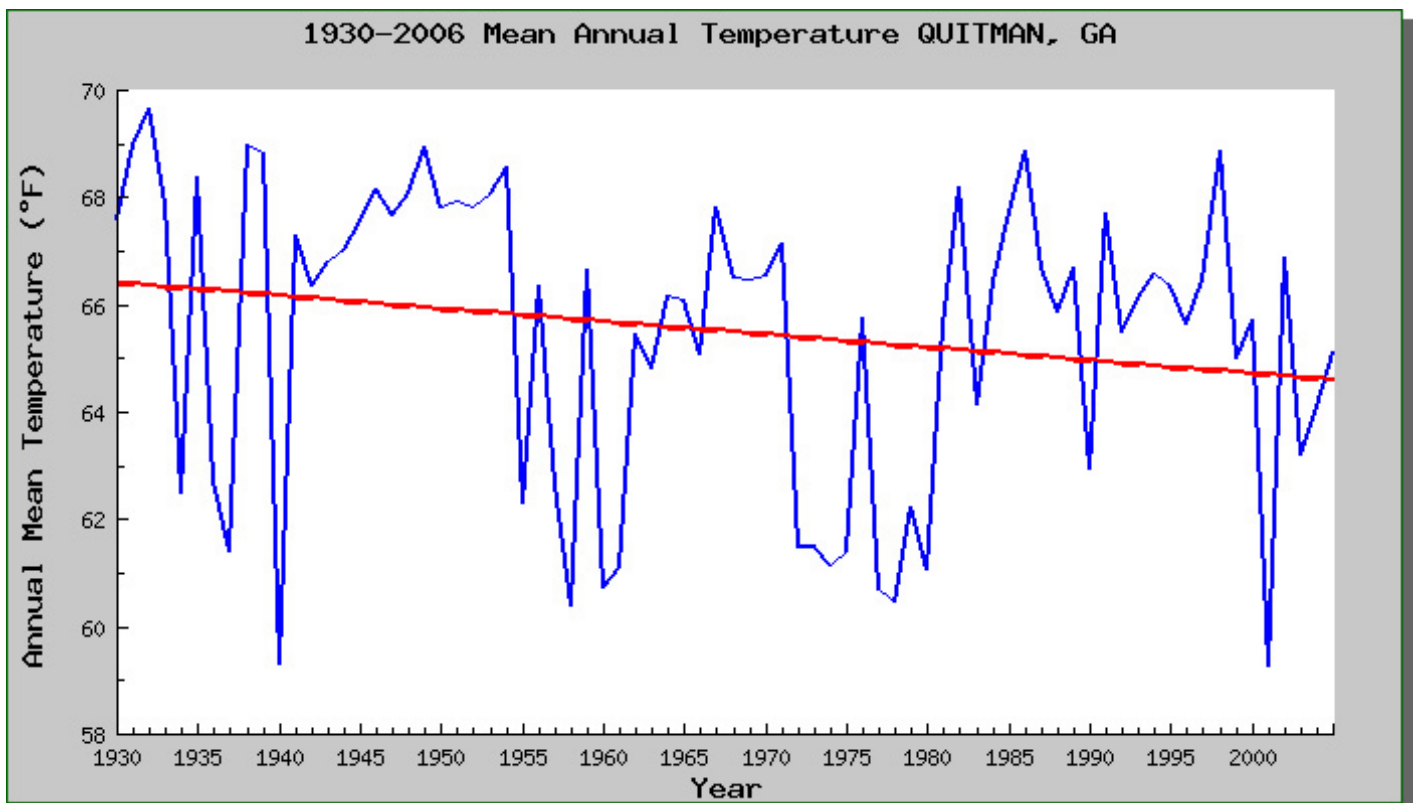


SPPI News Search 9-11-08

USHCN Temperature Record of the Week: Quitman, GA
<http://co2science.org/data/ushcn/stationoftheweek.php>

To bolster our claim that "[There Has Been Little Net Global Warming Over the Past 70 Years](#)," each week we highlight the temperature record of one of the 1221 U.S. Historical Climatology Network (USHCN) stations from 1930-2005.

This issue's temperature record of the week is from Quitman, GA. During the period of most significant greenhouse gas buildup over the past century, i.e., 1930 and onward, Quitman's mean annual temperature has *cooled by 1.81 degrees Fahrenheit*. Not much global warming here!



A "New-and-Improved" 1500-Year North Fennoscandian Summer Temperature History

<http://co2science.org/articles/V11/N37/C3.php>

Reference

Grudd, H. 2008. Tornetrask tree-ring width and density AD 500-2004: a test of climatic sensitivity and a new 1500-year reconstruction of north Fennoscandian summers. *Climate Dynamics*: 10.1007/s00382-0358-2.

Background

Noting that many tree-ring-based climate histories terminate far short of the end of the 20th

century, Grudd states "there is an urgent need to update existing tree-ring collections throughout the northern hemisphere," especially (as his results vividly demonstrate) to make valid comparisons of past high-temperature periods, such as the Medieval Warm Period, with those the present, i.e., the Current Warm Period.

What was done

Working with an extensive set of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris* L.) tree-ring *maximum density* (MXD) data from the Tornetrask area of northern Sweden, which were originally compiled by Schweingruber *et al.* (1988) and covered the period AD 441-1980, Grudd extended the record an additional 24 years to 2004 using new samples obtained from 35 relatively young trees, which had the effect of reducing the mean cambial age of the MXD data in the 20th century and thus *eliminating* a disturbing "loss of sensitivity to temperature, apparent in earlier versions of the Tornetrask MXD chronology (Briffa, 2000)."

What was learned

The results of Grudd's efforts are presented in the following figure.

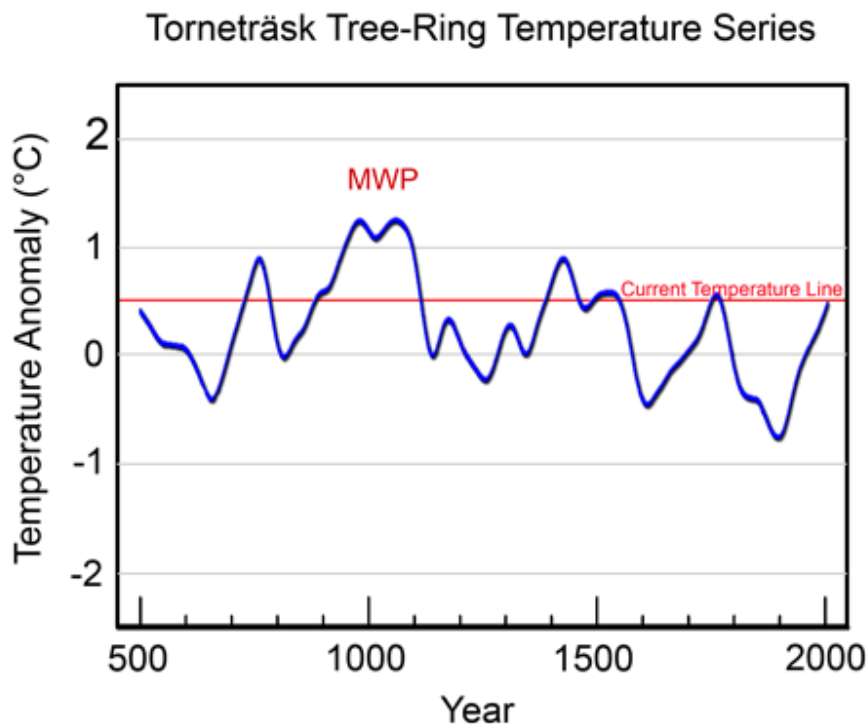


Figure 1. Annual April-August temperatures. Adapted from Grudd (2008).

What it means

Grudd concludes, as is readily evident from the results presented in the figure above, that "the late-twentieth century is not exceptionally warm in the new Tornetrask record," since "on decadal-to-century timescales, periods around AD 750, 1000, 1400 and 1750 were all equally warm, or warmer." More specifically, he notes that "the warmest summers in this new reconstruction occur in a 200-year period centered on AD 1000," leading him to state that "Fennoscandia seems to have been significantly warmer during medieval times as compared to the late-twentieth century," and that this period "was much warmer than previously recognized." In addition, he notes that "a warm period around AD 1000 is in line with evidence from other proxy indicators from northern Fennoscandia," writing that "pine tree-limit (Shemesh *et al.*, 2001; Helama *et al.*, 2004; Kulti *et al.*, 2006) [and] pollen and diatoms (Korhola *et al.*, 2000;

Seppa and Birks, 2002; Bigler *et al.*, 2006) show *indisputable evidence* [our italics] of a 'Medieval Warm Period' that was warmer than the twentieth century climate."

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Briffa, K.R. 2000. Annual climate variability in the Holocene: interpreting the message of ancient trees. *Quaternary Science Reviews* **19**: 87-105.

Helama, S., Lindholm, M., Timonen, M. and Eronen, M. 2004. Dendrochronologically dated changes in the limit of pine in northernmost Finland during the past 7.3 millennia. *Boreas* **33**: 250-259.

Korhola, A., Weckstrom, J., Holmstrom, L. and Erasto, P. 2000. A quantitative Holocene climatic record from diatoms in Northern Fennoscandia. *Quaternary Research* **54**: 284-294.

Kulti, S., Mikkola, K., Virtanen, T., Timonen, M. and Eronen, M. 2006. Past changes in the Scots pine forest line and climate in Finnish Lapland: a study based on megafossils, lake sediments, and GIS-based vegetation and climate data. *The Holocene* **16**: 381-391.

Schweingruber, F.H., Bartholin, T., Schar, E. and Briffa, K.R. 1988. Radiodensitometric-dendroclimatological conifer chronologies from Lapland (Scandinavia) and the Alps (Switzerland). *Boreas* **17**: 559-566.

Seppa, H. and Birks, H.J.B. 2002. Holocene climate reconstructions from the Fennoscandian tree-line area based on pollen data from Toskaljavri. *Quaternary Research* **57**: 191-199.

Shemesh, A., Rosqvist, G., Rietti-Shati, M., Rubensdotter, L., Bigler, C., Yam, R. and Karlen, W. 2001. Holocene climatic change in Swedish Lapland inferred from an oxygen-isotope record of lacustrine biogenic silica. *The Holocene* **11**: 447-454.

Reviewed 10 September 2008

Storminess in Northwest Europe

<http://co2science.org/articles/V11/N37/C2.php>

Reference

Clemmensen, L.B., Bjornsen, M., Murray, A. and Pedersen, K. 2007. Formation of Aeolian dunes on Anholt, Denmark since AD 1560: A record of deforestation and increased storminess. *Sedimentary Geology* **199**: 171-187.

What was done

On the Danish island of Anholt in the middle of Kattegat (a shallow marine sea bounded by the west coast of Sweden and the east coast of Jutland that is connected to the North Atlantic Ocean), the authors studied sedimentological and geomorphological properties of the island's dune system, employing optically-stimulated luminescence dating and aerial photography, which work they conducted at various times between April 2002 and September 2005.

What was learned

Clemmensen *et al.* say their data indicate that "the last aeolian activity phase on Anholt (AD

1640-1900) is synchronous with the last part of the Little Ice Age," noting that "dune stabilization on Anholt seems to a large degree to have been natural, and probably records a decrease in storminess at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century." In addition they report that this timing "is roughly simultaneous with dunefield stabilization on the west coast of Jutland and on Skagen Odde, citing the work of Clemmensen and Murray (2006).

What it means

Stating that, *today*, the dunes of Anholt "are largely inactive," the Danish researchers write that "the evidence of widespread dune formation on Anholt is indicative of increased storminess in the Kattegat region," noting further that "the period of sand drift and dune formation took place during the latter part of the Little Ice Age, which is characterized by increased (summer) storminess in large parts of NW Europe." Hence, it is clear that the global warming of the 20th century was accompanied by a dramatic *reduction* in the storminess of a significant portion of northwest Europe.

Reference

Clemmensen, L.B. and Murray, A. 2006. The termination of the last major phase of aeolian sand movement, coastal dunefields, Denmark. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* **31**: 795-808.

Reviewed 10 September 2008

Global Drought Conditions: 1950-2000

<http://co2science.org/articles/V11/N37/C1.php>

Reference

Sheffield, J. and Wood, E.F. 2008. Global trends and variability in soil moisture and drought characteristics, 1950-2000, from observation-driven simulations of the terrestrial hydrologic cycle. *Journal of Climate* **21**: 432-458.

Background

The authors begin their paper by stating that "drought can be regarded as one of the most damaging of natural disasters in human, environmental, and economic terms," and, therefore, it is not surprising that climate alarmists characteristically claim that drought conditions over the globe will occur more frequently and become more intense in response to global warming.

What was done

Sheffield and Wood investigated "variability and trends in soil moisture and drought characteristics, globally and regionally over the second half of the twentieth century," by means of "a global soil moisture dataset derived from a model simulation of the terrestrial hydrologic cycle" that was "driven by a hybrid observation-reanalysis-based meteorological dataset."

What was learned

The Princeton University researchers report that "an overall increasing trend in global soil moisture, driven by increasing precipitation, underlies the whole analysis, which is reflected most obviously over the western hemisphere and especially in North America," further stating that "trends in drought characteristics are predominantly decreasing," and that "concurrent changes in drought spatial extent are evident, with a global decreasing trend of -0.021% to -0.035% per year." They additionally note "there is a switch in later years to a drying trend, globally and in many regions, which is concurrent with increasing temperatures." However, this drying trend has not been strong enough to overpower the increasing trend of global soil moisture over the entire half-century of their analysis.

What it means

Even in the face of a warming trend that climate alarmists describe as having been *unprecedented over the past one to two millennia*, their predictions of more frequent and more severe concomitant drought have not been realized.

Reviewed 10 September 2008

Collins Ice Cap, King George Island, Antarctica

http://co2science.org/data/mwp/studies/l2_collinsicecap.php

Reference

Hall, B.L. 2007. Late-Holocene advance of the Collins Ice Cap, King George Island, South Shetland Islands. *The Holocene* **17**: 1253-1258.

Description

The author presents "radiocarbon and geomorphologic data that constrain [the] late-Holocene extent of the Collins Ice Cap on Fildes Peninsula (King George Island, South Shetland Islands: 62°10'51"S, 58°54'13"W)," based on field mapping of moraines and glacial deposits adjacent to the ice cap, as well as radiocarbon dates of associated organic materials. This work yielded, in Hall's words, "information on times in the past when climate in the South Shetland Islands must have been as warm as or warmer than today," with the specific period of this warmth indicated to stretch backwards in time from about AD 1300, which latter date would signify the end of this period of significant warmth, i.e., the Medieval Warm Period, with no date given as to its beginning.

Responses of Tree Species to Global Warming

<http://co2science.org/articles/V11/N37/EDIT.php>

Volume 11, Number 37: 10 September 2008

Looking through a pile of old papers the other day, we came across the study of Gunter *et al.* (2000), which was all "marked up," as if we were ready to write something about it but for some reason had never gotten around to it. Hence, we decided "better late than never," so here is the paper's write-up in the form of this week's editorial ... a mere eight years behind the times (but still amazingly relevant).

The four scientists -- all associated with the Environmental Sciences Division of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee (USA) at the time of their paper's publication -- introduced their study by noting that many models of actual or attempted range shifts in response to global warming lack a thorough understanding of "the role that acclimation and genetic adaptation may have in a species' response to predicted climate regimes," while stating that if populations "have a greater capacity for adjustment to higher temperatures, and if they are not constrained by complete genetic isolation from other populations, then the effects of global warming will probably be less severe than what may be predicted from a simple temperature-response curve applied without regard to spatial or temporal genetic variation."

In exploring this possibility, Gunter *et al.* employed *random amplified polymorphic DNA* markers to evaluate population-level genetic structure as an indirect indicator of the capacity for response to environmental change by sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* Marsh.) trees from three geographical locations representing a north-south gradient of the species' current distribution. This work revealed, as they describe it, that "genetic diversity, as indicated by estimates of percent polymorphic loci, expected heterozygosity, fixation coefficients, and genetic distance, is greatest

in the southern region, which consists of populations with the maximum potential risk due to climate change effects," and that "the high degree of variation within sugar maple implies that it may contain genetic mechanisms for adaptation."

In discussing their findings, Gunter *et al.* note that the sugar maple range shift potentials derived by the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (Hansen *et al.*, 1983) and Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (Manabe and Wetherald, 1987) -- as described by Davis and Zabinski (1992) -- "assume that a species grows only in a climate with temperature and precipitation identical to its current range." In a rebuff of those studies and their alarmist implications, however, they state that existing "high levels of genetic variation among families indicate that vegetational models designed to predict species' response to global-scale environmental change may need to consider the degree and hierarchical structure of genetic variation when making large-scale inferences." And when the latter approach is taken, it is clear that the ability of a species to adapt to the changing environment may be far greater than what is presumed by the outdated climate envelope approach, as may also be ascertained by perusing other materials we have archived over the years in under the headings of [Biodiversity \(Among Genotypes\)](#) and [Evolution \(Terrestrial Plants - Natural Vegetation\)](#) in our Subject Index.

Sherwood, Keith and Craig Idso

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Gunter, L.E., Tuskan, G.A., Gunderson, C.A. and Norby, R.J. 2008. Genetic variation and spatial structure in sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* Marsh.) and implications for predicted global-scale environmental change. *Global Change Biology* **6**: 335-344.

Hansen, J., Russell, G., Rind, D., Stone, P., Lacis, A., Lebedeff, S., Ruedy, R. and Travis, L. 1983. Efficient three-dimensional global models for climate studies: Models I and II. *Monthly Weather Review* **111**: 609-662.

Manabe, S. and Wetherald, R.T. 1987. Large-scale changes in soil wetness induced by an increase in carbon dioxide. *Journal of Atmospheric Sciences* **44**: 1211-1235.

Old Farmers Almanac: Global cooling may be underway

http://www.usatoday.com/weather/news/2008-09-09-farmers-almanac_N.htm

By David Tirrell-Wysocki, Associated Press Writer

DUBLIN, N.H. — The Old Farmer's Almanac is going further out on a limb than usual this year, not only forecasting a cooler winter, but looking ahead decades to suggest we are in for global cooling, not warming.

Based on the same time-honored, complex calculations it uses to predict weather, the Almanac hits the newsstands on Tuesday saying a study of solar activity and corresponding records on ocean temperatures and climate point to a cooler, not warmer, climate, for perhaps the next half century.

"We at the Almanac are among those who believe that sunspot cycles and their effects on oceans correlate with climate changes," writes meteorologist and climatologist Joseph D'Aleo. "Studying these and other factor suggests that cold, not warm, climate may be our future."

It remains to be seen, said Editor-in-Chief Jud Hale, whether the human impact on global temperatures will cancel out or override any cooling trend.

"We say that if human beings were not contributing to global warming, it would become real cold in the next 50 years," Hale said.

For the near future, the Almanac predicts most of the country will be colder than normal in the coming winter, with heavy snow from the Ozarks into southern New England. Snow also is forecast for northern Texas, with a warmer than usual winter in the northern Plains.

Almanac believers will prepare for a hot summer in much of the nation's midsection, continuing drought conditions there and wild fire conditions in parts of California, with a cooler-than-normal season elsewhere. They'll also keep the car packed for the 2009 hurricane season, as the Almanac predicts an active one, especially in Florida.

But Editor Janice Stillman said it's the winter forecasts that attract the most attention, especially this year, with much higher heating prices.

So, in line with the weather and economy forecasts, the Almanac includes information on using wood for heat: the best wood, how to build a fire in a fireplace, whether to use a wood stove and how to stay warm — all winter — with a single log.

Here's the secret, popularized in 1777: Throw a log out an upstairs window, dash down the stairs and outside, retrieve the log, dash upstairs, throw the log out the window and so on.

"Do that until you work up a sweat and you'll be warm all winter," said Stillman.

Last year, the Almanac correctly predicted "above-normal" snowfall in the Northeast — an understatement — and below-normal snowfall in the mid-Atlantic states.

New Hampshire, home of the Almanac, saw the most snow in 134 years and missed an all-time record by 2.6 inches.

Established in 1792, the Old Farmer's Almanac is North America's oldest continuously published periodical. The little yellow magazine still comes with the hole in the corner so it can hang in outhouses.

Boasting 18.5 million readers, this year's edition contains traditional tips on gardening and astronomical information and tide charts so accurate the government considered banning them during World War II, fearing they would help German spies.

The Old Farmer's Almanac is not to be confused with the Maine-based Farmer's Almanac, published "only" since 1818.

The 217th edition also predicts social trends such as sofas that measure body temperature, shopping carts that sound an alarm when filled with too much junk food and closet shelves and hangers that talk to give advice on matching shirts and ties.

"I would really hate that," Hale said. "What do you mean these don't match? Of course they match! You kidding me? Pink goes perfectly well with yellow," he joked.

Upholding its tradition of being "new, useful and entertaining," the Almanac offers tips on how to keep gardens alive, even in snow, and how to keep people alive, even for 100 years. (Some examples: Take it easy, use your brain, laugh and flirt!)

As printed publications fold around the country because of falling readership, Stillman says the Almanac is keeping pace with the 21st Century with a website that offers the printed version and supplements that can be personalized based on a reader's ZIP code.

Hale said the magazine with the familiar features remains popular in a digital age because, well, it's an almanac, and readers have said they like it being predictable.

"'Oh good,' they say, 'Not everything is disappearing.'"

This year, after 154 pages of words of wisdom from scientists and other experts, the 2009 edition closes with words from children — letters to God from first- and second-graders.

One, signed Joyce, shows little kids know not to be ungrateful, even when faced with a big disappointment.

"Dear God," she wrote. "Thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy."

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Cleared: Jury decides that threat of global warming justifies breaking the law
<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/cleared-jury-decides-that-threat-of-global-warming-justifies-breaking-the-law-925561.html>

By Michael McCarthy, Environment Editor
Thursday, 11 September 2008

The threat of global warming is so great that campaigners were justified in causing more than £35,000 worth of damage to a coal-fired power station, a jury decided yesterday. In a verdict that will have shocked ministers and energy companies the jury at Maidstone Crown Court cleared six Greenpeace activists of criminal damage.

Jurors accepted defence arguments that the six had a "lawful excuse" to damage property at Kingsnorth power station in Kent to prevent even greater damage caused by climate change. The defence of "lawful excuse" under the Criminal Damage Act 1971 allows damage to be caused to property to prevent even greater damage – such as breaking down the door of a burning house to tackle a fire.

The not-guilty verdict, delivered after two days and greeted with cheers in the courtroom, raises the stakes for the most pressing issue on Britain's green agenda and could encourage further direct action.

Kingsnorth was the centre for mass protests by climate camp activists last month. Last year, three protesters managed to paint Gordon Brown's name on the plant's chimney. Their handi-work cost £35,000 to remove.

The plan to build a successor to the power station is likely to be the first of a new generation of coal-fired plants. As coal produces more of the carbon emissions causing climate change than any other fuel, campaigners claim that a new station would be a disastrous setback in the battle against global warming, and send out a negative signal to the rest of the world about how serious Britain really is about tackling the climate threat.

But the proposals, from the energy giant E.ON, are firmly backed by the Business Secretary, John Hutton, and the Energy minister, Malcolm Wicks. Some members of the Cabinet are thought to be unhappy about them, including the Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, and the Environment Secretary, Hilary Benn. Mr Brown is likely to have the final say on the matter later this year.

*During the eight-day trial, the world's leading climate scientist, **Professor James Hansen** of Nasa, who had flown from America to give evidence, appealed to the Prime Minister personally to "take a leadership role" in cancelling the plan and scrapping the idea of a coal-fired future for Britain. Last December he wrote to Mr Brown with a similar appeal. At the trial, he called for an moratorium on all coal-fired power stations, and his hour-long testimony about the gravity of the climate danger, which painted a bleak picture, was listened to intently by the jury of nine women and three men.*

Professor Hansen, who first alerted the world to the global warming threat in June 1988 with testimony to a US senate committee in Washington, and who last year said the earth was in "**imminent peril**" from the warming atmosphere, asserted that emissions of CO₂ from Kingsnorth would damage property through the effects of the climate change they would help to cause.

He was one of several leading public figures who gave evidence for the defence, including Zac Goldsmith, the Conservative parliamentary candidate for Richmond Park and director of the Ecologist magazine, who similarly told the jury that in his opinion, direct action could be justified in the minds of many people if it was intended to prevent larger crimes being committed.

The acquittal was the second time in a decade that the "lawful excuse" defence has been successfully used by Greenpeace activists. In 1999, 28 Greenpeace campaigners led Lord Melchett, who was director at the time, were cleared of criminal damage after trashing an experimental field of GM crops in Norfolk. In each case the damage was not disputed – the point at issue was the motive.

The defendants who scaled the 630ft chimney at Kingsnorth, near Hoo, last year were Huw Williams, 41, from Nottingham; Ben Stewart, 34, from Lyminge, Kent; Kevin Drake, 44, from Westbury, Wiltshire; Will Rose, 29, from London; and Emily Hall, 34, from New Zealand. Tim Hewke, 48, from Ulcombe, Kent, helped organise the protest.

The court heard how, dressed in orange boiler suits and white hard hats bearing the Greenpeace logo, the six-strong group arrived at the site at 6.30am on 8 October. Armed with bags containing abseiling gear, five of them scaled the chimney while Mr Hewke waited below to liaise between the climbers and police.

The climbers had planned to paint "Gordon, bin it" in huge letters on the side of the chimney, but although they succeeded in temporarily shutting the station, they only got as far as painting the word "Gordon" on the chimney before they descended, having been threatened with a High Court injunction. Removing the graffiti cost E.ON £35,000, the court heard.

During the trial ***the defendants said they had acted lawfully, owing to an honestly held belief*** that their attempt to stop emissions from Kingsnorth would prevent further damage to properties worldwide caused by global warming. Their aim, they said, was to rein back CO₂ emissions and bring urgent pressure to bear on the Government and E.ON to changes policies. They insisted their action had caused the minimum amount of damage necessary to close the plant down and constituted a "proportionate response" to the increasing environmental threat.

Speaking outside court after being cleared yesterday, Mr Stewart said: "This is a huge blow for ministers and their plans for new coal-fired power stations. It wasn't only us in the dock, it was the coal-fired generation as well. After this verdict, the only people left in Britain who think new coal is a good idea are John Hutton and Malcolm Wicks. *It's time the Prime Minister stepped in, showed some leadership and embraced the clean energy future for Britain.*" [SPPI note: *These people are ill-informed and live in a religiously-based fantasy world. See: <http://eureferendum.blogspot.com/2008/09/confrontation-shapes-up.html> and here: <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/60259>]*

He added: "This verdict marks a tipping point for the climate change movement. When a jury of normal [sic] people say it is legitimate for a direct action group to shut down a coal-fired power station because of the harm it does to our planet, then where does that leave Government energy policy? We have the clean technologies at hand to power our economy. It's time we turned to them instead of coal."

Ms Hall said: "The jury heard from the most distinguished climate scientist in the world. How could they ignore his warnings and reject his leading scientific arguments?"

[Note to NASA: Fire Dr. James Hansen, now.](#)

By Anthony Watts

<http://wattsupwiththat.wordpress.com/2008/09/10/note-to-nasa-fire-dr-james-hansen-now/>

I've been wrestling with this topic for hours now as to how to best present it in this forum. I finally decided to simply just write it as I see it.

It has been an ugly day for law and common sense in the world. Vandalism in the name of ecological causes is now "ok" thanks in part to Dr. James Hansen, of NASA GISS coming to the defense of eco-vandals. See the second story below. Now, encouraged by this "victory" that gives a sanction to eco-vandalism in the UK, how many more shall we see? And if one of these people is injured and kills themselves or others in the process of the next stunt? What then? Who is responsible?

Certainly I want a cleaner world, and better energy resources with focus on the future. But, sanctioning vandalism for these causes is not the way to get there. What do I want from NASA as a taxpayer? Science, solutions, and inspiring ideas turned into reality. I don't want political activism in the name of science.

After thinking awhile about this, I've come to the following conclusions:

1- A NASA scientist siding with vandalism as a "lawful excuse" is an inappropriate abuse of the position. It was a question of law, not of science.

2- Dr. Hansen cannot separate himself from the agency as private citizen in this case, because he was brought in as an “expert witness”. Even if he paid his own way and took personal time, his presence was based on taxpayer funded research.

3- It appears Dr. Hansen has violated the code of ethics posted on the NASA Office of General Council webpage.

From the Goddard Institute for Space Studies web page: GISS is a component laboratory of [Goddard Space Flight Center's Earth Sciences Division](#), which is part of GSFC's [Sciences and Exploration Directorate](#). Thus Hansen falls under these ethics rules.

Specifically, Dr. Hansen's defense of vandalism in the name of a cause he believes in fails under the NASA [Misuse of position rule](#). If he received compensation of any kind, such as airfare, rooms, board etc. to appear as a NASA expert, he would also be breaking other NASA conduct rules.

4- As keeper of data, specifically the [GISTEMP dataset](#), he has now brought the impartiality of that data into question due to his activism in areas unrelated to scientific research.

Certainly Dr. Hansen has a body of work that is impressive, there is no disputing that. But it is time for Dr. Jim Hansen to go. Thanks to him, GISS as a dataset is no longer impartial. We have potential bias from the gatekeeper of the data that can't be separated from the data. If he can come to the defense of lawbreakers in the name of his global warming cause, then it is an even easier jump to allow that same bias to creep into scientific data he is responsible for and his conclusions drawn from that data.

If you feel the same way, your recourse is to write to

Michael D. Griffin
Administrator

c/o NASA Public Communications Office
NASA Headquarters
Suite 5K39
Washington, DC 20546-0001

(202) 358-0001 (Office)

(202) 358-3469 (Fax)

Or use the [online submission form](#):

http://www.nasa.gov/about/contact/ask_nasa_form.html

BLACKOUT BRITAIN WARNING, POWER CUTS COULD SPARK CIVIL DISORDER

<http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/60259>

Sunday September 7,2008

Jason Groves

Britain is “quite simply running out of power” and blackouts are almost inevitable within the next few years.

This is the stark warning from the head of an energy think-tank who believes power cuts could be serious enough to spark civil disorder.

Campbell Dunford of the respected Renewable Energy Foundation said: “It’s almost too late to do anything about it. Nothing will stop us having to pay very high prices for power in future.

“If we pull our finger out now we can limit blackouts but it’s going to be pretty grim whatever happens.”

Gordon Brown pledged last week to end Britain’s reliance on the “dictatorship of oil” but Mr Dunford believes the Prime Minister’s new interest in the security of energy supplies may have come too late.

Only last Thursday, National Grid issued an urgent call for power after a series of power station breakdowns. Suppliers were asked to bring all their available generating capacity online, including costly oil-fired stations.

In May, hundreds of thousands of people in Cleveland, Cheshire, Lincolnshire and London suffered blackouts when seven power stations were closed.

The electricity industry estimates it needs to spend £100billion on new stations to ensure supplies.

The “retirement” of a string of nuclear and coal-fired power stations will see 37 per cent of the UK’s generation disappear by 2015, partly because of EU environmental directives.

An REF report predicts that the neglect of the power infrastructure will lead to a series of grim consequences, particularly electricity and gas price rises as Britain could be held to ransom by such foreign energy producers as Russia.

Blackouts could force the Government to impose electricity rationing, last seen in the Seventies. The REF report says the Government “should prepare itself to intervene with social policy to prevent hardship and maintain order”.

It criticises ministers for focusing too heavily on such untried renewable energy sources as wind and tide power, rather than making sure that secure new power generation was put in place.

The report concludes: “A near fatal preoccupation with politically attractive but marginal forms of renewables seems to have caused a blindness towards the weakening of the UK’s power stations and a dangerous and helpless vulnerability to natural gas.”

The REF warns that as many as nine million people could be plunged into fuel poverty, defined as spending more than 10 per cent of their income on energy bills.

Ministers are already under massive pressure to do more to help people trapped in fuel poverty this winter because of soaring prices. Up to six million families are expected to face a stark choice between heating and eating following the series of massive energy price rises that have made a mockery of Labour’s target to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016.

Mr Dunford said worse was to come: “Certainly we’re going to be heading to eight or nine million in fuel poverty.

“The people who are vulnerable are old people and the single mums. They rely on power.

“If you are a single mum 14 storeys up in Hackney, you depend on electricity for everything in your life, even the water pumped to your flat, the lifts, the food and so on.

“There’s a very real chance that power, will not even be there when you need it. That’s when you start worrying about social disorder.”

Ministers have launched a belated plan to plug Britain’s energy gap, including the construction of a string of nuclear power stations take up to a decade to build though and many experts believe the Government’s move has come too late.

INSIDE EPA

THE INSIDE STORY

Endangered ESA?

September 9, 2008

KANSAS CITY, MO -- The Endangered Species Act (ESA) -- already under fire by industry and others for providing environmentalists an opportunity to press for greenhouse gas (GHG) regulations -- is facing new criticism from EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson and the chemical industry over its successful use by activists to block pesticide decisions.

At a meeting here of EPA's Farm, Ranch and Rural Communities advisory committee, Johnson and Agriculture Department (USDA) Secretary Ed Schafer said Sept. 8 that the recent appellate ruling requiring strict environmental reviews and ESA reviews before approval of genetically modified (GM) crops shows that Congress needs to amend the ESA to limit its use to block controversial actions.

“It’s clear that no matter what you choose, whether its pesticides or the siting of a new ethanol plant, the siting of a new coal-fired power plant, the siting of a new nuclear plant -- the list goes on -- that is a tool that is being used to prevent [actions] . . . for concern on protecting the endangered species. Some might argue that tool is being used just to stop or to prevent that activity from ever occurring,” Johnson said.

Johnson was responding to Jay Vroom, president of CropLife America, a pesticide industry group, who told the administration officials that ESA lawsuits, including the recent ruling blocking use of genetically modified alfalfa, is “a serious problem to all of agriculture.”

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit [ruled Sept. 2](#) to uphold a lower court ruling barring the planting of Monsanto's GM alfalfa seed nationwide. As we [reported last week](#), the ruling could make it more difficult to plant GM crops at a time when many advocates are looking to the controversial technology as a way to bolster worldwide food supplies.

Johnson said that problems with the ESA were leading to both poor species protection and misuse. For example, 10- to 20-year delays in biological opinions were preventing species from being adequately protected.

But Johnson said that the ESA is also being used to block business activity. This use of the ESA will likely lead to such a stalemate between industry and its opponents, that Congress will be forced to fix the ESA, Johnson said. "I believe there will come a point in time . . . where everything stops, and there will be a train wreck and our Congress will be compelled to act [in order to] to find a way to protect endangered species at the same time recognizing we need to continue the economic progress of our nation."

Schafer agreed that the ESA needs a legislative fix. "We're using laws not designed for a specific instance to solve problems that people think are there. And what happened is that we're letting courts drive the system, not the legislative process," Schafer said. Earlier during the meeting Schafer had praised the use of genetically modified seeds as a key way that farmers are improving their environmental stewardship. "And of course genetically modified seeds today are allowing farmers to use less pesticides and less herbicides and still see bountiful crops," Schafer.

The calls for amending the ESA to address GM crops comes as administration officials are also raising concerns about activists' use of the law to force regulation of GHG emissions. The Interior Department recently proposed a new ESA regulation which is intended to limit the use of the law as a tool to drive GHG regulations and officials said they may consider proposing legislative amendments. Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne said in a Aug. 11 statement that the regulatory changes were needed to "help avoid misuse of the ESA to regulate climate change." The department proposed the rule [in response to](#) environmentalists' petition to list the polar bear as endangered due to the impacts of climate change.

Wind Fuels Gas

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122107824722120577.html>

Wall Street Journal

By EDGAR GÄRTNER

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Following Russia's invasion of Georgia, a vital link between Europe and the energy resources of Central Asia, energy security is back at the top of Europe's agenda. For years now, many Europeans thought that a major part of their future energy security might come from wind turbines and solar panels. Industry, too, has suggested that this may be the case: At this summer's World Petroleum Congress in Madrid, most major oil and gas companies presented new plans for big renewable energy projects. But this renewables push, particularly when it comes to wind, is probably just a very clever short-term business strategy that will not improve Europe's geopolitical situation.

Wind turbines generate electricity very irregularly, because the wind itself is inconsistent. Therefore wind turbines always need backup power from fossil fuels to keep the electricity grid in balance. Gas turbines are the best way to do this. They are able to respond quickly and push power production when wind generators stop suddenly. They can be turned on and off almost instantly, whereas traditional coal-fired plants need to be maintained in a very inefficient standby mode if they are to respond to large fluctuations in power demand.

A proliferation of windmills, then, can become a windfall for gas sellers. Just look at the cases of Spain and Germany, Europe's leading producers of wind power.

By the end of 2007 Spain had 14,700 megawatts (MW) of installed wind capacity, according to Enagás, which manages the national gas network, producing 8.7% of the country's total power supplies. Most of these wind generators are located in scarcely populated areas, while the power consumption is concentrated in big cities with their many air-conditioned buildings. The peak

load of the Spanish power grid is thus in the hot summer months—but this is precisely the time of year when there usually isn't much wind.

For this reason, more and more gas turbines are being installed near consumers in the suburbs of Spain's cities. Only last year, Spanish power providers added 6,400 MW of gas-turbine power capacity, taking the total installed capacity of gas turbines to 21,000 MW. Natural gas has become the main source of electricity generation in Spain, and according to Enagás, 99.8% of the gas used in Spain is imported. Most of this comes via pipeline from Algeria, but the import of liquid natural gas (LNG) by ships will increase.

In Germany, more than 20,000 wind turbines with a total capacity of 21,400 MW are now "embellishing" landscapes. Wind power's share of total electricity generation has risen in line with that of natural gas since 1990. Germany's gas consumption for power generation more than doubled between 1990 and 2007, and now represents 11.7% of the country's total power generation. The country imported 83% of its natural gas supplies.

Today part of the wind power backup in Germany is still done by old coal-fired plants. But the Greens and even parts of the governing Christian and Social Democratic parties are fervently opposed to the construction of new coal plants. So many old power stations will probably be replaced by gas turbines. The green opponents of new coal-fired plants are nowadays the most dependable allies of the big gas companies such as Gazprom, Shell or BP.

Most European countries force consumers to subsidize electricity from wind power. This makes "renewables" a very safe investment compared with other energy businesses, where swings in commodity prices can be large. As Europe's big integrated oil and gas companies—such as Shell, BP and Total—invest more and more in LNG, they are also lobbying hard for a world-wide carbon-emissions trading system that would further increase the advantage of gas over coal.

In the U.S. the same thing is happening. The problem for the natural gas industry in the U.S. is that gas is still relatively inexpensive compared with market prices elsewhere in the world. There are no facilities for LNG export. This may explain why Shell, BP, Chevron and T. Boone Pickens are investing in wind power. It's a clever strategy to add value to their gas assets by boosting demand.

These gas players can afford to lose money on wind power in the short term to reap huge profits in the long term. In fact, this was the strategy first implemented by Ken Lay of Enron in 1990s. Enron was the power and gas company that started the first large-scale manufacturing of wind power in the U.S. It also brought up the ideas for a cap-and-trade system, to increase the competitive edge of gas over coal.

Wind power is clearly not reducing the dependence on imported fuel, contrary to the frequent claims of its proponents. In fact the experience from Germany and Spain shows that it is increasing the dependence of imported natural gas. And that's not energy security.

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