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Climate Alarmism's Flimsy Foundation

<http://www.spectator.org/archives/2008/10/24/climate-alarmisms-flimsy-found>



By [Paul Chesser](#) on 10.24.08 @ 6:08AM

Forget pretty much any news reporting you see that attributes disastrous phenomena to global warming, because it's all designed to create a fog surrounding the core issue: is climate change human-caused or not?

A most recent example is from Monday's *Washington Post*, in which alarmist reporter [Kari Lydersen](#) (who has a [long record](#) of such journalism, in addition to work she does for leftist publications such as [In These Times](#) and the [Progressive](#), on topics including "[environmental racism](#)") [told](#) about how waterborne diseases are expected to multiply due to future climate devastation:

Now, scientists say, it is a near-certainty that global warming will drive significant increases in waterborne diseases around the world.

Rainfalls will be heavier, triggering sewage overflows, contaminating drinking water and endangering beachgoers. Higher lake and ocean temperatures will cause bacteria, parasites and algal blooms to flourish. Warmer weather and heavier rains also will mean more mosquitoes, which can carry the West Nile virus, malaria and dengue fever. Fresh produce and shellfish are more likely to become contaminated.

The inevitable devastating consequences, as in [so many](#) environmentalist reporter articles, dominate the opening paragraphs of Lydersen's piece. She follows by asserting that a trend of heavier rainfalls "will accelerate," citing the 2007 report of the UN's [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#). I asked Lydersen where in the IPCC report it states with certainty that heavier rainfalls would rapidly increase, and she promised to get back to me on that -- "That was paraphrasing, not a direct quote from the report," she told me in an email. I'm sure.

Regardless, this kind of distractive reporting buttresses the lucrative industry that is global warming alarmism. "It's going to cause sea levels to rise!" cry the coastal scientists and fisheries experts. "It will massively displace wildlife!" scream the biological scientists. "It will prolong droughts and intensify rainfalls," warn the geologists and agricultural scientists. Their wailing fills up their applications for billions of dollars in grants from governments and sympathetic nonprofit foundations.

But these outcries miss the point, because they do not address the core issue of whether the temperature uptick (of one degree Celsius) over the last century is attributable chiefly to man's influence and thus mitigable, or to natural fluctuations and that nothing can be done about it. In other words, the vast majority of research (80 percent? 90 percent? more?) tied to climate change has nothing to do with its cause.

Therefore we have a whole derivative economic sector constructed on the foundation of a single premise: that increasing greenhouse gas emissions are having a greater impact on global climate than are other phenomena such as solar activity, cloud cover, ocean temperatures, El Niño/La

Niña, etc. If that single thesis is deemed false, then all these offshoot opportunities for researchers, government, universities, nonprofits, rent seekers, and media goes into a deep chill. Goodbye [grants](#). Adios [agency positions](#). Ciao, [charitable contributions](#). So long, [subsidies](#). And where hast thou gone, [writing awards](#)?

Just think -- if it's shown beyond the mainstream media's reach that carbon dioxide and its gaseous sisters (methane and a few others) do *not* jack up the atmospheric temps, we would no longer have to live under the enviroia of this collaborative claptrap.

So obviously it's in each of the alarmists' interests to dismiss their dissenters and undermine any evidence that global warming is not a threat to the planet or to mankind. Jim Martin, executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, has [said](#), "You could have a convention of all the scientists who dispute climate change in a relatively small phone booth." There was the classic *Newsweek* [smear job](#) by Sharon Begley last August which [labeled](#) some differing-but-credible climate scientists as a fossil fuel industry-funded "denial machine." Meanwhile the green-journalism [Society of Environmental Journalists](#) [marginalizes](#) the opposers as "skeptics and contrarians." Discourteous folks call 'em "flat-earthers."

But the difficulty of the alarmists' protectionist task only grows. There has been [no significant warming](#) since 1995, and none at all since 1997. The [numbers](#) of detracting scientists were already [sizable](#) and are only [continuing to grow](#) (PDF). The oceans are [cooling](#), Antarctic ice [grows](#), current temperature measuring data [are biased](#) in favor of heat, and legitimate explanations for Arctic ice loss (by the way, *not* an unprecedented phenomenon) other than increased greenhouse gases are [published](#).

When you think about it, the global warming industry is not dissimilar to the current mortgage-instigated mess the country now faces. We have a planetary heat crisis and an insufficient home ownership crisis. Government demands intervention to remedy both mistaken theories. Media joins in celebrating and promoting the new agenda. A bubbling system of artificial wealth is created. But because both foundations are shaky, they cannot hold up the continued weight placed upon them.

One has finally collapsed. When will the other?

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Creating unneeded jobs just won't help

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/otherviews/1237995,CST-EDT-sullum23.article>

October 23, 2008

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If, as widely expected, Barack Obama faces a recession when he takes office in January, many Americans will expect him to deliver on his promise to "create jobs."

They probably will be disappointed, because Obama seems to view job creation not only as something the government does with taxpayers' money but also as an end in itself. That's a recipe for wasteful spending that will divert resources from more productive uses and ultimately result in lower employment than would otherwise occur.

Obama says he will "transform the challenge of global climate change into an opportunity to create 5 million new green jobs."

This way of looking at climate change is a variation on the broken-window fallacy, according to which the loss caused by a smashed window is offset by the employment it gives the glazier.

By the same logic, Obama should view war, crime and hurricanes as opportunities to create jobs. All three generate economic activity, but we'd be better off if the resources spent on bombs, burglar alarms and reconstruction were available for other purposes, instead of being used to inflict, prevent or recover from losses.

Likewise, overhauling manufacturing, transportation and power production to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide may or may not be justified, but it is properly viewed as a drag on the economy.

We'd be better off if we didn't have to worry about, and use resources to minimize, climate change.

Obama wants to spend \$150 billion on "developing and deploying advanced energy technologies, including solar, wind and clean coal." He says this plan "will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, decrease our dependence on foreign oil and create jobs that can't be outsourced."

Leaving aside the merits of Obama's approach to reducing carbon dioxide emissions, the fact that he lists **"jobs that can't be outsourced" as a distinct goal is troubling.**

Paying people to dig holes and fill them in again also creates "jobs that can't be outsourced," but that doesn't mean it's a smart investment or an appropriate use of taxpayers' money.

Speaking of digging holes, Obama also wants to spend \$60 billion to "provide financing to transportation infrastructure projects across the nation." He says "these projects will create up to two million new direct and indirect jobs and stimulate approximately \$35 billion per year in new economic activity."

Fixing a bridge, widening a highway or building a light rail system may or may not make economic sense. But the fact that it involves paying people to operate jackhammers and pour concrete does not make it any more worthwhile. **If creating jobs can justify transportation projects, why not fill the country with empty airports and bridges to nowhere?**

Obama also sees regulation as an engine of economic growth. He says requiring that "25 percent of American electricity be derived from renewable sources by 2025 . . . has the potential to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs." (See Benny [report # 155](#), Smith and Booker)

Even if true, that projection tells us nothing about the advisability of such a mandate. **If the government required that 25 percent of cars be replaced by horse-drawn carriages, that also would create certain jobs, while destroying or forestalling others.**

Obama's job fetish is apparent even when he talks about spontaneous economic activity. "Businesses should live up to their responsibilities to create American jobs," he declared in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention. **In a free market, businesses exist because they provide goods or services that people value. A business that makes job creation its overriding goal will not be employing anyone for long.**

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Oversold environmentalism about to take a tumble

<http://www.canada.com/vancouversun/news/story.html?id=d68b71bo-e1cb-4710-a0c9-058bb8de8f95>

Lawrence Solomon
Monday, October 27, 2008

Stock market indexes have plummeted from their inflated peaks. Oil and other commodities have likewise fallen. The next commodity to tumble from unsustainable peak levels: Environmentalism.

In part, I am making this prediction because, in my 30 years as an environmentalist, I have never seen so many governments and so many corporations so profusely espousing so many environmental causes.

Where promoting environmentalism was once seen as daring and counter-cultural, today it has become banal, no longer the exclusive preserve of a Body Shop chain, but of every retailer down to Wal-Mart.

For the same reason that clothes go out of fashion after the masses embrace them, mass-marketed environmentalism will come to be disdained. That won't sell for long.

I am predicting a collapse of today's Wal-Mart environmentalism for another reason, too: Much of it is misguided, based on misunderstanding and vacuity.

Global warming is by far the biggest such example. Those who have been following my Denier series know that large numbers of distinguished scientists dispute the conventional wisdom on climate change, making absurd the claim that the science is settled on climate change. And yet government and corporate propaganda -- in global warming and elsewhere -- strip away all subtlety and uncertainty in their public relations programs, portraying environmental problems and proposing environmental solutions in cartoon-cutout simplicity that, more often than not, accomplish nothing good or make matters worse.

While governments and industry discount major environmental issues that affect Crown corporations and Crown resources (nuclear power, forestry), they stir up concerns in consumer areas that have high visibility and often pose few true hazards.

The results are often perverse: Blue Box recycling programs that promote waste; ethanol blends for automobiles that benefit the farm lobby while depleting the land and fouling the air; bans on incandescent bulbs that ignore consumer preferences but please light bulb manufacturers seeking lucrative new markets; public transit systems that run near-empty buses along low-density routes; "Right-to-Farm" laws that legalize polluting practices; demonization of private water systems, including bans on water bottles, when private systems have a superior safety and environmental record -- in short, most of the environmental policies that governments put before the public are wrong-headed.

A third reason for my prediction that environmentalism has peaked is the instinct for self-preservation among the political leadership. Thinking they could raise revenues while appearing green, opportunistic politicians have been promoting environmental taxes without having a credible case to make. **The result, increasingly, is political ruin.**

The federal election results two weeks ago are, in good part, a testament to Liberal leader Stephane Dion's failure to sell his Green Shift -- the Liberals obtained the lowest share of the vote since Confederation. In England, where citizens face the world's highest burden of green taxes, the ruling Labour party received a miserable three per cent of the vote in byelections earlier this year and London's mayor, the greenest in Europe, was thrown out of office. Across Europe, once-green politicians are now backing away from their earlier commitments to push green agendas.

In stock and commodity markets, when values fall from unrealistically high levels, they often fall further than justified.

When environmentalism falls from its high values on the realization that many concerns have been oversold, it too will likely fall further than justified. Environmentalism will then need to reestablish public trust before real environmental gains can be made.

As history shows, after being burned in the stock market, investors often stay away for years, fearful of being burned again. The lack of trust harms the greater economy. We have no history of what happens when citizens feel taken in by false environmental claims. But we may soon find out.

Lawrence Solomon is executive director of Energy Probe in Toronto and author of *The Deniers: The World Renowned Scientists Who Stood Up Against Global Warming Hysteria, Political Persecution, and Fraud.*

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Limiting Co2 Emissions Hurts Poor Most

<http://www.investors.com/editorial/editorialcontent.asp?secid=1502&status=article&id=310084682311296>

BY DAVID A. RIDENOUR

Posted 10/28/2008

When our economic bus is teetering at the edge of a cliff, it's a bad time to throw on some extra weight.

Yet government-mandated restrictions on carbon emissions would do precisely that, adding enormous additional weight to an economy already reeling. This additional weight shouldn't just be thrown from the bus — it should be thrown under it.

Most econometric studies agree that restricting greenhouse gas emissions would slow our already sluggish economy.

A study by the National Association of Manufacturers projected that emissions caps, similar to those rejected earlier this year by the U.S. Senate calling for a 63% cut in emissions by 2050, would reduce U.S. gross domestic product by up to \$269 billion and cost 850,000 jobs by 2014.

The Heritage Foundation estimated that such restrictions would result in cumulative GDP losses of up to \$4.8 trillion and employment losses of more than 500,000 per year by 2030.

Other studies suggest smaller economic costs: Duke University's Nicholas Institute estimates a GDP loss of \$245 billion by 2030, while the Environmental Protection Agency forecasts a GDP drop of between \$238 billion and \$983 billion.

Sharp emissions restrictions would also push the costs of energy and other consumer products higher. According to a study conducted by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the restrictions could raise gasoline prices by 29%, electricity prices by 55% and natural gas prices by 15% by 2015.

The people most vulnerable to such price increases are the poor. A 2007 report by the Congressional Budget Office, examining the costs of cutting carbon emissions just 15%, noted that customers "would face persistently higher prices for products such as electricity and gasoline. Those price increases would be regressive in that poorer households would bear a larger burden relative to their income than wealthier households would."

Indeed, the lowest quintile income group would pay nearly double what the highest quintile income group would pay, as a proportion of income, in increased energy costs.

And it appears that all this economic pain would be an utterly meaningless gesture.

Dr. Patrick Michaels, former president of the American Association of State Climatologists, now with the Cato Institute, says reducing U.S. emissions by 63% would prevent a mere 0.013 degree Celsius in warming. With emissions from China, India and other developing nations growing at breakneck speed, even this modest benefit would be completely erased.

Some argue that we should undergo this pain anyway to set an example for others to follow. The European Union tried that and now, apparently, it's throwing in its recycled-material towel.

At a summit in Brussels last month, the EU applied the brakes to its ambitious program to reduce EU carbon emissions by 20% by 2020 after Italy, backed by 10 other EU nations, threatened to veto the plan. They argued that the costs of the climate plan couldn't be justified given the current economic turmoil.

Little wonder that Europeans are balking. Europeans have been paying enormous costs to meet their targets, getting little in return. In the United Kingdom, green tariffs already account for 14% of the average electricity bill. Yet only 2% of Britain's energy needs are met by renewables.

To meet its renewable target of 15%, these fees will have to be raised even further, increasing the number of Britons suffering from "fuel poverty," defined as spending 10% or more of income on energy. Over 4 million Britons currently qualify as fuel-impooverished.

Imposing such costs on Americans promises to do for the economy what Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae did for banking. We should bail out before it's too late. Let's hope that this is one bailout plan all Americans can get behind.

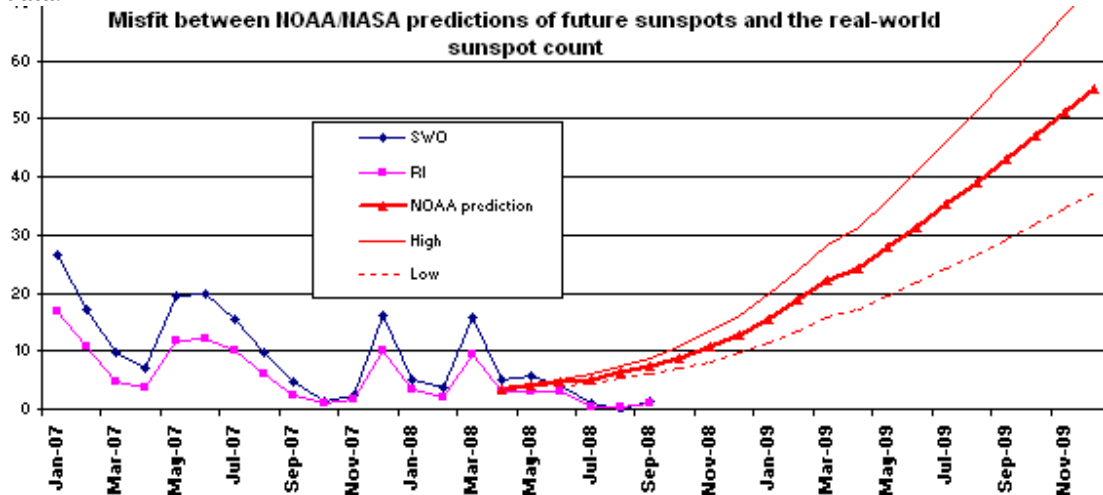
Ridenour is vice president of the National Center for Public Policy Research, a conservative, nonpartisan think tank on Capitol Hill.

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[Hard lesson about solar realities for NOAA / NASA
http://www.warwickhughes.com/blog/?p=180](http://www.warwickhughes.com/blog/?p=180)

October 30th, 2008 by Warwick Hughes

The real world sunspot data remaining quiet month after month are mocking the curved red predictions of [NOAA and about to slide underneath](#). Time for a rethink I reckon NOAA !! Here is my clearer chart showing the misfit between NOAA / NASA prediction and real-world data.



Regular readers might remember that we started posting articles drawing attention to contrasting predictions for Solar Cycle 24, way back on 16 December 2006. [Scroll to the start of my solar threads.](#)

Then in March 2007 I posted David Archibald's pdf article, "The Past and Future of Climate". Well worth another read now, I would like to see another version of David's Fig 12 showing where we are now in the transition from Cycle 23 to Cycle 24. [Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Issued April 2007 from NOAA / NASA](#)

Much data and commentary at solarcycle24.com

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We can't think of any other cause, it must be us

<http://australianclimatemadness.blogspot.com/2008/10/we-cant-think-of-any-other-cause-it.html>

This is the depth to which scientific research into climate change has sunk, like a kind of prehistoric civilisation that blames thunderstorms, earthquakes and volcanoes on humanity somehow having "upset the gods". A Canadian study has concluded that we *must* be causing climate change because nothing else can explain it.

Under the triumphant headline "Study confirms human impact on climate change", *The Age* reports all this without any discrimination:
"We found that **we could only explain the warming** that's been observed if we included human-climate influences, particularly greenhouse gases," the study's author, Nathan Gillett, told ABC Radio.

"And **we couldn't explain those changes [if there] were just natural influences** on climate like volcanoes and changes in the brightness of the sun."

Maybe your models aren't all they're cracked up to be? Did you get them cheap off the IPCC? And to finish off, ACM Idiotic Comment of the Day gong awarded for dumbest alarmist remark:
"In the Arctic, we have the Greenland ice sheet, in the Antarctic, the Antarctic ice sheet.

"If those all melted, that would contribute 70 metres to sea level."

Yawn.

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