Obama is indicating that the great energy debate will take place at the epicenter of U.S. national security- and that the outcome of that debate will look more like "all of the above" and less like a "green revolution."

--Keith Johnson, WSJ Environmental Capital, 1 December 2008

Tough new targets on tackling climate change will cost Britain £500 a year per household, push up utility bills and force 1.7million Britons into fuel poverty by 2020. Shifting to a 'low carbon economy' could cost 1 per cent of gross domestic product - the equivalent of £14billion a year or £500 per household - by 2020. But the committee insisted the target was essential to prevent dangerous global warming.

--Daily Mail, 2 December 2008

(1) EU CLIMATE POLICY IN DISARRAY: ITALY HARDENS VETO THREAT

AFP, 1 December 2008

(2) MULTI-BILLION OFFER: SARKOZY'S DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO SWAY CLIMATE REBELS

EurActiv, 2 December 2008

(3) PUTTING ON THE BRAKES, EU TO DELAY CAR CO₂ CAPS

Bloomberg, 2 December 2008

(4) EXPECTATIONS ARE 'LOW' FOR CLIMATE AGREEMENT, GERMANY SAYS

Bloomberg, 1 December 2008

(5) POZNAN: TEAM BUSH, TEAM OBAMA SINGING FROM THE SAME HYMN SHEET

AFP, 1 December 2008

(6) CHINA HAS LEARNED TO PLAY THE CLIMATE GAME

Reuters, 2 December 2008

(7) POZNAN: INDIA SETS OUT DEMANDS - GETTING THE RICH TO PAY UP

Reuters, 1 December 2008

(8) OBAMA'S PRIORITIES: FORGET THE 'GREEN REVOLUTION' - ENERGY SECURITY COMES FIRST

WSJ Environmental Capital, 1 December 2008

(9) CLIMATE POLICY: WILL CONGRESS OR THE WHITE HOUSE LEAD THE WAY?

ClimateWire, 1 December 2008

(11) POZNAN DELEGATES TAKE NOTE: GLOBAL WARMING HAS STOPPED!

Madhav Khandekar [mkhandekar@rogers.com]

(12) KYOTO OBJECTIVE MAY BE MET BY 2010 ... WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING

Norm Kalmanovitch [kahlnd@shaw.ca]

(13) CO2 SCIENCE EPA FILING RE CO2

Bob Ferguson [bferguson@sppinstitute.org]

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(1) EU CLIMATE POLICY IN DISARRAY: ITALY HARDENS VETO THREAT

AFP, 1 December 2008

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gQqWTAIbUZ79XJ2mVHp1sYCMCoW>

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Italy will veto ambitious European Union plans to tackle climate change unless changes are made to make the package less costly to industry and consumers, a minister warned Monday.

"If the climate package passes as it stands it will lead to a 17 percent hike in electricity bills for every Italian," Andrea Ronchi, Italy's european policy minister, told reporters in Brussels.

"We think the package is a mistake. As it stands, it penalises our industry, increases costs for citizens, threatens jobs and makes Italy poorer.

"We must find a fair agreement, If that doesn't happen then the question of a veto emerges," he added.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and his Polish counterpart Donald Tusk have already voiced reservations at the so-called '20-20-20' proposals which include a 20 percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, a 20 percent cut in energy consumed and 20 percent use of renewable energy.

The package will require the unanimous approval of all 27 heads of state and government at an EU summit in Brussels on December 11-12.

While the main objectives were agreed last year, the devil is in the detail with nations and industries pleading their special cases as national and sectoral targets are thrashed out.

Poland, along with other eastern European members, is concerned its coal-dependent economies will be particularly hard hit by moves to make industry by its polluting rights.

"We note with satisfaction that we are not alone," in having concerns at the package, the Italian minister said.

Italy estimates its industry would have to spend between 18 billion and 25 billion euros (24 billion to 33 billion dollars) a year to reach the targets, though the European Commission contests the figures.

Ronchi told AFP that his country was "not satisfied" with the compromise being discussed on obligations imposed on automakers such as Italy's Fiat.

Italy rejects calls for high penalties to be levied against manufacturers who breach permitted levels for car emissions.

Ronchi also stressed the lack of unity among the EU's other major powers.

"Britain's (Prime Minister Gordon) Brown goes one way, (German Chancellor Angela) Merkel another, (French President Nicolas) Sarkozy goes his way and (Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis) Zapatero his," he said.

"It's a problem at a time when the European Union is going to be called upon more and more to speak with a single voice," he added.

Copyright 2008, AFP

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(2) MULTI-BILLION OFFER: SARKOZY'S DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO SWAY CLIMATE REBELS

EurActiv, 2 December 2008

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/climate-change/sarkozy-moves-enlist-eastern-eu-members-climate-change/article-177680>

French President and EU presidency holder Nicolas Sarkozy will this weekend make a dramatic attempt to obtain the agreement of the bloc's Eastern countries on the bloc's climate change package, ahead of a crucial EU summit on 11-12 December, sources told EurActiv.

The meeting will take place over a lunch hosted by Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk in the Polish city of Gdansk on Saturday 6 December.

The two leaders will be joined by the prime ministers of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia.

Yesterday (1 December), Tusk made optimistic statements, insisting that the Union was "very close" to a deal on the climate and energy package. Poland was recently offered concessions on the package, triggering fears from some member states that France, which holds the presidency of the European Council until the end of the year, was dismantling some of the basic architecture of the European Commission's original proposal in order to reach a deal before the end of 2008 (EurActiv 27/11/08).

Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia also want to receive greater recognition for efforts already made to reduce CO2 emissions. At the 15 October EU summit, they tabled a joint paper, which states that any EU climate deal "should respect the differences of member states' economic potential" (EurActiv 16/10/08).

Even if he had already reached an agreement with his Polish host Donald Tusk, it is less clear what concessions Sarkozy is prepared to make to the other Eastern European countries. A diplomat from a smaller EU country told EurActiv that a compromise was still expected, because current burden-sharing is considered unfair by the Eastern group.

If no deal is reached at the 11-12 summit, the Czech Republic will inherit the climate change dossier. Although Prague is not particularly active on the file and has not been fighting along with the rest of the Eastern group for special treatment, diplomats said France "absolutely" wanted to close the dossier during its presidency.

Recently, the Polish press even reported that an extraordinary EU summit may be held on 27 December in Brussels to wrap up the climate change deal.

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(3) PUTTING ON THE BRAKES, EU TO DELAY CAR CO₂ CAPS

Bloomberg, 2 December 2008

http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601085&sid=aOZULoxEY4_c&refer=europe

By Jonathan Stearns

Dec. 2 (Bloomberg) -- European Union negotiators eased planned caps on carbon dioxide from cars by excluding part of the fleet for three years to reduce costs for automakers such as Daimler AG and Porsche SE.

Representatives of EU national governments and the European Parliament agreed yesterday evening to impose the emission curbs on 65 percent of the new car fleet in 2012, 75 percent in 2013, 80 percent in 2014 and 100 percent beginning in 2015. The European Commission, the EU's regulatory arm, had proposed introducing the caps on all new cars sold in the region in 2012.

"Overall, it represents a balance between the needs of the environment and the needs of the struggling car industry in Europe," Martin Callanan, a U.K. member of the EU Parliament, said after he helped strike the deal in Brussels. The negotiators also reduced some of the proposed penalties against carmakers that breach the limits, which are meant to fight climate change.

The scaling-back reflects Germany's objections to draft EU rules that pit its premium brands against smaller, cleaner cars from France's PSA Peugeot Citroen and Italy's Fiat SpA. The deal aims to win over German Chancellor Angela Merkel and German members of the EU Parliament who criticized a Sept. 25 vote by the assembly's environment committee upholding the original commission proposal.

The measures, which still need to be rubber-stamped by national governments and the full 785-seat Parliament, also affect non-European manufacturers including General Motors Corp., Toyota Motor Corp. and Hyundai Motor Co. The 27-nation EU's first CO₂ cap on the car industry aims to maintain Europe's lead in the field along with Japan, and follows efficiency initiatives in places such as California, Canada, South Korea and China.

FULL STORY at

http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601085&sid=aOZULoxEY4_c&refer=europe

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(4) EXPECTATIONS ARE 'LOW' FOR CLIMATE AGREEMENT, GERMANY SAYS

Bloomberg, 1 December 2008

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=awkQ1B3ARcSE&refer=germany>

By Jeremy van Loon

Dec. 1 (Bloomberg) -- United Nations talks that began today to devise a new global-warming treaty for limiting carbon- dioxide emissions probably won't yield concrete results, German environment minister Sigmar Gabriel said.

Delegates from 190 nations are meeting in Poznan, Poland, to negotiate a new treaty to curb climate change. Proposals for a successor to the Kyoto Protocol treaty will be debated at the conference, which runs Dec. 1-12, with a final agreement planned to be signed in Copenhagen a year from now.

"Many countries will hold back from making commitments because there is still a year to go before a final agreement must be reached," he said today at a briefing in Berlin.

FULL STORY at

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=awkQ1B3ARcSE&refer=germany>

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(5) POZNAN: TEAM BUSH, TEAM OBAMA SINGING FROM THE SAME HYMN SHEET

AFP, 1 December 2008

<http://www.spacedaily.com/2006/081201164108.40ymw4os.html>

The top US delegate at world climate talks here said Monday he saw no likelihood of discord with the incoming administration of Barack Obama, who has vowed to overturn US policies on global warming.

Harlan Watson, heading the US team at the 12-day UN talks that opened here Monday, said "the principal differences" on climate change between President George W. Bush and President-elect Obama were on addressing domestic emissions of greenhouse gases.

"I would say, don't look so much at the differences domestically. On the international scene, there's broad-based agreement," he told a press conference.

Watson said he saw "broad consensus with regard to a number of important issues internationally -- it's a global issue, we need all parties in the [UN Climate] Convention involved, in particular major developing economies. There's no difference in opinion on that."

FULL STORY at <http://www.spacedaily.com/2006/081201164108.40ymw4os.html>

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(6) CHINA HAS LEARNED TO PLAY THE CLIMATE GAME

Reuters, 2 December 2008

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE4B126320081202>

HONG KONG (Reuters) - China's foreign minister was unusually upbeat on Tuesday about prospects for agreement on a new pact to tackle global warming by an ambitious 2009 deadline, as top negotiators gathered in Poland for key UN talks.

Yang Jiechi said that with genuine cooperation the world could find a replacement for the Kyoto Protocol on time and added that his country would not try to evade its part of the burden.

Beijing's climate change ambassador had warned less than two months earlier that negotiations were troubled and the outlook for a deal was grim as rich countries stalled on promises to transfer green technology.

"If we work together, we will be able to meet the target set by the Bali road map," Yang said at the 2008 Clinton Global Initiative meeting in Hong Kong.

China has pledged to reduce its energy intensity by around 20 percent from 2005 to 2010, Yang said.

"We will not shirk our responsibilities. Although we foresee continuous growth of energy consumption in China, we will try to control the pace as much as possible."

About 10,600 delegates from 186 governments, businesses and environmental groups are meeting in the Polish city of Poznan for the Dec 1-12 talks, which come halfway through a two-year push to agree a new climate treaty in Copenhagen in 2009.

"We should participate all of us, in a very serious manner in a series of meetings leading up to the Copenhagen meeting," Yang said.

Barack Obama's election as the next U.S. president provided extra impetus because he backs U.S. greenhouse gas output cuts.

But the discussions are overshadowed by the worst world financial crisis since the 1930s, which will make it "an incredible challenge" to reach a complex and costly climate accord, the top U.N. climate official has warned.

Pressure is mounting on Beijing to act as it overtakes the United States as top emitter of carbon dioxide, but Chinese officials warn that lifting hundreds of millions out of relative poverty will stay the country's top priority.

Premier Wen Jiabao said last month rich nations must abandon their "unsustainable lifestyle" to fight climate change and expand help to poor nations bearing the brunt of worsening droughts and rising sea levels.

His government has been promoting a plan to tackle warming by dramatically boosting the flow of greenhouse gas-cutting technology from wealthy economies to developing countries.

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(7) POZNAN: INDIA SETS OUT DEMANDS - GETTING THE RICH TO PAY UP

Reuters, 1 December 2008

<http://in.reuters.com/article/topNews/idINIndia-36801020081201>

(Reuters) - India, the world's no. 4 greenhouse gas emitter, joins about 185 nations in Poznan, Poland, from Monday to work on a new U.N. climate pact meant to curb global warming.

Following are some of the main points India has made in submissions to the United Nations ahead of the talks, which are part of a two-year drive to replace the Kyoto Protocol from 2013.

The United States, China, India and Brazil are currently outside Kyoto's first phase till end-2012. Kyoto only commits 37 rich nations to binding emissions targets.

FAIR SHARE

With greenhouse gas levels rising quickly, India has said any stabilization target should be decided on the principle that each person on the planet has an equal right to the atmosphere.

But India believes industrialised nations have a historic responsibility for the bulk of the greenhouse pollution and should curb their own emissions first and help the developing world clean up their economies without harming development.

"Equitable sharing of the carbon space, therefore, needs to be urgently agreed by the international community," the government said in an October submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto's parent treaty.

CALL FOR CASH, TECHNOLOGY

"There is a critical and urgent need to provide access to technology for adaptation at a regional and national level," the government said in the same submission.

It was crucial to have new and additional funding to meet the costs of integrating adaptation into national development plans and adaptation projects, the government said.

GETTING THE RICH TO PAY UP

India has called on the developed world to contribute the equivalent of 0.5 percent of total GDP annually to pay for the costs of adaptation and mitigation.

Individual country contributions could be decided on the basis of historical responsibility for greenhouse gas concentration, current emission levels or per-capita GDP.

China said in October it wanted rich nations to commit one percent of their economic worth to help poor nations fight global warming.

FULL STORY at <http://in.reuters.com/article/topNews/idINIndia-36801020081201>

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(8) OBAMA'S PRIORITIES: FORGET THE 'GREEN REVOLUTION' - ENERGY SECURITY COMES FIRST

WSJ Environmental Capital, 1 December 2008

<http://blogs.wsj.com/environmentalcapital/2008/12/01/team-obama-new-national-security-adviser-jim-jones-puts-energy-first/>

Keith Johnson

U.S. presidents have been talking about energy security and searching for an energy policy since Nixon was popular. By tapping General James Jones as his national security adviser, President-elect Barack Obama is indicating that the great energy debate will take place at the epicenter of U.S. national security-and that the outcome of that debate will look more like "all of the above" and less like a "green revolution."

For Gen. Jones, formerly the Marine commandant and Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, "energy is a national security issue, and it is an international security issue of the highest order." Gen. Jones is the president and chief executive of the Institute for 21st Century Energy, an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In November, the Institute offered Mr. Obama a roadmap for bolstering U.S. energy security as a key component of increasing its national security. (Our colleagues at Washington Wire have more on the national security team announcement.)

The Institute's business-friendly approach advocates more of everything-more domestic oil and gas, more nuclear power, more coal, more renewable energy, and above all, for the federal government to cut through regulatory thickets that have hamstrung U.S. energy modernization in recent years. The key message from the Institute's transition plan is that U.S. economic and security interests have suffered due to the lack of a comprehensive national energy plan that addresses how we can get more energy and how we can use less.

The only thing Gen. James doesn't countenance is more of the same: "We are in a race against the clock and complacency is our greatest enemy. If we do not take this challenge seriously, America's economic prosperity, national security, and global standing will be at risk. The status quo is not only an option, it is a recipe for failure."

One of the Institute's other recommendations for the next president? The creation of an energy-policy chieftain who will sit on both the National Security Council and the National Economic Council to make sure that energy is the common thread uniting disparate government policy.

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(9) CLIMATE POLICY: WILL CONGRESS OR THE WHITE HOUSE LEAD THE WAY?

ClimateWire, 1 December 2008

<http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2008/12/01/3/>

Christa Marshall, ClimateWire reporter

With the economic crisis threatening to preoccupy the early days of the next Congress, many in Washington, D.C., are debating what President-elect Barack Obama should do to move climate policy using solely the powers of the executive branch.

The issue is percolating with the release of a document written by two lawyers under the pseudonym "Justinian" that has been on the radar of the Obama transition team. Others pushing for a cap-and-trade system to control greenhouse gases, including a coalition of 29 environmental groups, also have called for an increased executive branch role in global warming.

"There's a tremendous amount that can be done through the power of the presidency," said Gene Karpinski, president of the League of Conservation Voters. "Two key things are setting priorities through the federal budget and making sure that the right people are in the right jobs."

Many of the ideas floating around Washington, D.C., call for a strengthened role for the Environmental Protection Agency, which could be directed to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act or oversee a potential carbon cap-and-trade system. Yet many say there are risks in pulling too much authority away from Congress on the issue.

"One thing missing in this debate is the capacity of agencies to handle increased responsibility," said Barry Rabe, a professor of public policy at the University of Michigan. "Where is the money going to come from?"

Is EPA ready to be 'climate-regulator-in-chief'?

With the EPA's budget lower in real dollars than it was decades ago, many people are underestimating the difficulties that could emerge if the agency becomes a climate-regulator-in-chief, he said.

The most important thing Obama needs to do initially on climate with his executive powers, Rabe said, is to develop a reporting and verification system for greenhouse gas emissions. The EPA has been working on such a registry for a while, but "a clear set of marching orders" would be vital to get the political landscape ready for a larger bill, he said.

"It is often overlooked but existing data on emissions is generally sketchy," Rabe said.

In a similar vein, one former Bush administration U.S. EPA air pollution chief, Jeff Holmstead, noted that regulation of CO₂ under the Clean Air Act would require any medium-size building in

the United States, whether a school or a power plant, to go through a permitting process through state offices.

"Right now, about 100 of those permits are issued. With carbon dioxide regulation, we might need 100,000. Have people thought about how much staff that would require?" asked Holmstead, now a senior attorney representing coal-fired utilities with the firm Bracewell & Giuliani.

He also said that Section 111 of the Clean Air Act, which some have promoted as a tool to build advanced coal-fired power plants with lower CO₂ emissions than typical coal plants, has never been used that way before and that doing so would generate legal fights. Indeed, the potential for courtroom tie-ups is one reason some analysts are promoting a system confirmed by Congress as a much better mechanism than existing federal law for addressing climate change.

Either way, federal agencies will face new demands

"You can't sue Congress to death," said Denny Ellerman, a senior lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which released a study in November concluding that cap-and-trade programs under consideration in the United States would effectively reduce emissions and would have little negative economic impact.

In one of his first policy videos on his transition Web site, the president-elect pledged support for a cap-and-trade scheme with tight reduction targets. Last week, Frances Beinecke, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council, said she believed Obama would move quickly to implement that plan.

Even so, a greenhouse gas cap in itself would impose new demands on federal agencies. For example, the climate bill co-sponsored by Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John Warner (R-Va.) that stalled this summer would have required that the EPA implement at least 26 mandates before the system could even get up and running.

In just-released policy briefs, the Pew Center on Global Climate Change recommended that the next president boost research funding for climate-friendly technologies such as carbon capture and sequestration on coal-fired power plants to make a potential cap-and-trade mechanism cost-effective.

Such a move is necessary, according to the organization, because a carbon price alone is "necessary but not sufficient" to control emissions and the business community doesn't have the means to do it alone. As one example of the problem, Pew reported that funding for the Department of Energy's advanced research and development programs has decreased by 85 percent since 1978.

How to distribute research dollars?

The bigger question, though, is to how to distribute dollars effectively for research, and whether to raise them through general federal funds or some new tool such as a fee on utilities. Some have touted the idea of a new entity within the Energy Department that would be modeled after the Pentagon's research program, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), to ensure that companies and utilities have the proper technologies to become carbon-friendly operations.

But as the Pew Center pointed out, DARPA operates on behalf of one client, the Pentagon. Considering that the buyers of other energy technologies will span the whole business spectrum, climate change may need to have scientists spread out throughout the government working on the next generation of energy gadgets, the group said.

Ultimately, however, the lessons of history show that the president's men and women can move environmental policy that has stalled in Congress, Rabe said. Such a phenomenon happened in the Bush administration with executive orders and directives to the Interior Department to speed

up oil and gas drilling on public lands. Similarly, President Clinton's Interior secretary designated swaths of land for protection under the Antiquities Act.

But climate change is such a big challenge, he said, that new and vigorous federal action may be enough by itself to prompt congressional politicians to act on the issue, to ensure that their influence is not undermined.

"This is going to be a bit of a race to the top between the White House and the Capitol dome," Rabe said.

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(11) POZNAN DELEGATES TAKE NOTE: GLOBAL WARMING HAS STOPPED!

Madhav Khandekar [mkhandekar@rogers.com]

Dear Benny

I fully share the commentaries and views expressed by David Whitehouse & Paul Biggs in this news letter (CCNet 1 Dec 2008). It is now generally accepted by most scientists (except some die-hard AGW adherents) that the earth's mean temperature has NOT (I repeat NOT) increased in the last few years, OR to be precise, NOT increased since about mid-1998, when the SSTs (Sea Surface temperatures) started to decline. Since then, SSTs have declined steadily over world-oceans and as a result the land area mean temperature has stayed essentially the same over Northern Hemisphere (due to large urban effects which the AGW adherents refuse to accept) while in the Southern Hemisphere the mean temperature has definitely declined, as shown clearly by the satellite data.

Yes, the 1980s and 1990s did see some warming, as commented by David Whitehouse, but the first decade of the 21st century is definitely cooler than the 1990s so far and should remain so over the next three years. This year 2008 will probably come up to about 0.39C above the 1961-1990 mean and that will make 2008 about 9th warmest in the last 15 years. The last year 2007 was seventh warmest, according to the UK Met Office (per Phil Jones), with mean temperature about 0.41C above 1961-90 mean, while 1998 still remains the warmest (hottest!) year in the last 150 years, with mean temperature about 0.52C above 1961-90 mean.

There have been NO major heat waves anywhere since the 2003 summer heat wave in Europe. Over North America 1998 summer was probably the hottest in the last 25 years and since then there have been NO major heat wave episodes. Over the Indian subcontinent, there have been No major pre-monsoon heat wave episodes, since June 1998, when parts of central & northern India experienced record-high temperatures of 47-50C for a couple of weeks.

In the Southern Hemisphere, there were no major heat waves anywhere in the last five years or so. The entire continent of South America was one of the coldest in 2007. The city of Buenos Aires received about 6 cm of snowfall in July 2007, the last time it snowed in the city was in 1918!

I like to ask my favorite question one more time: Where is Global Warming? Delegates attending the UNFCCC Meeting in Poland beginning today (December 1 2008) please take note: Global Warming has stopped!

Madhav Khandekar
IPCC Reviewer 2007 Climate change

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(12) KYOTO OBJECTIVE MAY BE MET BY 2010 ... WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING

Norm Kalmanovitch [kalhnd@shaw.ca]

Dear Benny,

The official Name of the Kyoto Accord is:

KYOTO PROTOCOL TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The objective of the Accord is to reduce the impact of observed increases in global temperatures using 1990 as the reference year for a target.

If we take the average global temperature in 1990 as a "zero reference", the average temperature for 2002 can be seen to be about 0.35°C, and the average temperature for the last 12 months is back down to about 0.05°C.

The best fit linear trend since 2002 is about 0.025°C/year of cooling, and at this rate we will have met the Kyoto target of 1990 temperature in just two years without having done anything!

(Temperature graph is posted on the front page of the Friends of Science website www.friendsofscience.org)

If the Kyoto target of 1990 global temperature will be met in just two years in spite of the continued increase in CO₂ emissions, doesn't it seem a bit odd that the world leaders are willing to sacrifice the global economy to reduce CO₂ emissions as though CO₂ emissions reductions, and not global temperature stabilization, was the objective of the Kyoto Protocol?

Norm Kalmanovitch

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(13) CO₂ SCIENCE EPA FILING RE CO₂

Bob Ferguson [bferguson@sppinstitute.org]

Dear Benny,

Craig Idso of CO₂ Science has filed a document with U.S. EPA for their Advanced Notice of Rule Making for regulating CO₂ under the Clean Air Act.

It is an extraordinarily extensive document. It can be downloaded here:

http://www.co2science.org/education/reports/epa/CO2ScienceEPAComments_Full.pdf

Regards,
Bob

Robert Ferguson
President
Science and Public Policy Institute
bferguson@sppinstitute.org
www.scienceandpublicpolicy.org