

The Week That Was: 2012-12-01 (December 1, 2012)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *“Reality must take precedence over public relations, for nature cannot be fooled.”* Richard P. Feynman [www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/r/richard_p_feynman.html]

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Number of the Week: 55.5 mm or 2.2 inches per century

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Which Way Now for SEPP?

Get ready for the worst -- in 2013 and after:

An avalanche of economy-crippling EPA regulations, soaring energy prices, and a White House that has Climate Change as its centerpiece. President Obama acknowledged as much in his acceptance speech, when he said he wanted to "pass on a country that isn't threatened by the destructive power of a warming planet." [NB: The planet hasn't warmed for the past 16 years!]

My real concern is for young people who will never know what America was like -- or might have been. They will pay the price in reduced standard of living and job opportunities -- and, more importantly, in reduced Freedom.

We may already be on the 'slippery slope' -- with the 'takers' outvoting the 'producers.' OECD projects that China will overtake the US as the world's largest economy in 2016. My hope is that the US is not beyond repair. Let us pray -- each in his own way.

What we are up against

The environmental movement is arguably among the best-funded and most popular of the interest groups composing the Left today. They raise and spend billions of dollars a year, a fair amount of it coming from governments and duped donors. The five top energy and environment issues in 2013 will likely be:

- regulations on fracking and mining
- state renewable-energy portfolios (mandates)
- subsidies to renewable-energy firms, environmental advocacy groups, and other cronies
- EPA regulations on coal-powered electric generation to the point of eliminating new coal-fired power plants.
- proposals for carbon taxes – or worse

Stopping them requires exposing their abuse of sound science (including the hot topic of global warming), abuse of courts, and their alliances with groups on the far anti-human Left. Fortunately, other groups are actively opposing thus; it's not necessary for SEPP to duplicate their good efforts. We already work closely with such groups and support them by providing scientific back-up.

SEPP's past -- and proposed action plan

Although I had been involved in climate science throughout my professional life (see http://z4.invisionfree.com/Popular_Technology/index.php?showtopic=3072), my first policy-oriented publication was in 1988: *Fact and Fancy on Greenhouse Earth* (*The Wall Street Journal*, August 30, 1988). <http://www.sepp.org/science-editorials.cfm?whichyear=2012>
I founded SEPP in 1990 – just as the UN-IPCC published its first Assessment Report on climate science; we achieved 501-c-3 tax-exempt status in 1992, shortly after the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit and the World Climate Treaty.

Among SEPP’s major achievements was the first demonstration of absence of a ‘scientific consensus’ (the 1995 ‘Leipzig Declaration’) and the publication of booklets or other responses to the four climate-science assessments of the IPCC, culminating in setting up NIPCC (Non-governmental International Panel on Climate Change) in 2007. Since then, we have published two major NIPCC reports and two summaries. Our plan calls for another (final) report and summary in 2013.

In the case of a Romney election victory, I had planned to lay out a road map for Romney-Ryan, focusing on eliminating the current Endangerment Findings of the EPA. The EF is the basis for all carbon-dioxide regulations, whether for power plants or road vehicles. Remove the EF and most of EPA’s proposed regulations would collapse.

With Obama’s re-election, our proposed plan consists of two parts: science and environmental policy.

On **science** we are completing a review of the state of climate science that addresses the same audience as IPCC. “Climate Change Reconsidered – 2013” will be the third of this series of NIPCC reports published for us by the Heartland Institute.

Serving as an “expert reviewer” on the forthcoming 5th Assessment report of the UN-IPCC, I can tell you without breaking confidence that the IPCC fails to make its case for AGW (anthropogenic global warming). Here is the abstract of talks I will be giving over the next couple months.

Evidence for AGW (anthropogenic global warming) is put forward in IPCC's chapter 10 on "Attribution." However, NIPCC (Non-governmental International Panel on Climate Change) demonstrates that this evidence cannot survive scrutiny.

The most feared consequence of putative AGW is an accelerated rise in global Sea Level. However, a detailed analysis of available data does not support the claims of IPCC chapter 13.

We conclude therefore that all current international efforts to limit emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gases are pointless, expensive, -- and largely counter-productive.

On the **policy** side, we work mainly with established organizations, such as the Heartland Institute and the Competitive Enterprise Institute. They are larger than we, have a talented staff of policy analysts and access to legal advice. Our contribution is to provide scientific back-up. For example, we were co-plaintiffs against the EPA, challenging their Endangerment Finding.

In 2013 we will face a large number of proposed EPA regulations that will do little for the environment but will certainly retard or even stop economic growth. For a (partial) listing see http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/10/obamas_epa_plans_for_2013.html

Our task is to show that most of these regulations are destructive, unscientific and unnecessary.

We invite your comments and look forward to an active and productive coming year.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

S. Fred Singer, PhD
Chairman, Science & Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)
1600 S. Eads St., Suite 712-S
Arlington, VA 22202-2907
<singer@SEPP.org>
1-703-920-2744

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THIS WEEK:

By Ken Haapala, Executive Vice President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)

On the Road Again: On November 28, Fred Singer will be leaving for another lecture tour in Europe. On November 30 he will be speaking at the EIKE Conference in Munich, co-sponsored by Heartland. On December 3, he will be in Geneva giving three talks: luncheon talk to the BSCC, an afternoon talk with the WMO, and an evening talk "The Climate Debate." On December 5, he give a 14:30 open lecture on "Skeptical about Climate Catastrophes" at the Google building in Zurich To RSVP contact Johan Branstroem +41 76 79 89 579. He will give another open talk in Vienna on Dec 7 at 6 pm. To RSVP contact Gabriella Engler at the F. von Hayek Institute. For additional information please contact Ken@SEPP.org.

Please Note: The time of Fred's talk to the Google group in Zurich has been changed to 14:30, local time]

Dire Doha: On Monday, November 26, the 18th annual Conference of Parties (COP 18) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) opened in Doha, Qatar, for a two-week session to try to reach an agreement for the control of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions to replace the expiring Kyoto Protocol. The opening was accompanied by all too

typical claims of a dire future for humanity unless all agree to submit to carbon dioxide (CO2) controls administered by the UN.

However, there was a surprise. According to a report in the *Times of India*, in a closed door meeting with green organizations, US chief climate change negotiator Jonathan Pershing reminded the green organizations that the US partially funds their presence at these conferences (other funders were not named) and suggested the green groups tone down their criticism of the US. According to the *Times of India*, the meeting was secretly recorded and the reporter listened to the recording.

It is quite well established from the budgets of agencies such as the Department of State, that the US is a major funder of these climate conferences. If correct, the report is a stark statement that the US is funding the presence of political agitators at these conferences. In effect, the US is funding a political movement, not a scientific enterprise.

As reported in prior TWTWs, the US has spent at least \$107 Billion on global warming / climate change, with about \$35 billion on climate science. It is past time for the US government to give a complete accounting of this funding and the funding of political pressure groups such as green non-government organizations (NGOs). Transparency and government integrity are at issue.

It is difficult to predict the outcome from Doha which ends on Friday. But if the past is any guide, the conference will end with days of “Herculean” negotiations over a nebulous agreement to continue such conferences for the indefinite future. No reason to stop the circus. Westerners who are skeptical about the largely unverified claims that CO2 emissions are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming should be thankful to officials in China and India who are more concerned about the future economic welfare of their citizens than many western officials are concerned about the future economic welfare of their citizens. Please see links under Defending the Orthodoxy, Expanding the Orthodoxy – Doha.

Questioning IPCC Science: A number of new posts question the science of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The alarmists use this questionable science to make their dire predictions.

Four-time IPCC expert reviewer Vincent Gray summarizes what he considers major deficiencies in the IPCC science. Gray highlights six assumptions in the basic climate models that he considers are at odds with meteorological science. He points out that, contrary to the oversimplification by the IPCC, the climate system is a heat engine. It includes the changing influences of the sun, such as, from day to night; movement of the earth, and outer space.

Tim Ball, who studied under modern climate change pioneer H.H. Lamb, addresses the critical procedural fault in the IPCC process as well as some of the major causes of significant uncertainty in the results. The critical fault is that the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) is a political document, not a scientific one. It is politically agreed upon and distributed months before the scientific document is publicly available. The SPM is written with a certainty that is scientifically unjustified. The political impact is immediate and most politicians, bureaucrats, alarmists, journalists, etc. ignore the scientific report that would undermine the claims in the

SPM. Ball gives examples of uncertainty found in the scientific document that do not appear in the political one.

Judith Curry posts excerpts of a lengthy discussion by Paul Voosen on the uncertainty arising from the failure to properly understand clouds – something extremely difficult. The uncertainty has been known for decades, yet, largely, ignored. A new field observation program, MAGIC, is an effort to better understand the influence of clouds. One vexing problem is understanding the role of aerosols, small fine particles or liquid droplets suspended in the atmosphere. In the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), 2007, the total effect of aerosols is calculated to be highly negative with a great range of error. If the models overestimate the negative impact of aerosols, then the models may greatly overestimate the impact on temperatures from atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHG), especially CO₂.

These are but few of the major problems conveniently ignored by organizations such as the EPA that make declarative statements as to the certainty of the science. The certainty the EPA expresses in its finding that GHG, especially CO₂, endangers public health and welfare is not scientifically warranted. Please see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Unprecedented Global Warming? The supporters of the IPCC have claimed that the late 20th century global warming was unprecedented and dangerous. Three studies reviewed by NIPCC Reports this week challenge this claim. Please see links under NIPCC Reports.

From Natural to the Anthropogenic, then Back? For over a decade, the anthropogenic (human caused) global warming alarmists have claimed that humans causes dominate natural causes of global warming / climate change. In discussing the latest temperature release by the British MET, David Whitehouse of the Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF) points out that the MET states the current 15 years of no warming is perfectly natural, a convenient explanation. However, it is inconsistent with the barrage of claims that human emissions of GHG dominate climate. Please see link under Models v. Observations.

Polling for Policy: The American Lung Association (ALA) released a poll claiming that the public supports additional EPA regulations on soot. In the series of largely background questions, one addressed the issue of soot:

“Q.3 Now let me read you two more statements some people on both sides of the issue might make.

(Some/other) people say: Studies indicate that soot is one of the most dangerous and deadly forms of pollution, especially for children, and can cause heart and lung damage and even lead to cancer or premature death. Independent scientists say that setting stronger soot standards will prevent tens of thousands of premature deaths and over 1 million asthma attacks every year, saving American families billions in lower health care costs. The EPA is taking a common sense approach, setting standards that will be easy for polluters to comply with at a minimal cost.

(Some/other) people say: Given the weak economy, now is the worst time for the EPA to enact costly regulations that kill jobs and increase energy costs. These new rules are

unrealistic and unattainable. They will lead to higher energy costs for American families, would cost businesses tens of millions of dollars, and would essentially close areas of the country to new or expanded manufacturing businesses, resulting in American jobs being shipped overseas. President Obama shouldn't be creating new barriers to job creation or increasing energy costs when our country is trying to recover from a recession.

Now that you've heard more about this issue let me ask you again, do you favor or oppose the EPA setting stricter limits on fine particles, also called "soot?"

Comparing one side of the scientific issue with the economic issue is similar to comparing apples to oranges, and is misleading. The second side of the scientific issue is: many scientists state the statistical techniques used to evaluate the harmful effects of soot greatly overstate the harm of current levels of soot and greatly exaggerate the benefits derived from further regulation. With such a statement the results may be drastically different.

It may be a coincidence, but EPA funds many ALA activities, and ALA strongly supports expansion of EPA powers. Please see link under Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

WUWT.TV: Anthony Watts has posted more of the interviews he broadcast during his 24 hour counter to Al Gore's Dirty Weather. Please see links under: Challenging the Orthodoxy – WUWT.TV

Ethanol Mandate: In an unusual statement the American Automobile Association (AAA) urged the EPA not to mandate a blend of gasoline requiring 15% ethanol citing automobile manufacturers will not cover the use of such fuel in their warrantees. EPA responded that cars made in 2001 and thereafter can handle it. The lobbying group, Renewable Fuels Association immediately attacked AAA and defended EPA. As a gasoline additive, ethanol is a product with little value. It does not improve air quality in cars with electronic fuel injection, is destroying 2 cycle engines (power boats, etc.), and is driving up food prices world-wide. In 1942 Joseph Schumpeter coined the term "creative destruction" to describe the procedure whereby a product or manufacturing process is replaced by a superior one, with a net benefit to society. EPA and its lobbyists understand the second part of the term but apparently have difficulty with the first part. Please see Article # 3 and link under Subsidies and Mandates Forever.

Number of the Week: 55.5 mm or 2.2 inches per century. The international research group of polar scientists, IMBIE, announced that melting glacial ice on Greenland and Antarctica has increased sea levels by 11.1 mm over 20 years, from 1992 to 2011, which can be extrapolated to the numbers above. However, one must not rely on long run extrapolations from short run data. Yet, IMBIE did so. It stated that sea level rise increased in the second decade over the first decade.

What is particularly interesting is the early data shows a decline in sea levels from an accumulation of ice, which indicates a cooling. Yet the 1980s and 1990s were decades of warming. Further, there has been no surface warming for about 15 years. This indicates that the ice melt does reflect current temperatures, and other factors must be involved. If ice melt constitutes 30% of the sea level rise as the article suggests, then the 21st century increase will be

at the low end of the range suggested by the IPCC, which is consistent with Fred Singer's suggestions, and far from Jim Hansen's predictions.

It is also interesting that news reports, such as in the *Washington Post*, excitedly reported the polar melt and sea level rise, but failed to provide information on how tiny the rise is. Please see Article # 1 (for a graph), links under Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague?, Changing Seas, and <http://imbie.org/>

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see this week's TWTW at: www.sepp.org. The articles are at the end of the pdf.

1. Polar Ice Sheets Melt Faster

Shrinkage in Greenland, Antarctica Has Sent Ocean Levels Higher, Study Says

By Gautam Naik, WSJ, Nov 29, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323751104578149073844418936.html>

2. Obama Vetoes a Carbon Tax—in Europe

At last a levy the White House doesn't like.

Editorial, WSJ, Nov 27, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323830404578145670298647936.html?mod=W>
[SJ Opinion AboveLEFTTop](#)

3. A Mandate to Raise Food Prices

The cause of higher grocery bills isn't the drought. It's the failed federal ethanol policy.

By Rob Green, WSJ, Nov 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323713104578133571463805826.html#mod=djemEditorialPage_t

4. India's GM Food Hypocrisy

While modern crop engineering faces endless red tape, more slipshod cross-breeding gets a free pass.

By Henry I. Miller, WSJ, Nov 28, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324469304578144880687241220.html?mod=W>
[SJ Opinion LEFTTopBucket](#)

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

Top British Science Body in Revolt over Global Warming Censorship

By Staff Writers, Principia Scientific, Nov 28, 2012 [H/t Thomas Sheahen]

<http://principia-scientific.org/supportnews/latest-news/72-top-british-science-body-in-revolt-over-global-warming-censorship.html>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

The Real Climate

By Vincent Gray, NZ Climate Truth Newsletter, Nov 22, 2012

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2012/11/the-real-climate.html>

Claims Of More Severe Weather With Warming Are Based On IPCC Errors and Omissions

By Tim Ball, WUWT, Nov 25, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/25/claims-of-more-severe-weather-with-warming-are-based-on-ipcc-errors-and-omissions/>

Clouds and MAGIC

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Nov 28, 2012

<http://judithcurry.com/2012/11/28/clouds-and-magic/#more-10533>

Open Climate Letter to UN Secretary General

Current scientific knowledge does not substantiate Ban Ki-Moon assertions on weather and climate, say 125-plus scientists.

Policy actions that aim to reduce CO2 emissions are unlikely to influence future climate. Policies need to focus on preparation for, and adaptation to, all dangerous climatic events, however caused
Special to Financial Post, Nov 29, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/11/29/open-climate-letter-to-un-secretary-general-current-scientific-knowledge-does-not-substantiate-ban-ki-moon-assertions-on-weather-and-climate-say-125-scientists/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy – WUWT.TV

Another WUWT.TV segment – interview with director Pete Garcia on the movie ‘The Boy Who Cried Warming’

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Nov 24, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/24/another-wuwt-segment-interview-with-director-pete-garcia-on-the-movie-the-boy-who-cried-warming/>

Another WUWT.TV segment – Engineer and aviation pioneer Burt Rutan on why he doubts global warming

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Nov 26, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/26/another-wuwt-tv-segment-engineer-and-aviation-pioneer-burt-rutan-on-why-he-doubts-global-warming/>

More WUWT.TV video segments – Joe D’Aleo on Hurricane Sandy and extreme weather

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Nov 28, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/28/more-wuwt-tv-video-segments-joe-daleo-on-hurricane-sandy-and-extreme-weather/>

Another WUWT.TV video, Mike Smith, severe weather expert

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Nov 29, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/29/another-wuwt-tv-video-mike-smith-severe-weather-expert/>

More WUWT.TV: Interview and presentation with Dr. Sebastian Lüning

By Anthony Watts: WUWT, Nov 30, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/30/more-wuwt-tv-interview-and-presentation-with-dr-sebastian-luning/>

[SEPP Comment: Co-author of the German best seller: *Die kalte Sonne*.]

Defending the Orthodoxy

Scientists develop new approach to support future climate projections

By Staff Writers, Southampton UK (SPX), Nov 29, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Scientists_develop_new_approach_to_support_future_climate_projections_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Would the good professors kindly explain what caused the Quaternary – the current period of about 2.5 million years marked by long periods of glaciations and short periods of warming? It cannot be explained by examining periods 65 million years ago emphasizing CO2.]

Pledges to fight global warming inadequate, U.S. off track: study

By Alister Doyle and Marton Kruppa, Reuters, Nov 30, 2012

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/sns-rt-us-climate-talks-emittersbre8at0ja-20121130,0,4733521.story>

Mankind must go green or die, says Prince Charles

Environmental damage left unchecked would be ‘suicide on a grand scale’, Prince warns

By Jonathan Brown, Independent, Nov 23, 2012

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/mankind-must-go-green-or-die-says-prince-charles-8347524.html>

Outcry Grows Over Canadian Govt's Undermining of Climate Science

Federal researchers are on the front line of Harper's alleged 'war on science' as the country's oil ambitions clash with its scientific agenda.

By Katherine Bagley, Inside Climate News, Nov 27, 2012

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20121114/climate-change-scientists-global-warming-stephen-harper-canada-skeptics-oil-sands-budget-cuts-muzzling-protests>

[SEPP Comment: What science is the target of the ‘war on science’? Is it the science of failing climate models?]

A low-carbon Finland is a great challenge, but an achievable one

By Staff Writers, Helsinki, Finland (SPX), Nov 26, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/A_low_carbon_Finland_is_a_great_challenge_but_an_achievable_one_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Burn the forests!]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Our energy and environment deserve better – in South Africa and Qatar

By Kelvin Kemm, Albany Tribune, Nov 29, 2012

<http://www.albanytribune.com/29112012-alice-in-wonderland-science-oped/>

Can We Control The Weather?

By Art Horn, Energy Tribune, Nov 30, 2012

<http://www.energytribune.com/66586/can-we-control-the-weather>

Global Warming Mission Creep At The World Bank

Editorial, IBD, Nov 23, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/112312-634522-climate-change-mission-creep-at-the-world-bank.htm?p=full>

Institutional Bias

By Andrew Montford, Pamphlet, Nov 27, 2012

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2012/11/27/institutional-bias.html>

The futility of climate change mitigation

By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Nov 22, 2012

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/the-futility-of-climate-change-mitigation/article/2514083#.ULSvXYb5Xrp>

Heartland Institute Sends Waves Of Panic Through The Warmist Movement In Germany

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Nov 30, 2012

<http://notrickszone.com/2012/11/30/heartland-institute-sends-waves-of-panic-through-the-warmist-movement-in-germany/>

Questioning European Green

Industries to be shielded from green energy costs as household bills to soar

Energy-intensive industries will be shielded from subsidising new nuclear power plants and wind farms, under Government plans that will see other businesses and consumers paying billions of pounds more for electricity.

By Emily Gosden, Telegraph, UK, Nov 29, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/9709904/Industries-to-be-shielded-from-green-energy-costs-as-household-bills-to-soar.html>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

UN climate change chief getting frustrated with United States

By Joel Gehrke, Washington Examiner, Nov 23, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/un-climate-change-chief-getting-frustrated-with-united-states/article/2514204#.ULSuiYb5Xrp>

Expanding the Orthodoxy -- Doha

US to green NGOs: Who pays for your presence at global summits?

By Nitin Sethi, India Times, Nov 29, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/environment/global-warming/us-to-green-ngos-who-pays-for-your-presence-at-global-summits/articleshow/17417399.cms>

Another Climate Confab Going Down in Flames?

By Walter Russell Mead, Via Meadia, Nov 28, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2012/11/28/another-climate-convention-goes-down-in-flames/>

[SEPP Comment: As long as China and India do not support economic suicide, the UN climate process without commitment keeps many Western leaders satisfied.]

Hamstrung by domestic compulsions, US seeks global compromise over emission pledge

By Nitin Sethi, India Times, Nov 29, 2012

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/environment/global-warming/hamstrung-by-domestic-compulsions-us-seeks-global-compromise-over-emission-pledge/articleshow/17416713.cms>

World Bank turns up the heat on global warming debate

By Bill Wilson, Net Right Daily, Nov 27, 2012

<http://netrightdaily.com/2012/11/world-bank-turns-up-the-heat-on-global-warming-debate/>

US criticizes hosts of climate talks, Qatar for sloppy arrangements

By Nitin Sethi, India Times, Nov 29, 2012

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/environment/global-warming/us-criticizes-hosts-of-climate-talks-qatar-for-sloppy-arrangements/articleshow/17417933.cms>

Beware of permafrost peril, climate talks told

By Staff Writers, Doha (AFP), Nov 27, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Beware_of_permafrost_peril_climate_talks_told_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Like many of the activities in Doha, the claims seem to be manufactured to fit the occasion.]

As nations haggle, global carbon cut targets get impossibly deep

By David Fogarty and Alister Doyle, Reuters, Nov 28, 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/28/us-climate-talks-targets-idUSBRE8AR14T20121128>

Clock is ticking fast, UN climate talks told

By Staff Writers, Doha (AFP), Nov 26, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Clock_is_ticking_fast_UN_climate_talks_told_999.html

Europe defends emissions record at climate talks

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Nov 28, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Europe_defends_emissions_record_at_climate_talks_999.html

U.N. Global Warming Summit: Heading Over the Climate Cliff

By Bryan Walsh, Time, Nov 27, 2012

<http://science.time.com/2012/11/27/u-n-global-warming-summit-heading-over-the-climate-cliff/>

Funding Fights

Clean Energy Aid Hit \$8 Billion for Developing Nations

By Louise Downing, Bloomberg, Nov 27, 2012

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-11-27/clean-energy-aid-hit-8-billion-for-developing-nations.html>

[SEPP Comment: On the way to \$100 Billion by 2020?]

Seeking a Common Ground

Against "Modern Energy Access"

By Roger Pielke Jr, His Blog, Nov 28, 2012

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2012/11/against-modern-energy-access.html>

Energy security and emissions reduction

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Nov 30, 2012

<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/energy-security-and-emissions-reduction>

Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague?

2012 marked by extreme weather, Arctic ice melt: UN

By Staff Writers, Geneva (AFP), Nov 28, 2012

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/2012_marked_by_extreme_weather_Arctic_ice_melt_UN_999.html

Is This the End?

By James Atlas, NYT, Nov 24, 2012 [H/t David Manuta]

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/25/opinion/sunday/is-this-the-end.html?emc=eta1>

Whether in 50 or 100 or 200 years, there's a good chance that New York City will sink beneath the sea.

Tanker ship making first arctic [sic] crossing

By Staff Writers, Hammerfest, Norway (UPI) Nov 26, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Tanker_ship_making_first_arctic_crossing_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Ignoring history. There have been many Arctic crossings along the north coast of Russia.]

Arctic sea ice larger than US melts, UN reports; climate change happening 'before our eyes'

By Michael Casey, AP, Nov 28, 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/un-agency-2012-year-of-extremes-and-above-average-temperatures-despite-la-nina/2012/11/28/60fd6a7e-3950-11e2-9258-ac7c78d5c680_story.html

[SEPP Comment: The Arctic sea ice is now freezing, quickly.]

New study affirms ice-sheet-loss estimates in Greenland, Antarctica

By Darryl Fears, Washington Post, Nov 29, 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/new-study-affirms-ice-sheet-loss-estimates-in-greenland-antarctica/2012/11/29/9d3e3834-3a3a-11e2-b01f-5f55b193f58f_story.html

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Unprecedented level of climate fraud?

Don't miss this stunningly brazen warmist misuse of Newsweek's 1975 "The Cooling World" article

By Tom Nelson, His Blog, Nov 25, 2012 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://tomnelson.blogspot.com/2012/11/unprecedented-level-of-climate-fraud.html>

[SEPP Comment: Alarmists changing history, after the fact.]

Poll: Most favor stronger soot rules

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Nov 29, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/270127-poll-most-favor-stronger-soot-rules>

A fanatic with an ABC microphone

By Walter Starck, Quadrant, Nov 27, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/11/a-fanatic-with-an-abc-microphone>

Models v. Observations

2012: The Temperature Standstill Continues

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Nov 29, 2012

<http://www.thegwpf.org/2012-temperature-standstill-continues/>

Storming Sandy

Who Caused Sandy?

By William Gray, ICECAP, Nov 30, 2012

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/who_caused_sandy/

[SEPP Comment: If global warming caused Sandy, then did it not cause the long period of declining US landfalls of major hurricanes?]

Changing Weather

US Hurricane Intensity 1900-2012

By Roger Pielke, Jr, His Blog, Nov 27, 2012

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2012/11/us-hurricane-intensity-1900-2012.html>

[SEPP Comment: No trend.]

Globe Seized By Bitter Cold – Arctic Sees Record Refreeze – UK Faces 100-Year Winter – Snow In New Zealand!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Nov 29, 2012

<http://notrickszone.com/2012/11/29/globe-seized-by-bitter-cold-arctic-sees-record-refreeze-uk-faces-100-year-winter-snow-in-new-zealand/>

Changing Climate

Global warming still stalled since 1998, WMO Doha figures show

'We're looking into this thing which is NOT HAPPENING'

By Lewis Page, The Register, Nov 29, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2012/11/29/wmo_global_temp_figures_2012_doha_ninth_hottest/

Changing Seas

Definitive study highlights polar ice melt

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP), Nov 29, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Definitive_study_highlights_polar_ice_melt_999.html

Ice Sheet Loss At Both Poles Increasing, Study Finds

By Staff Writers, Pasadena CA (JPL), Nov 30, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Ice_Sheet_Loss_At_Both_Poles_Increasing_Study_Finds_999.html

Combined, melting of these ice sheets [Greenland and Antarctica] contributed 0.44 inches (11.1 millimeters) to global sea levels since 1992.

Stefan Rahmstorf's Sea Level Amnesia – Using His Own Numbers, Sea Level Rise Actually Slowed Down 3%!

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Nov 29, 2012 [H/t Climate Depot]

<http://notrickszone.com/2012/11/29/stefan-rahmstorfs-sea-level-amnesia-using-his-own-numbers-sea-level-rise-actually-dropped-3/>

Seas rising 60 percent faster than UN forecast: study

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Nov 28, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Seas_rising_60_percent_faster_than_UN_forecast_study_999.html

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above!]

Changing Sea Ice

Ocean currents play a role in predicting extent of Arctic sea ice

By Jennifer Chu for MIT News, Boston MA (SPX), Nov 23, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Ocean_currents_play_a_role_in_predicting_extent_of_Arctic_sea_ice_999.html

Changing Earth

Drained wetlands give off same amount of greenhouse gases as industry

By Staff Writers, Gothenburg, Sweden (SPX), Nov 27, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Drained_wetlands_give_off_same_amount_of_greenhouse_gases_as_industry_999.html

[SEPP Comment: In Sweden.]

Acidic Waters

Ocean acidification affecting live marine creatures in the Southern Ocean

By Staff Writers, London, UK (SPX), Nov 28, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Ocean_acidification_affecting_live_marine_creatures_in_the_Southern_Ocean_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The research was done in 2008 and just published. Future comments on it may be very interesting. Again, declining alkalinity is not acidification.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

For a full list of articles see www.NIPCCreport.org

How Sunspot Cycles Impact the Temperatures of Norway and Earth's North Atlantic Region

Reference: Solheim, J.-E., Stordahl, K. and Humlum, O. 2012. The long sunspot cycle 23 predicts a significant temperature decrease in cycle 24. *Journal of Atmospheric and Solar-Terrestrial Physics* 80: 267-284.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/nov/27nov2012a3.html>

How Unusual Was 20th-Century Global Warming?

Reference: Pak, D.K., Lea, D.W. and Kennett, J.P. 2012. Millennial scale changes in sea surface temperature and ocean circulation in the northeast Pacific, 10-60 kyr BP. *Paleoceanography* 27: 10.1029/2011PA002238.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/nov/28nov2012a1.html>

Holocene Temperature Histories of Northern and Southern Norway

Reference: Lilleøren, K.S., Etzelmüller, B., Schuler, T.V., Gislås, K. and Humlum, O. 2012. The relative age of mountain permafrost - estimation of Holocene permafrost limits in Norway. *Global and Planetary Change* 92-93: 209-223.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/nov/28nov2012a3.html>

Confirmed Greening of the Arctic Tundra

Reference: Elmendorf, S.C., et al. 2012. Plot-scale evidence of tundra vegetation change and links to recent summer warming. *Nature Climate Change* 2: 453-457.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/nov/27nov2012a4.html>

Litigation Issues

Millions of jobs at stake in logging case

Supreme Court ruling poised to impact economy

By David Hampton, Washington Times, Nov 26, 2012

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/nov/26/millions-of-jobs-at-stake-in-logging-case/>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

U.S. Carbon Tax to Shovel Dollars to U.N. Bureaucrats?

By David Kreutzer, The Foundry, Nov 27, 2012

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/11/27/u-s-carbon-tax-to-shovel-dollars-to-u-n-bureaucrats/>

Obama's Next Move: the Global Warming Tax

By Brian Sussman, American Thinker, Nov 28, 2012

http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/11/obamas_next_move_the_global_warming_tax.html

Why the GOP Will not Support Carbon Taxes (if it wants to survive)

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Nov 26, 2012

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2012/11/26/why-the-gop-will-not-support-carbon-taxes-if-it-wants-to-survive/#more-15411>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Expiration Of Wind Tax Credit Kills Jobs, Senators Say

By Lucia Graves, Huffington Post, Nov 28, 2012

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/28/wind-tax-credit-fiscal-cliff_n_2207581.html?utm_hp_ref=green&ir=Green

AAA asks EPA to stop sales of high-ethanol fuel

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Nov 30, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/270305-aaa-tells-epa-to-stop-sales-of-higher-ethanol-fuel-blend>

Saving the Wind Industry: Henry Hazlitt's Lesson Applied Today

By Travis Fisher, Master Resource, Nov 28, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/11/saving-wind-hazlitt/#more-22970>

A subsidy that's blowin' in the wind

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Nov 26, 2012

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2012/nov/26/subsidy-s-blowin-wind/>

Mandating cars people don't want

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Nov 29, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/11/29/peter-foster-mandating-cars-people-dont-want/>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

EPA suspends BP from government contracts

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Nov 28, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/269767-epa-suspends-bp-from-government-contracts>

[SEPP Comment: Demanding a fresh piece of flesh?]

EPA Proposes Slightly Modified MATS for New Power Plants

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Nov 20, 2012

http://www.powernews.com/POWERnews/5160.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2571955&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Continuing the war on coal.]

GAO: Coal Power Sector Poised for “Significant” Change

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Nov 29, 2012

http://www.powernews.com/POWERnews/5199.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2571955&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: According to the report, in 2011 coal-fired plants had 30% of the nation's capacity but generated 42% of the electricity. These numbers do not match EIA numbers, but they demonstrate that capacity does not equate to delivery.]

Energy Issues – Non-US

U.S. greens shut down Canadian oil

By Vivian Krause, Financial Post, Nov 29, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/11/28/vivian-krause-u-s-greens-shut-down-canadian-oil/>

[SEPP Comment: Are green foundations the new Ugly American?]

Shale development threatens China's water

By Staff Writers, Beijing (UPI) Nov 28, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Shale_development_threatens_Chinas_water_999.html

[SEPP Comment: More correctly stated, it would be a competing use of water.]

Energy Issues -- US

Wealth rises in USA's heartland

By Dennis Cauchon, USA Today, Nov 27, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.freep.com/usatoday/article/1728123>

Ex-senators propose interagency council for energy policy

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Nov 27, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/269447-report-create-interagency-council-for-national-energy-policy>

[SEPP Comment: Oil and natural gas are expanding rapidly – we must have a policy to control it!]

Fracking Showdown Approaches in Colorado

By Walter Russell Mead, Via Meadia, Nov 26, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2012/11/26/fracking-showdown-approaches-in-colorado/>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Drilling is Awe-Inspiring

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Nov 27, 2012

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2012/11/27/drilling-is-awe-inspiring/>

Return of King Coal?

Report: Mississippi Power’s Kemper Project Will Be Over-Budget and Behind Schedule

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Nov 29, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/5200.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2571955&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Turning brown coal into synthetic gas before burning the gas to generate electricity. Not only does it reduce emissions such as sulfur dioxide, it is estimated that the method will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 65%. The final costs of the two plants under construction will be interesting.]

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Babcock & Wilcox Team Gets Unspecified DOE Award for SMR Development

By Gail Reitenbach, Power News, Nov 29, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/5164.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2571955&hq_l=8&hq_v=5e660500d0

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Tim Flannery – baseload is just a “coal” industry idea (Yes and darkness is a “renewable” idea, right?)

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Nov 28, 2012

<http://joannenova.com.au/2012/11/tim-flannery-baseload-is-just-a-coal-industry-idea-yes-and-darkness-is-a-renewable-idea-eh-tim/>

Texas Windpower: Will Negative Pricing Blow Out the Lights? (PTC vs. reliable new capacity)

By Josiah Neeley, Master Resource, Nov 27, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/11/texas-negative-pricing-ptc/#more-22893>

Massachusetts Approves Second PPA for Offshore Cape Wind Farm

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Nov 29, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/5202.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2571955&hq_l=7&hq_v=5e660500d0

Under terms of the deal, NSTAR will reportedly pay 18.7 cents/kWh for Cape Wind power in the first year of the contract.

[SEPP Comment: According to the following link, the average annual price in Massachusetts in 2010 was 14.26 cents per kilowatt hour, while the national average was 9.83 cents per kilowatt hour. <http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/204.htm>.]

One Solar Array, with Propaganda

By Phil Shannon, American Thinker, Nov 25, 2012

http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/11/one_solar_array_with_propaganda.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy -- Other

Senate passes amendment keeping biofuel investments in defense bill

By Zack Colman and Ramsey Cox, The Hill, Nov 28, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/senate/269897-senate-passes-amendment-keeping-biofuel-investments-in-defense-bill>

[SEPP Comment: Squandering money by paying 7 times, or more, the going price for fuel is an investment? Only in Washington.]

First solely-biofuel jet flight raises clean travel hopes

By Staff Writers, Ottawa (AFP), Nov 7, 2012

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/First_solely-biofuel_jet_flight_raises_clean_travel_hopes_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Biofuel burns more cleanly than standard jet fuel? No mention of costs.]

White rot fungus boosts ethanol production from corn stalks, cobs and leaves

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Nov 20, 2012

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/White_rot_fungus_boosts_ethanol_production_from_corn_stalks_cobs_and_leaves_999.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Tough Trucking For Natural Gas Vehicles: Can They Make It In The Long Haul?

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Nov 27, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/11/27/tough-trucking-for-natural-gas-vehicles-can-they-make-it-in-the-long-haul/>

Nissan Cancels Grand Opening of Taxpayer-Backed EV Plant

By Paul Chesser, NIPC, Nov 29, 2012

<http://nlpc.org/stories/2012/11/29/nissan-cancels-grand-opening-taxpayer-backed-ev-plant>

[SEPP Comment: The failure of another product designed to satisfy Washington’s demands, not consumer demand.]

Health, Energy, and Climate

5 Caveats About The Autism And Air Pollution Study

By Emily Willingham, Forbes, Nov 27, 2012 [H/t ACSH]

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/emilywillingham/2012/11/27/5-caveats-about-the-autism-and-air-pollution-study/>

Finally, there's the editorial (paywalled, sorry) that accompanied this research report, one that makes the not-so-startling observation that the increase in autism prevalence parallels an increase in autism research.

[SEPP Comment: Statistical associations are not proof of causation.]

CBS presents hype as news

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Nov 29, 2012

<http://www.acsh.org/cbs-presents-hype-as-news/>

Oh Mann!

Dendros stick it to the Mann

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Nov 25, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/11/25/dendros-stick-it-to-the-mann/>

[SEPP Comment: Experts in dendrochronology (analysis of tree rings) are apparently becoming less than enchanted by Michael "Tree Ring" Mann.]

A Tale of Two Controversies... or Really Only One?

By James Bacon, Bacons Rebellion, Nov 29, 2012 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2012/11/a-tale-of-two-controversies-or-really-only-one.html>

Environmental Industry

Bill McKibben: Energy Enemy Number One

By Alex Epstein, Master Resource, Nov 30, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/11/mckibben-public-enemy-1/#more-22601>

San Francisco's 'Green' Energy Plan: Back-Door Coercion, Front-Door Costs

By Dave Roberts, Master Resource, Nov 26, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/11/cleanpower-sf/#more-22861>

[SEPP Comment: The green version of consumer choice; if you don't opt out, you get zapped. Another tax that will fall disproportionately on the less fortunate who do not read or understand their electricity bills.]

Will Washington's Super Green Governor Take Up the Fight Against Coal Exports?

Enviros say Gov. Jay Inslee, a pioneer of the U.S. clean economy, gives them a shot at blocking NW coal terminals. Is it wishful thinking?

By Maria Gallucci, InsideClimate News, Nov 26, 2012

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20121119/washington-state-coal-export-terminals-northwest-governor-jay-inslee-clean-energy-economy-oregon-california-epa>

Election Outcome Changes the Climate and Energy Conversation in Congress

Environmentalists are optimistic that the electoral defeat of 11 of a targeted 'dirty dozen' sends a signal and opens new possibilities for action.

By Jason Plautz, Inside Climate News, Nov 27, 2012

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20121126/november-2012-election-congress-environment-energy-carbon-tax-clean-energy-loans-obama-climate-skeptics-enviros>

Other Scientific News

Beetles Warm BC Forests

Using satellite data, researchers calculate that mountain pine beetle infestations raise summertime temperatures in British Columbia’s pine forests by 1 degree Celsius.

By Sabrina Richards, The Scientist, Nov 27, 2012 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/33447/title/Beetles-Warm-BC-Forests/>

Satellites used to track global smog level

By Staff Writers, Tel Aviv, Israel (UPI), Nov 27, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Satellites_used_to_track_global_smog_level_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Houston was the cleanest major city! Tell that to the EPA!]

Ancient microbes found living beneath the icy surface of Antarctic lake

By Staff Writers, Reno NV (SPX), Nov 27, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Ancient_microbes_found_living_beneath_the_icy_surface_of_Antarctic_lake_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

Antifragility

Taleb on emergence and trial and error

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Nov 27, 2012

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/antifragility.aspx>

[SEPP Comment: Very early, Taleb predicted the government sponsored housing bubble.]

Ruining the environment to save it

By Max Rheese, Quadrant, Nov 26, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/11/ruining-the-environment-to-save-it>

[SEPP Comment: Exporting minor environmental problems from countries with solid environmental protection standards to countries with poor or no standards.]

Defying money crunch, Europe sets new goals in space

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Nov 21, 2012

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Defying_money_crunch_Europe_sets_new_goals_in_space_999.html

Who's Killing the Space Program?

By Staff Writers, Bethesda MD (SPX), Nov 27, 2012

http://www.space-travel.com/reports/Whos_Killing_the_Space_Program_999.html

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Solar energy eyed for battlefield power

By Staff Writers, Arlington, Va. (UPI), Nov 29, 2012

http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Solar_energy_eyed_for_battlefield_power_999.html

The hybrid system must also be compact enough to fit on a small trailer towed by a Humvee so they can be hauled to forward positions, researchers said.

[SEPP Comment: How do you know there is a secret Marine unit there? Look for the huge array of solar panels. The Office of Naval Research is now a green lobby.]

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ARTICLES:

1. Polar Ice Sheets Melt Faster

Shrinkage in Greenland, Antarctica Has Sent Ocean Levels Higher, Study Says

By Gautam Naik, WSJ, Nov 29, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323751104578149073844418936.html>

Higher temperatures over the past two decades have caused the polar ice sheets to melt at an accelerating rate, contributing to an almost half-inch rise in global sea levels, according to the most comprehensive study done so far.

Scientists long have struggled to get a fix on whether the permanent ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica are gaining or losing ice. Past satellite-based measurements either were limited in scope or suffered from methodological inconsistencies.

The new study, published Thursday in the journal *Science*, estimates that the melting of the ice sheets as a whole has raised global sea levels by 11.1 millimeters (0.43 inch) since 1992. That represents one-fifth of the total sea-level increase recorded in that period.

In the 1990s, melting of the polar ice sheets was responsible for about 10% of the global sea-level rise, but now it represents about 30%, the data suggest.

Higher temperatures can raise sea levels in several ways. Some estimates suggest that roughly half of the increase relates to the thermal expansion of the oceans: as the water warms, it becomes less dense and expands.

Another source is the runoff from melting glaciers. A third is the increased melting of the ice sheets of Antarctica and Greenland.

Greenland in particular has seen a greater melting of its permanent ice. One reason is that Northern Hemisphere ocean currents are warmer, which leads to more vigorous melting.

In addition, the air temperature in Greenland is much warmer than that in the Antarctic, so a rise in temperature in Greenland has a more profound effect.

"If you extrapolate these results, Greenland is going to be a serious contributor to global sea-level rise" in coming years, said Peter Wadhams, a professor of ocean physics at the University of Cambridge, England, who wasn't involved in the *Science* study. "Its contribution, relative to other sources, is becoming greater and greater," he said.

The issue of rising sea levels has gained more attention in recent months. The destructive flooding caused by the storm Sandy, which struck the U.S. East Coast in late October, revived anxieties about rising ocean levels in heavily populated coastal regions.

To assess the contribution from melting ice sheets, scientists try to measure "mass balance," which is the difference between the annual snow that falls on the permanent ice sheets each year, and the total mass of ice that melts or breaks off the sheets.

It is an extremely complex measurement, because there are so many factors at work: shifting ocean currents, the dynamics and movement of large ice shelves, and the varying temperature and saltiness of water at different places.

Consequently, researchers don't yet know exactly how much of the ice-sheet melt is caused by a warming atmosphere and how much by a warming ocean.

The last major assessment of mass balance was published in a 2007 report on climate change issued by the United Nations. But those findings were based on limited observations, and many scientists considered them to underestimate the melting.

The latest effort reconciles the differences among dozens of earlier measurements and includes new data to compile an estimate that is believed to be twice as accurate as previous ones, according to researchers involved.

"It allows us to make some firm conclusions," said Andrew Shepherd, a professor of earth observation at the University of Leeds in England and a lead author of the study. "It wasn't clear if Antarctica was gaining or losing ice. Now we can say with confidence it is losing ice."

The 2007 U.N. report, published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, suggested that similar amounts of ice were being lost at both the polar regions. By contrast, the new study concludes that two-thirds of the ice loss was in Greenland and the remainder in Antarctica.

The latest findings show that the rate of ice loss in Greenland has increased almost fivefold since the mid-1990s, while Antarctica overall has been losing relatively small amounts of ice at a more or less constant rate.

"Antarctica is so cold that even if warming occurs it won't melt" at the rate seen in Greenland, said Ian Joughin, a glaciologist at the University of Washington in Seattle and a co-author of the new paper.

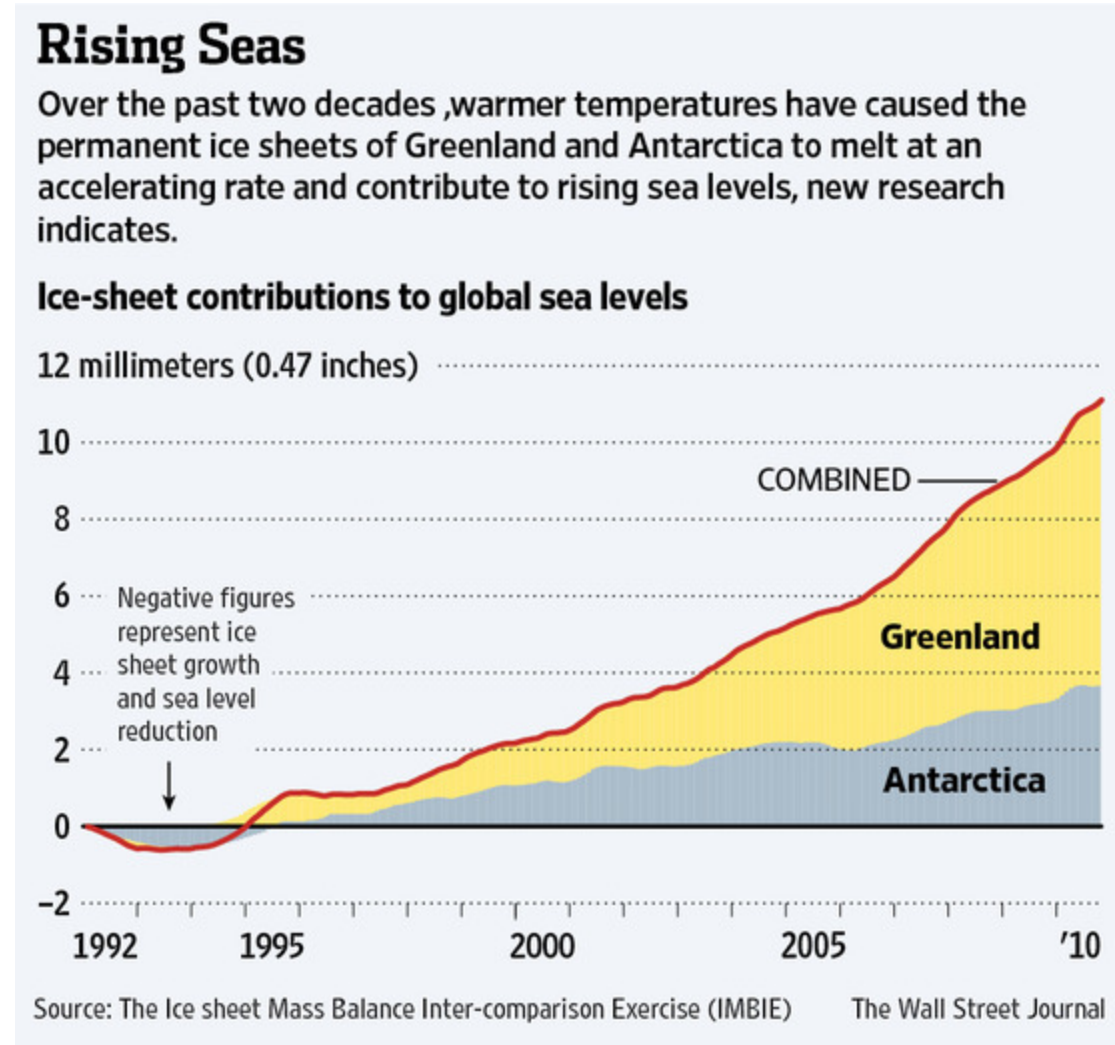
One tricky question is whether the overall accelerated melting of the ice sheets can be linked to man-made climate change.

The shrinkage of the permanent ice sheets can't entirely be explained by any of the decades long or century long natural shifts in climate cycles, according to Prof. Shepherd.

Scientists note that current climate-change models predict that some parts of the Antarctic ice sheet will grow while other parts will shrink, and that parts of the Greenland ice also will melt. Observations have borne out these projections so far.

"The signals suggest there is no immediate threat" from rising sea levels, Prof. Shepherd said. "But we can at least warn people that there are instabilities that need to be investigated."

The study involved 26 laboratories and was supported by the European Space Agency and the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The data used for the study were based on measurements from 10 separate satellite missions.



2. Obama Vetoes a Carbon Tax—in Europe

At last a levy the White House doesn't like.

Editorial, WSJ, Nov 27, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323830404578145670298647936.html?mod=W>
[SJ Opinion AboveLEFTTop](#)

President Obama has said he's going to continue his crusade against carbon energy in a second term, and we believe him. Yet there he was Tuesday signing a bipartisan bill shielding U.S. airlines from paying a carbon tax merely for flying to Europe.

The European Union imposed its scheme to tax foreign airlines this year in one of its aren't-we-virtuous climate change gestures. Never mind that the tax ignored the usual multilateral forum for dealing with international aviation issues. The move drew a furious reaction from China and U.S.

airlines, which estimated the tax would cost them \$3.1 billion through 2020. The costs would be passed along to airline passengers.

Congress may love taxes, but not if foreigners are taxing Americans and keeping the money. So in September the Senate passed by rare unanimous vote a bill directing the Transportation Secretary to protect U.S. carriers from the air tax if he deems it necessary, and the House followed upon returning after the election.

“The Obama Administration is firmly committed to reducing harmful carbon pollution from civil aviation both domestically and internationally,” said a White House spokesman on Tuesday, but “the application of the EU [tax] to non-EU air carriers is the wrong way to achieve that objective.” It’s good to know there’s at least one tax this Administration doesn’t like.

3. A Mandate to Raise Food Prices

The cause of higher grocery bills isn’t the drought. It’s the failed federal ethanol policy.

By Rob Green, WSJ, Nov 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323713104578133571463805826.html#mod=djemEditorialPage_t

Americans should understand that this year’s drought—the worst in 50 years—isn’t the primary reason for record-high food prices. The drought made things worse, but the leading driver of long-term increases in food costs is a deeply flawed federal mandate.

In 2005, Congress enacted the Renewable Fuel Standard to mandate the use of corn-based ethanol in gasoline. The cost of food commodities immediately began to rise. As a result, Americans have had to deal with some of the highest food prices on -record. While the drought will end at some point, the price increases caused by the ethanol mandate will continue unless the government reverses course.

Proponents of ethanol argue that it lowers greenhouse-gas emissions and gas prices, but these findings remain subject to intense debate. The higher food prices all Americans now pay are indisputable.

Under the federal mandate, Americans must use 15 billion gallons of ethanol in gasoline -annually by 2015. To meet this goal, 5.3 billion bushels of corn per year—equal to more than 40% of the 2011 corn crop—must be processed and burned as -ethanol, not used for food or livestock feed.

The result: higher prices across the entire food chain, from products directly containing corn to protein raised on corn feed and crops that compete with corn for farmland. That includes the bread on the table, the eggs at breakfast, the chicken or steak at dinner, and almost all dairy products.

Since the enactment of the ethanol mandate in 2005, the use of corn in ethanol has skyrocketed to more than five -billion bushels per year from 1.3 billion. Corn prices immediately began to rise, too, and in each year since they have exceeded the highest price seen between 1976 and 2006.

Price increases also spread to other parts of the agricultural sector, as farmers switched to corn from other crops and livestock.

New research by PricewaterhouseCoopers (on behalf of the National Council of Chain Restaurants) finds that by the time the mandate's 2015 goals are met, it will have caused a 27% increase in corn prices. Increased corn prices have already led to higher prices for other commodities, such as soybeans (by up to 16%), pork (by up to 15%) and poultry (by up to 8%).

Chain restaurants rely on these products for the food they serve. According to the PwC study, the federal mandate costs the typical chain restaurant up to \$18,000 per year, per restaurant location. That is money that could otherwise go to building new restaurants, expanding operations or hiring new workers.

At some point in the future, alternative forms of biofuel might be produced without the distortionary impact on food prices. But such alternative biofuels aren't yet commercially viable. So the elevated corn and other commodity prices caused by the ethanol mandate will continue into the foreseeable future. The increased costs to the food chain will have to be paid as long as the policy remains in place.

All the while, it isn't clear what good ethanol use will be doing for the environment. This is especially true if the long-run impact of increased corn production is to convert forests into croplands, substitute normal crop rotation with practices that use more fertilizers, and further tax local water resources. If so, any net reductions in greenhouse-gas emissions can disappear altogether.

In exchange for an alleged benefit that is uncertain at best, the ethanol mandate effectively requires that Americans pay a tax on the food they purchase. However laudable the mandate's intended goals, its downsides outweigh any possible benefits.

The chain-restaurant industry isn't anti-ethanol. We simply believe it is time for the ethanol industry to stand on its own, as restaurant owners and operators do every day. Congress and the president should repeal the misguided Renewable Fuel Standard and allow the free market to allocate corn to its most highly valued use—not one imposed by a government that forces food to be burned for inefficient fuel.

Mr. Green is executive director of the National Council of Chain Restaurants.

4. India's GM Food Hypocrisy

While modern crop engineering faces endless red tape, more slipshod cross-breeding gets a free pass.

By Henry I. Miller, WSJ, Nov 28, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324469304578144880687241220.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopBucket

India has enjoyed signal successes with genetic engineering in agriculture. But today the nation's relationship with this critical biotechnology is in total disarray, the victim of activists' scaremongering and government pandering.

Delhi should know better. Following the adoption of the genetically improved varieties and intensive crop management practices of the Green Revolution, from 1960 to 2000 India's wheat yields increased more than three-fold.

During the past decade, widespread adoption of an insect-resistant, genetically engineered crop called Bt-cotton has drastically reduced the use of chemical pesticides in cotton fields, enhanced food security and improved farmers' bottom line. Economists Graham Brookes and Peter Barfoot estimate that Bt-cotton, which contains a bacterial protein toxic to pests, boosted India's economy by \$9.4 billion from 2002 to 2010, and by \$2.5 billion in 2010 alone.

Nevertheless, bureaucrats have blocked innovations in genetic engineering. During the late 1990s, regulators used the threat of fines and imprisonment to force scientists at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute to destroy their field trial of insect-resistant eggplant, or brinjal as Indians call it. There was nothing remotely hazardous about the trial; the investigators had simply not submitted all the required paperwork.

More recently, anti-biotech groups have waged relentless war on Bt-eggplant. They have made bizarre, baseless allegations about genetically engineered crops, linking them to health problems and to economic failures that have supposedly led to mass farmer suicides, and succeeded in convincing then-Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh in February 2010 to impose a temporary ban on this variety of eggplant.

These activists succeeded in further influencing the Indian government. In August, a report from a parliamentary agriculture committee parroted many of the activists' misrepresentations. It heavily criticized a 2009 regulatory decision to approve genetically engineered eggplant—a rare approval that had been won after years of bureaucratic delays.

Also in August, and again at the behest of activists, the government of Maharashtra state banned the sale and distribution of Bt-cotton seeds. The seeds are made by Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company, which is a partner of the Missouri-based multinational Monsanto MON -0.42% . Maharashtra politicians said they were inferior in quality, an unreasonable charge given their enormous, proven benefits.

Anti-biotech groups have also gone to the courts to halt the testing and commercialization of genetically engineered crops. In October, a technical committee appointed by India's Supreme Court recommended a 10-year blanket ban on field trials of genetically engineered food crops. Scientists harshly criticized this recommendation, noting that the committee ignored copious data on the safety of genetically engineered crops and their promise for Indian agriculture and food production. On Nov. 9, the Supreme Court declined to accept the recommendation, pending receipt of a more comprehensive report early next year.

Such meddling from New Delhi has hurt farmers' ability to feed Indians more cheaply and reliably. Its approach to oversight turns on its head a basic tenet of regulation—that the amount of

oversight an activity receives should be commensurate with the level of risk it poses. In India, crops like Bt-brinjal are crafted using precise, modern laboratory methods that essentially refine, or extend, more primitive ways to perform genetic modification.

The precision involved actually makes the product safer, as it becomes possible to introduce pieces of DNA that contain only one or a few well-characterized genes. Yet they are subjected to extensive, expensive testing and monitoring regimes—and even proposed bans. Meanwhile, exempted entirely from regulation are new plants created using cruder, less predictable breeding techniques, such as "wide-cross" hybridization, in which large numbers of genes are moved between unrelated plants.

To fully grasp the folly of this approach, consider the man-made hybrid species *Triticum agropyrotriticum*, which arose from the combination of bread wheat and quackgrass. The old method of hybridization involved here transfers the entire genome of quackgrass haphazardly into wheat.

This new crop could, at least in theory, pose several types of problems because it takes an established plant variety, wheat, and introduces tens of thousands of foreign genes into it. Concerns include the potential for increased invasiveness of the plant and the possibility that quackgrass-derived proteins could be toxic or allergenic for some humans.

But neither Indian regulators nor activists have evinced any concern about these possibilities. Plant varieties like *T. agropyrotriticum*, which harbor "transgenes" and are "genetically modified" according to any reasonable definition, are subject to no review before entering the food chain. In contrast, if a single gene from quackgrass (or any other organism) were introduced into wheat using modern genetic engineering techniques, the resulting variety would be subject to hugely expensive—and increasingly biased and politicized—regulation.

Such discrimination has several root causes. They include the political influence of environmental activists and a deep-seated distrust of industry. But this flies in the face of existing scientific consensus, if activists and bureaucrats ever bothered about that. Perhaps reason will win out in the face of such absurdities, and officials will come to their senses. Until then, the irony of India's fear and ignorance driven approach to genetic engineering is that the only Frankenstein's monster it has spawned is bureaucracy run amok.

Mr. Miller, a physician and molecular biologist, is the Robert Wesson fellow in scientific philosophy and public policy at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He was the founding director of the FDA's Office of Biotechnology.

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