

The Week That Was 2010-08-28 (August 28, 2010)

Brought to you by SEPP (www.SEPP.org)

The Science and Environmental Policy Project

Fred Singer will be lecturing overseas Aug 8 to Sept 21, including India, Israel, and Sicily. He asks that you send him only high-priority e-mail. Please direct other correspondence to Ken Haapala. Lectures open to the public are: Aug 27 U of Rome; Aug 30 or 31 Munich; Sept 13 or 14 Berlin; Sept 16 or 17 Paris. Also at Princeton U on Sept 23, Annandale, VA on Sept 25, and Purdue U on Sept 27. To attend, contact ken@haapala.com for details.

Don't forget to attend the SEPP-SEEE Climate-Energy Forum at 10:30 am on Sept 25 in the Ernst Community Center at the Annandale Campus of the Northern Virginia Community. No reservations are required. This is no fee but donations are greatly appreciated. More details in the next TWTW.

Quote of the Week
“When the Climatic Research Unit was founded, it was clear that the first need was to establish the facts of the past record of the natural climate in times before any side effects of human activities could well be important.” Climate science pioneer HH Lamb quoted in Tim Ball’s article below.

Number of the Week: 1.1%

THIS WEEK:
For those concerned about the environmental impact of oil exploration and development, perhaps the biggest news are studies of the impact of the BP spill on the Gulf of Mexico. On August 19, the New York Times reported that a new study by the venerable Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, being published in *Science*, indicates that the earlier NOAA studies of the disappearance of the oil plume were far too optimistic. According to the Woods Hole study, the oil plume was not breaking down quickly and effects will remain indefinitely. This confirmed suspicions by other groups.

On August 24, the New York Times reported a new study by the Energy Biosciences Institute, a partnership led by the University of California Berkeley and the University of Illinois, stated that the oil plume is being depleted quickly by a previously undiscovered microorganism that appears closely related to *Oceanospirillales*.

Readers may recall that TWTW previously reported that the Gulf of Mexico is home to a great number of microorganisms that thrive in cold water (about 5°C) at oil seeps and that these microbes depend upon chemosynthesis rather than photosynthesis. The newly discovered microbe appears to be one such creature. Very importantly, it appears that the microbe is anaerobic – it does not consume oxygen. The oxygen levels are remaining high (59% inside the plume as compared with 67% outside the plume). Thus the feared dead zone from oxygen depletion is not occurring.

It should be noted that the Energy Biosciences Institute was created by a \$500 Million, 10 year grant from BP for which Stephen Chu, now Secretary of Energy, was a grateful recipient. If the research holds, then this is another example that in science, it is the quality of the work, not the funding, that is important. (Please see Article # 5 and the referenced articles under BP Spill including the 1998 article from *Scientific American*.)

In what appears to be alarming news to the environmental industry, acting US Solicitor General Neal Katyal, representing the Tennessee Valley Authority, a federal agency, filed a brief with the US Supreme Court requesting it throws out a decision by the 2nd Court of Appeals permitting law suits brought by the State of Connecticut and other northeast states against utilities using coal to generate electricity. The entire situation is logically bazaar.

The Attorney General for Connecticut, backed by environmental groups and other northeastern states, is claiming that public utilities using coal to generate electricity are public nuisances. According to the article in the New York Times (please see Article #4 below) the environmental industry thought it had a deal with the Obama administration to allow the law suits to proceed as a means of forcing Congress to accept some form of cap-and-trade. Now the environmental industry feels betrayed. Has a bit of logic and reason hit the administration?

The hot summer weather over Russia, and elsewhere, has broken. But the chorus of alarmists, particularly politicians, blaming the unusual weather events on global warming continues. Of course, some of the politicians, including Rep. Markey and Hilleary Clinton, claim these events demonstrate “climate change” which government regulations such as cap-and-tax will be able to control. (Please see referenced articles under Defending the Orthodoxy).

By contrast, meteorologists such as Joe D’Aleo and others write that the events, though not normal (average), are not unique or particularly exceptional – once again confirming the adage that to those ignorant of history, every event is unprecedented. (Please see referenced articles under Heat Wave.)

The National Science Foundation announced “powerful new computer software” by the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) called the Community Earth System Model (CESM) that others can use to make regional climate projections. If the models were well tested and validated to discern the difference between natural cause of climate change and human induced changes, then it would be a valuable addition to our understanding of climate change. However, based upon the announcements it appears that the software will do little more than intensify the errors of the past. Expanding the detail of models that have not been validated does not expand knowledge. (Please see referenced article under Defending the Orthodoxy.)

Don’t forget, the American Chemical Society is soliciting the views of its members on its climate change policy statement. (Please see Article # 1)

SEPP Corrections and Amplifications: The August 14 TWTW discussed the largest iceberg to break off a Greenland glacier since 1962. Alarmists immediately took this to be a sign of global warming that would cause sea levels to rise by up to 23 feet. Alert readers immediately picked up that TWTW committed a typo and misstated the metric equivalent to 23 feet is about 3 meters, rather than the correct 7 meters. Admitted – 23 feet is approximately equal to 7 meters!

Other readers pointed out that none of the articles they read on the event mentioned that the larger break in **1962 came more than two decades into a global cooling period** that, later, some alarmists claimed was the start of a new ice age. There you have it – global warming causes huge icebergs from Greenland and global cooling causes huge icebergs from Greenland.

Number of the Week: 1.1%. The 2008 US Electric Power Industry Net Generation from Petroleum, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/epa/figes1.pdf>, released Jan 21, 2010 by the Energy Information Agency of the Department of Energy.

With only 1.1% of US Electrical Power Generation coming from petroleum, there is little logical basis those who claim the nation needs to subsidize electricity from wind and solar to reduce its dependence on “foreign oil.” This revelation leads to:

The Book of the Week: *Power Hungry: The Myths of “Green” Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future* by Robert Bryce. An accomplished journalist, Bryce addresses the important issues of power in a style that should be readily understood by journalists, politicians, policy makers, and the reading public.

According to Bryce, the grand schemes created by politicians, and others, to replace coal fired electrical generating plants with wind and solar demonstrate an educational weakness among the proponents – innumeracy, numerical illiteracy. Simply put, they do not grasp the scope of what they are demanding and the inability of solar and wind to meet the demand. Unless there are drastic breakthroughs in affordable, commercial scale storage of electricity, alternative energy mandates from governments promise only a bleak economic future for younger generations.

Brice identifies what he terms the “Four Imperatives” to evaluate energy sources: power density, energy density, cost, and scale. *Power density* is the amount of power that can be harnessed per unit; and *energy density* is amount of energy that can be contained in a given volume or mass. Bryce states the key concept is power density which can be described as energy flow, the ability to do work. Energy in itself is of little value unless it can be turned into power. Herein is the crucial weakness of solar and wind. These sources are not dispatchable, that is, one cannot state, with high confidence, that the necessary power will be available in, say, New York City at 5 pm on August 26, 2010 – yet, without it the city stops.

Using easily understood graphs and charts, Bryce establishes that replacing coal, and oil will be a long, difficult process. The proposed sources of wind and solar simply fail due to the enormous cost and the scale of the projects to generate the necessary power, which remains unreliable. Few appreciate the enormous quantities of land that wind turbines require and that every where they have been tried, they increase the cost of electricity rather than reduce it. Unfortunately, many journalists reporting on solar and wind confuse nameplate capacity (ideal potential) with power density – what is actually delivered.

Bryce demonstrates that the US is an energy giant with enormous resources of coal and natural gas. Private ventures in hydraulic fracturing of shale rock containing natural gas and horizontal drilling have made the US an energy giant in natural gas. [Today, in the eastern US where coal is more expensive than in the west, the cost of generating electricity from natural gas is roughly comparable to that of coal.] Yet, the advances in natural gas production are virtually ignored by alternative energy proponents in Washington, who seem to be stuck in the mania of the 1970’s when the Federal Government banned the use of natural gas for generation of electricity.

In the view of Bryce, absent of government edicts, the 21st Century will see a slow transition from coal to natural gas and finally to nuclear as the basic suppliers of power for the nation. To support his hypothesis, Bryce discusses the work of Nakicenovic, Grubler, Ausubel, Marchetti, and others who have identified a mega trend of several centuries of decarbonization of fuels shifting from fuels with high ratios of carbon to hydrogen (wood) to those with low ratios carbon to hydrogen (natural gas) as consumers demand denser and cleaner fuels.

[Power Hungry: The Myths of “Green” Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future by Robert Bryce, Managing Editor of *Energy Tribune*, 2010, Public Affairs, ISBN 978-1-58648-789-8, 394 pp including extensive endnotes and 17 pp index.]

ARTICLES: [For the numbered articles below please see www.haapala.com/sepp/the-week-that-was.cfm.

1. American Chemical Society Climate Change Policy Survey of Membership

Updating the ACS Climate Change Policy Position

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=PP_ARTICLEMAIN&node_id=259&content_id=CNBP_025274&use_sec=true&sec_url_var=region1&uuid=486e6e78-063e-4b24-a86d-214d6ffae70

2. Global warmists abandoned fact for fancy

By Roger Helmer, Member of the European Parliament, Washington Times, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/aug/24/around-the-world-the-fight-against-climate-change/>

3. Jobs Knowingly Killed and Destroyed

Editorial, IBD, Aug 25, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=544944>

4. Obama Admin Urges Supreme Court to Vacate Greenhouse Gas ‘Nuisance’ ruling

By Gabriel Nelson of Greenwire, NYT, Aug 25, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2010/08/25/25greenwire-obama-admin-urges-supreme-court-to-vacate-gree-42072.html>

5. New Study Sees Spill Receding

Microbes That Evolved Amid Natural Oil on Ocean Floor Are Now Gobbling Plume

By Robert Lee Hotz, WSJ, Aug 25, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB20001424052748704125604575449690602451532.html>

6. Wind Power Won’t Cool Down the Planet

Often enough it leads to higher carbon emissions

By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Aug 23, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703792704575366700528078676.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

The Tree Ring Circus,

By John Dawson, Quadrant Online, July-August [H/t Kae wa Koyangi]

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/magazine/issue/2010/7-8/the-tree-ring-circus>

Cuts jeopardizing quality of Canada’s weather service: report

By Mike De Souza, Financial Post, Aug 23, 2010 [H/t Watts Up With That?]

<http://www.financialpost.com/news/Cuts+jeopardizing+quality+Canada+weather+service+report/3429657/story.html#ixzz0xSiB3vLH>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

MIT Professor Can’t See Forest For Trees; Confuses Meteorology – Climate – Weather

By Tim Ball, Canada Free Press, Aug. 26, 2010 [H/t Paul Pekarek]

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/26979>

Rising sea of irresponsibility

By Des Moore & Tom Quirk, Quadrant Online, Aug 23, 2010

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2010/08/rising-seas-of-irresponsibility>

Silencing global warming critics

By Russell Cook, American Thinker, Aug 26, 2010

http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/08/silencing_global_warming_criti.html

Defending the Orthodoxy

New Computer Model Advances Climate Change Research

Press Release 10-146, National Science Foundation, Aug 18, 2010 [H/t ICECAP]

http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=117513

[ICECAP Note: the model obviously has built in global warming - I thought the models were by nature supposed to be totally objective and let the chips fall as they may. They did not promise ability to predict important multi decadal ocean cycles, changes in the thermohaline circulations and no mention of improvements in use of solar factors. AR4 models virtually ignored solar changes and forcing. It sounds like the same old GHG, ozone chemistry, aerosol driven model with more land/sea interaction run at a higher resolution. Don't expect any breakthrough findings or leap in skill. <http://www.icecap.us/>]

Dangerous Climate Picture Emerging

By Rep. Ed Markey, D-MA, National Journal, Energy and Environment, Aug 25, 2010

http://energy.nationaljournal.com/2010/08/is-climate-change-causing-wild.php#1623153?utm_source=emailalerts&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Environment

Secretary Clinton's Climate Con

Editorial, IBD, Aug 23, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/544672/201008231910/Secretary-Clintons-Climate-Con.aspx>

Al Gore's global-warming crusade shrinks

Eco-autocrats are exposed as frauds

By Matt Patterson, Washington Times, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/aug/24/al-gores-global-warming-crusade-shrinks/>

Heat Wave

Selective Memory

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Aug 23, 2010

http://icecap.us/images/uploads/Selective_Memory.pdf

Frozen jet stream links Pakistan floods, Russian fires

By Michael Marshall, New Scientist, Aug 14, 2010 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog>

“Extreme Weather”? Not Yet!

By Dennis Avery, Center for Global Food Issues, Aug 23, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://www.cgfi.org/2010/08/%E2%80%9Cextreme-weather%E2%80%9D-not-yet-by-dennis-t-avery/>

Global warming and short memories

By Thomas Fuller, Examiner.com, Aug 25, 2010

<http://www.examiner.com/environmental-policy-in-national/global-warming-and-short-memories>

Climate ‘CSI’ Team Takes on Russian Heat

By Andrew Revkin, NYT, Aug 24, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/24/climate-csi-team-takes-on-russian-heat/>

BP Oil Spill and Aftermath

23,000 workers affected by Gulf drilling ban

By AP, Washington Times, Aug 21, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/aug/21/govt-23k-workers-affected-gulf-oil-drill-ban/>

The folly of punishing oil companies

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Aug 26, 2010

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/The-folly-of-punishing-oil-companies-608681-101605033.html>

New Microbe Discovered Eating Gulf Oil Spill

By Randolph Schmid, AP, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2010/08/24/new-microbe-discovered-eating-gulf-oil-spill/>

Undersea Oil Plume Vanishes in Gulf, Degraded by Previously Unknown Bug

By Paul Voosen of Greenwire, NYT, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2010/08/24/24greenwire-undersea-oil-plume-vanishes-in-gulf-degraded-b-87391.html>

Oil Plume Is Not Breaking Down Fast, Study Says

By Justin Gillis and John Rudolf, NYT, Aug 19, 2010

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/20/science/earth/20plume.html?_r=1&th&emc=th

Oil Spills

In the Gulf of Mexico, a region famous for its many oil and gas fields, most of the petroleum flowing into the ocean leaks naturally from fissures in the seabed

By Ian MacDonald, Scientific American, Nov 1998 [H/t Dick Hoese]

<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/gca?sendit.x=52&sendit.y=11&sendit=Get+all+checked+abstract%28s%29&gca=science.1195979v1>

Energy Issues

Energy Institute Steps Up Call for Sensible Energy Policies

Energy Institute Newsletter, Aug 19, 2010 [H/t ICECAP]

http://energyxxi.org/articles/August_2010_Newsletter.aspx#policies

New Jersey Act Calls for Offshore Wind State Mandates

Power News, Aug 25, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/New-Jersey-Act-Calls-for-Offshore-Wind-State-Mandates_2964.html

[SEPP Comment: A victory for the promoters of the one the most expensive styles of sub-prime electricity.]

Nuclear Plant's Use of River Water Prompts \$1.1 Billion Debate With State

By Matthew Wald, NYT, Aug 23, 2010

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/23/science/earth/23cooling.html?ref=science>

[SEPP Comment: Another way to make reliable electricity more expensive. How much of the River's eco-system would be restored?]

EPA and other Regulators On the March

Texas fights global-warming power grab

Lone Star stated won't participate in Obama's lawless policy

By Peggy Venable, Washington Times, Aug 25, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/aug/25/texas-fights-global-warming-power-grab/>

Climate Change Lawsuits Heat Up, Lead By An End Run In Connecticut

By James Copland, IBD, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/544812/201008241817/Climate-Change-Lawsuits-Heat-Up-Led-By-An-End-Run-In-Connecticut.htm>

[SEPP Comment: See Article # 4]

An EPA report from another era: Preventing damage from sea level rise would not be so expensive.

By Tomas Fuller, Examiner.com, Aug 26, 2010

<http://www.examiner.com/environmental-policy-in-national/an-epa-report-from-another-era-preventing-damage-from-sea-level-rise-would-not-be-so-expensive>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Solar Forcing of Meteorological Phenomena on Earth

Reference: Le Mouel, J.-L., Blanter, E., Shnirman, M., and Courtillot, V. 2010a. Solar forcing of the semi-annual variation of length-of-day. *Geophysical Research Letters* **37**: 2010GL043185. Archived Aug 19, 2010

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/aug/19aug2010a7.html>

Glaciers of the Antarctic Peninsula and Sub-Antarctic Islands

Reference: Hall, B.L. 2009. Holocene glacial history of Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic islands. *Quaternary Science Reviews* **28**: 2213-2230. Archived Aug 19, 2010

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/aug/19aug2010a6.html>

Elevated CO2 Protects Trees from the Ravages of Heat Stress

Reference: Darbah, J.N.T., Sharkey, T.D., Calfapietra, C. and Karnosky, D.F. 2010. Differential response of aspen and birch trees to heat stress under elevated carbon dioxide. *Environmental Pollution* **158**: 1008-1014. Archived Aug 18, 2010

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/aug/18aug2010a3.html>

Miscellaneous Topics of Possible Interest

New Orleans Levees nearly Ready, but Mistrusted

By John Schwartz, NYT, Aug 23, 2010

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/24/us/24levee.html?_r=1&th&emc=th

[SEPP Comment: After hurricane Betsey in 1965, the Corps of Engineers planned a system to stop the flooding of New Orleans from hurricanes similar to that used by the Dutch to stop flooding from the North Sea. Environmental groups quashed the plan with a Federal judge ruling that such a system would be harmful to local inhabitants.]

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Food Firms Jarred by Sugar Beet Restriction

By Scott Kilman, WSJ, Aug 16, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704296704575431802903998146.html?mod=ITP_pageone_1

[SEPP Comment: Genetically modified fears.]

G20 protests: Rioters loot RBS as demonstrators turn violent

G20 summit protesters looted a City office of Royal Bank of Scotland this afternoon, as a largely peaceful demonstration spilled over into bloody violence in the centre of London.

Telegraph, UK, Aug 23, 2010

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financetopics/g20-summit/5089870/G20-protests-Rioters-loot-RBS-as-demonstrations-turn-violent.html>

[SEPP Comment: The mostly government owned Royal Bank of Scotland has been targeted as a promoter of global warming.]

China traffic jam stretches ‘nine days, 100km’

BBC News, Aug 23, 2010 [H/t Malcolm Ross]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11062708>

#####

1. American Chemical Society Climate Change Policy Survey of Membership

Updating the ACS Climate Change Policy Position

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?nfpb=true&pageLabel=PP_ARTICLEMAIN&node_id=259&content_id=CNBP_025274&use_sec=true&sec_url_var=region1&uuid=486e6e78-063e-4b24-a86d-214d6ffae70

To Members of the American Chemical Society: Your input is being sought in preparation for revision of the ACS public policy [position concerning global climate change](#).

The American Chemical Society [adopts public policy statements](#) on issues of concern to ACS members and the chemical community. [The process for consideration and approval](#) of these statements is the responsibility of the ACS Board of Directors and its Committee on Public Affairs and Public Relations. The statements have a three-year lifetime before they are reconsidered and updated, retired, or extended. They serve as the basis for member and staff advocacy on public policy issues.

Typically, the work to prepare the drafts of the statements is done by national ACS committees with interest in the topics. The [Joint Board-Council Committee on Environmental Improvement \(CEI\)](#) fills that role for the global climate change statement.

2. Global warmists abandoned fact for fancy

By Roger Helmer, Member of the European Parliament, Washington Times, Aug 24, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/aug/24/around-the-world-the-fight-against-cli-mate-change/>

Around the world, the fight against "climate change" and carbon dioxide emissions is costing literally hundreds of billions of dollars - and this at a time when the Western world is ravaged by recession.

We can ill afford these sums. Many scientists think CO2 emissions have a trivial effect on climate, but even those who support the theory of anthropogenic global warming (AGW) generally agree that the efforts we are making will result in changes so small that they cannot even be measured.

Given that [China](#) is building a new coal-fired power station every week, with [India](#) not far behind, it's a fair bet that CO2 emissions will increase for decades regardless of what we in the West do. If the [United Kingdom](#), for example, were to turn off its economy totally and not burn so much as a candle, [China](#) would make up our emissions savings in about 12 months.

Just 70 years ago, at the height of the Battle of [Britain](#), [Winston Churchill](#) gave what became perhaps the most famous political speech in British history. Were he here today and able to comment on the great climate debate, he might well be saying, "Never in the field of public policy has so much been spent by so many for so little."

They say there's "a consensus" of scientists who support AGW. But science proceeds by hypothesis and falsification, not consensus. As author [Michael Crichton](#) famously put it, "If it's science, it's not consensus. And if it's consensus, it's not science."

We are told that the [U.N.](#)'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) represents a consensus of 2,500 experts in the field. Yet when we look at the details, we find that the IPCC process, and especially the Summary for Policymakers, is in the hands of a small group, no more than two or three dozen.

The practically incestuous links among these scientists were revealed in a 2006 report by a team led by [George Mason University](#) statistics professor [Edward Wegman](#) at the request of [Congress](#) following a report by the [National Research Council](#). These people work together, publish papers together and peer-review each others' work. And we now know from the "Climate" leaks that they also cobbled together unrelated data sets, sought to "hide the decline," to eliminate the Medieval Warm Period from the record, to prevent publication of alternative views and to bring about the dismissal of editors who took a more open-minded approach.

Science is supposed to follow the facts and seek the truth. These guys started with a conviction about climate change and sought to make the data fit the preconception. They called themselves the "Hockey Team," and they included [Michael Mann](#) - creator of the infamous "hockey stick" graph - perhaps the most discredited artifact in the history of science, which nonetheless took pride of place in the IPCC's Third Assessment Report.

To understand climate hysteria, we need look no further than the Watergate advice: "Follow the money." Governments, think tanks, institutions and universities spend huge sums on climate research. Academics can't obtain work, tenure, grant funding or publication without toeing the line. Even researchers in unrelated fields can ensure funding by adding the context of climate change to their proposals. Thousands of jobs in government, academia, the media and industry depend on the climate issue.

The East Midlands region of the [United Kingdom](#), which I represent in the [European Parliament](#), has just committed \$1.5 million to "climate change skills training" (read "propaganda").

And the propaganda works. Every schoolchild knows about dangerous sea-level rise. But the children don't know that it's simply a projection of a virtual-reality computer model. They don't know that in the real world, sea-level rise (at around six to seven inches in 100 years) is the same as it has been for centuries, that the Maldives and Tuvalu aren't sinking beneath the waves. They don't know that successive IPCC reports have consistently reduced their alarmist estimates for sea-level rise by 2100.

Every schoolchild knows that the ice caps are melting - but glaciers and ice fields accumulate snow (which compacts to ice) at high levels, while chunks of ice break off at the margin. Vast blocks of ice tumbling into the sea make great video footage, but they say nothing about warming or cooling. That's simply what ice sheets do.

There has been some retreat of glaciers since about 1800 (long before CO2 became an issue), but geological evidence shows that glaciers regularly advance and retreat with the Earth's climate cycles. We are simply seeing a natural recovery from the Little Ice Age. And global ice mass is broadly constant.

In 1942, six Lockheed P-38F Lightning fighters were lost in Greenland. In 1988, they were rediscovered under 270 feet of solid ice. That's an ice buildup of nearly six feet a year.

Every schoolchild knows about the plight of the polar bear (the alarmists' pinup species), threatened by climate change. But how many know that polar bear numbers have increased substantially in recent decades and that polar bears are thriving?

In each of these cases, the alarmists put the projections of virtual-reality computer models ahead of real-world observation. Yet these models are programmed with a wide range of estimates and assumptions -

including the assumption that CO2 is a major cause of warming. Little surprise, then, that they predict that outcome.

The models are seeking to make predictions about climate, which is a complex, chaotic nonlinear system. Yet a key feature of such systems is that they are hugely sensitive to initial conditions and therefore simply cannot be predicted in the long term.

But all the models make one clear prediction - that with a CO2 greenhouse effect, the maximum warming will occur high in the atmosphere and over the tropics. Here at least we have a prediction we can test. And the models fail the test. Observation shows the greatest warming at ground level and in the Northern Hemisphere. Because science moves forward by falsifying predictions, this one fact refutes AGW theory.

There is another way. It is possible to apply purely statistical/mathematical analysis to the climate record, to identify patterns and extrapolate those patterns into the future. Several researchers have done so. They find that climate is cyclical, with a temperature peak around 2000 and subsequent decline. Right on cue, the record shows that, indeed, the Earth has cooled slightly in the past decade.

Solar scientists also are pointing to a period of very weak solar activity as a possible precursor to global cooling.

Dan Quayle reputedly said, "Forecasting is difficult, especially about the future." He's right: It's a mug's game. But if I were a betting man, I'd bet that 2030 will be cooler than today.

Roger Helmer is a member of the [European Parliament](#) and a former member of its Environment Committee and its Temporary Committee on Climate Change.

3. Jobs Knowingly Killed and Destroyed

Editorial, IBD, Aug 25, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=544944>

Unemployment: A damning memo shows the administration knew its oil drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico would kill tens of thousands of jobs but did it anyway. We're the ones getting drilled.

There's a law known as the law of unintended consequences. It's invoked when you try to do the right thing but overlook other events and occurrences set in motion by your actions. In the case of the drilling moratorium, the consequences were intended.

In June, U.S. District Judge Martin Feldman struck down Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's original moratorium, saying it was overkill based on flawed reasoning. "If some drilling equipment parts are flawed, is it rational to say all are?" Feldman asked in his ruling. "That sort of thinking seems heavy-handed and rather overbearing."

So the administration went back, rearranged a few words and a few deck chairs, and reissued its moratorium. Last week, the Justice Department filed more than 27,000 pages of documents in a New Orleans court in the latest round of litigation over the moratorium. Among them is a memo detailing how the administration knew the job losses its drilling moratorium would cause and simply chose to ignore them and the people and communities affected.

The July 10 memo shows how Michael Bromwich, new director of the Minerals Management Service, told Salazar that a six-month halt in deep-water drilling would result in "lost direct employment" affecting 9,450 workers and "lost jobs from indirect and induced effects" affecting 13,797 more.

Nevertheless, the blanket moratorium was continued because Interior felt it couldn't trust the offshore oil industry or its own Minerals Management Service.

"Are all airplanes a danger because one was? All oil tankers like Exxon Valdez? All trains? All mines?" Judge Feldman asked in his ruling. The administration's answer still seems to be yes, as offshore oil rigs find their way to other shores, and communities dry up along with the oil business that sustained them.

President Obama, battered by a jobless recovery after a failed stimulus, may have an October surprise, according to Michael McKenna, president of MWR Strategies, an oil industry consulting firm in Washington.

He tells Bloomberg that Obama may agree to an October lifting of the moratorium ahead of a proposed Nov. 30 date, claiming credit for the oil spill cleanup efforts of others while promising the jobs will come back. The moratorium may be lifted, but the jobs won't come back, as new regulations keep remaining rigs idle until perhaps mid-2011.

"Lifting the moratorium is almost unimportant," McKenna said in the interview. "It's how difficult the regulatory regime is going to be afterward. The endgame here is to make it a very, very difficult and time-consuming regulatory process."

These regulations don't apply only to deep-water drilling; they already have affected shallow-water exploration. Only two permits for new shallow-water wells have been approved since new safety regulations were issued June 8, according to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Interior unit that oversees offshore drilling. The fewest permits issued last year in one month was eight.

As damaging as the Deepwater Horizon disaster was, the administration's actions aren't about drilling safety. They're about drilling not at all and slowing things down until an oil and natural gas industry that supports 9.2 million workers nationwide and generates 7.5% of U.S. gross domestic product withers away.

A recent study by Science Applications International Corp. shows that failure to exploit our domestic and offshore resources will mean \$2.3 trillion in lost-opportunity costs over the next two decades.

The American Petroleum Institute estimates that exploiting these resources would generate nearly 160,000 well-paying jobs and \$1.7 trillion in federal, state and local revenues, with \$1.3 trillion from offshore drilling alone. Now that's a stimulus package.

The jarring part is that, starting with the Gulf moratorium, it will all have been done on purpose.

4. Obama Admin Urges Supreme Court to Vacate Greenhouse Gas 'Nuisance' ruling

By Gabriel Nelson of Greenwire, NYT, Aug 25, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2010/08/25/25greenwire-obama-admin-urges-supreme-court-to-vacate-gree-42072.html>

The Obama administration has urged the Supreme Court to toss out an appeals court decision that would allow lawsuits against major emitters for their contributions to global warming, stunning environmentalists who see the case as a powerful prod on climate change.

In the case, *AEP v. Connecticut*, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with a coalition of states, environmental groups and New York City. The decision, handed down last year, said they could proceed

with a lawsuit that seeks to force several of the nation's largest coal-fired utilities to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The defendants -- American Electric Power Co. Inc., Duke Energy Corp., Southern Co. and Xcel Energy Inc. -- filed a petition for review with the Supreme Court earlier this month, asking the court to reject the argument that greenhouse gas emissions can be addressed through "public nuisance" lawsuits ([Greenwire](#), Aug. 4).

In a [brief](#) (pdf) filed yesterday on behalf of the Tennessee Valley Authority, acting Solicitor General Neal Katyal agreed with the defendants, saying that U.S. EPA's newly finalized regulations on greenhouse gases have displaced that type of common-law claim.

Katyal urged the court to vacate the decision and remand the case to the 2nd Circuit for further proceedings, this time taking into account the administration's push to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.

The 2nd Circuit's decision rested on the assertion that "EPA does not currently regulate carbon dioxide," but that has since changed. The Obama administration has finalized several regulations in response to the Supreme Court's 2007 decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, which told the agency to decide whether greenhouse gases were pollutants under the Clean Air Act.

"Since this court held in 2007 that carbon dioxide falls within that regulatory authority, EPA has taken several significant steps toward addressing the very question presented here," Katyal wrote. "That regulatory approach is preferable to what would result if multiple district courts -- acting without the benefit of even the most basic statutory guidance -- could use common-law nuisance claims to sit as arbiters of scientific and technology-related disputes and *de facto* regulators of power plants and other sources of pollution both within their districts and nationwide."

Matt Pawa, an attorney representing plaintiffs in the case, said he and his colleagues expected the White House to stay out of the matter. During a meeting with more than 30 administration lawyers at the solicitor general's office on June 24, it seemed they had "a lot of friends in the room," he said.

"We feel stabbed in the back," Pawa said. "This was really a dastardly move by an administration that said it was a friend of the environment. With friends like this, who needs enemies?"

Top attorneys at environmental advocacy groups are buzzing about the brief, sources say. Some feel betrayed by a White House that has generally been more amenable to environmental regulation than its predecessor.

"This reads as if it were cut and pasted from the Bush administration's briefing in *Massachusetts*," said David Bookbinder, who served as the Sierra Club's chief climate counsel until his resignation in May.

Climate and common law

Nuisance claims, a long-standing fixture of common law, are more often used to settle disputes with neighbors than to address an issue as wide-reaching as global warming. In the absence of congressional action, environmental groups say, such lawsuits could be used to make businesses, or anyone else, pay for the effects of their emissions.

Critics, including many industry groups, say the claims would lead to an inefficient and unfair jumble of litigation.

Two other similar cases are already working their way through the federal courts. In the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, briefing is under way in *Native Village of Kivalina v. Exxon Mobil Corp.*, while the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals recently reinstated a district court's decision to dismiss *Comer v. Murphy Oil*, which was brought by Hurricane Katrina victims.

Because the White House supports legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions, many attorneys expected the Obama administration to avoid criticizing a ruling that could become so disruptive that it would force Congress to take action. Jonathan Zasloff, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, said in a recent blog post that the White House would undermine its goals by siding with utilities.

If the Supreme Court does not take the case, he wrote, "then the only way to get rid of the suit is for Congress to displace it. And the only way for Congress to displace it is to pass legislation. As is the case with EPA authority to regulate carbon, this puts more bargaining power on the side that wants regulation."

Though the Supreme Court agrees to hear less than 1 percent of all petitions for review, a brief from the solicitor general tends to grab justices' attention. The court could decide as soon as this fall whether to review the case.

Richard Faulk, chairman of the environmental practice at Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP, said industry groups want the Supreme Court to review and overturn the 2nd Circuit's decision, but they would be fairly content if the justices followed the administration's suggestions.

"So far, the petitioners haven't asked that the case be remanded back, but it's hard for me to imagine that anyone would be really disappointed if the Supreme Court decided to do that," Faulk said. "People would like to see the case reversed, but having it sent back for further deliberation is certainly a better result than having the result affirmed."

5. New Study Sees Spill Receding

Microbes That Evolved Amid Natural Oil on Ocean Floor Are Now Gobbling Plume

By Robert Lee Hotz, WSJ, Aug 25, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB20001424052748704125604575449690602451532.html>

Microbes may be making quick work of a vast oily plume from the Deepwater Horizon disaster, according to scientists who took the first direct measurements of undersea bacteria feeding on the oil spill.

Results announced Tuesday by researchers from California's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory indicate the Gulf of Mexico may be rebounding faster than many had expected from the largest accidental offshore oil spill in history.

Yet they also add to the see-saw swings of uncertainty over how much of the 4.9 million barrels of oil spilled from the blown-out BP PLC well remains in the Gulf, where it may threaten marine life.

A government assessment earlier this month calculated about 75% of the oil had been skimmed, evaporated, safely burned or dispersed. Several independent research teams, however, have argued that much of the oil still contaminates Gulf waters.

The Lawrence Berkeley results suggest microscopic clean-up crews of oil-eating bacteria that have evolved among the natural petroleum seeps on the sea floor are helping to quickly dispatch the oil. The results so far have not been duplicated by other researchers.

In the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon accident, scientific certainty has been elusive, several oil impact experts said.

Although teams of scientists quickly deployed through the spill region, each group is studying a different aspect of the accident, usually in a different place, using a variety of sensors attuned to different chemical components of crude petroleum. So findings rarely overlap.

The remaining oil from the spill, hidden at depths or driven far afield by currents, is a moving target, making follow-up studies difficult. It may be years before the technical findings can be rendered a coherent mosaic.

"This is science on the fly," said Ron Atlas, a microbiologist at the University of Louisville and a former president of the American Society for Microbiology.

The Lawrence Berkeley researchers, led by Terry Hazen, analyzed the microscopic life forms at work in May within a puzzling underwater plume of oil droplets and trace petrochemicals that, by late June, had grown to the size of Manhattan.

Oil experts and microbiologists have long known that the Gulf harbored bacteria that had evolved to feed on petroleum hydrocarbons from natural oil seeps. But scientists had feared the huge spill would either overwhelm these deep-dwelling bacteria or cause them to multiply so explosively they would drain life-giving oxygen from the water, making it impossible for other marine life to survive.

On Tuesday, at a meeting of the International Society for Microbial Ecology in Seattle and online in the journal *Science*, Dr. Hazen and his colleagues reported their preliminary findings, based on measurements made when the well was still gushing oil.

They found that several species of oil-eating bacteria were thriving in the cold waters of the submerged plume, degrading the oil "faster than expected." And the evidence so far shows that oxygen consumption levels are low, with no sign of developing dead zones.

"To our knowledge, no other research team has specifically looked for these microbes," said Tom Mueller, press officer for BP.

Even so, research teams studying different aspects of the spill disagreed on how quickly the microbes may be breaking down the oil and on the ultimate fate of the underwater oil plume 3,000 feet below the surface of the Gulf. Researchers also aren't certain how the Gulf's altered water chemistry, with slightly higher traces of hydrocarbons, will affect marine life.

Last week, scientists from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution argued that, based on their analysis, the 22-mile-long sub-surface oil plume may linger underwater for months. But the Lawrence Berkeley researchers said their work on microbes shows it may already be gone.

"There is real disagreement here," said microbiologist Jim Spain at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

At the meeting, Dr. Hazen reported that water samples he and his colleagues have collected since the damaged well was capped last month suggest the plume of petroleum hydrocarbons is now undetectable, either consumed by oil-eating bacteria or carried away from the immediate vicinity of the damaged well by currents.

Dr. Hazen and other microbiologists are convinced that bacteria have already eliminated the hazard posed by the plume.

"We no longer see any deep plumes that can be attributed to the leak," Dr. Hazen said.

But some marine chemists and oceanographers suspect that the current carried the plume out of the immediate spill zone—and, for the time being, out of the range of scientific sensors.

"The plume is not a stationary object," said Richard Camilli at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, chief scientist for a research team that first mapped the underwater plume. By his calculation, the diluted plume could be hundreds of miles from the damaged well by now.

6. Wind Power Won't Cool Down the Planet

Often enough it leads to higher carbon emissions

By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Aug 23, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703792704575366700528078676.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

The wind industry has achieved remarkable growth largely due to the claim that it will provide major reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. There's just one problem: It's not true. A slew of recent studies show that wind-generated electricity likely won't result in any reduction in carbon emissions—or that they'll be so small as to be almost meaningless.

This issue is especially important now that states are mandating that utilities produce arbitrary amounts of their electricity from renewable sources. By 2020, for example, California will require utilities to obtain 33% of their electricity from renewables. About 30 states, including Connecticut, Minnesota and Hawaii, are requiring major increases in the production of renewable electricity over the coming years.

Wind—not solar or geothermal sources—must provide most of this electricity. It's the only renewable source that can rapidly scale up to meet the requirements of the mandates. This means billions more in taxpayer subsidies for the wind industry and higher electricity costs for consumers.

None of it will lead to major cuts in carbon emissions, for two reasons. First, wind blows only intermittently and variably. Second, wind-generated electricity largely displaces power produced by natural gas-fired generators, rather than that from plants burning more carbon-intensive coal.

Because wind blows intermittently, electric utilities must either keep their conventional power plants running all the time to make sure the lights don't go dark, or continually ramp up and down the output from conventional coal- or gas-fired generators (called "cycling"). But coal-fired and gas-fired generators are designed to run continuously, and if they don't, fuel consumption and emissions generally increase. A car analogy helps explain: An automobile that operates at a constant speed—say, 55 miles per hour—will have better fuel efficiency, and emit less pollution per mile traveled, than one that is stuck in stop-and-go traffic.

Recent research strongly suggests how this problem defeats the alleged carbon-reducing virtues of wind power. In April, Bentek Energy, a Colorado-based energy analytics firm, looked at power plant records in Colorado and Texas. (It was commissioned by the Independent Petroleum Association of the Mountain States.) Bentek concluded that despite huge investments, wind-generated electricity "has had minimal, if any, impact on carbon dioxide" emissions.

Bentek found that thanks to the cycling of Colorado's coal-fired plants in 2009, at least 94,000 more pounds of carbon dioxide were generated because of the repeated cycling. In Texas, Bentek estimated that the cycling of power plants due to increased use of wind energy resulted in a slight savings of carbon dioxide (about 600 tons) in 2008 and a slight increase (of about 1,000 tons) in 2009.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) has estimated the potential savings from a nationwide 25% renewable electricity standard, a goal included in the Waxman-Markey energy bill that narrowly passed the House last year. Best-case scenario: about 306 million tons less CO2 by 2030. Given that the agency expects annual U.S. carbon emissions to be about 6.2 billion tons in 2030, that expected reduction will only equal about 4.9% of emissions nationwide. That's not much when you consider that the Obama administration wants to cut CO2 emissions 80% by 2050.

Earlier this year, another arm of the Department of Energy, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, released a report whose conclusions were remarkably similar to those of the EIA. This report focused on integrating wind energy into the electric grid in the Eastern U.S., which has about two-thirds of the country's electric load. If wind energy were to meet 20% of electric needs in this region by 2024, according to the report, the likely reduction in carbon emissions would be less than 200 million tons per year. All the scenarios it considered will cost at least \$140 billion to implement. And the issue of cycling conventional power plants is only mentioned in passing.

Coal emits about twice as much CO2 during combustion as natural gas. But wind generation mostly displaces natural gas, because natural gas-fired generators are often the most costly form of conventional electricity production. Yet if regulators are truly concerned about reducing carbon emissions and air pollution, they should be encouraging gas-fired generation at the expense of coal. And they should be doing so because U.S. natural gas resources are now likely large enough to meet all of America's natural gas needs for a century.

Meanwhile, the wind industry is pocketing subsidies that dwarf those garnered by the oil and gas sector. The federal government provides a production tax credit of \$0.022 for each kilowatt-hour of electricity produced by wind. That amounts to \$6.44 per million BTU of energy produced. In 2008, however, the EIA reported subsidies to oil and gas totaled \$1.9 billion per year, or about \$0.03 per million BTU of energy produced. Wind subsidies are more than 200 times as great as those given to oil and gas on the basis of per-unit-of-energy produced.

Perhaps it comes down to what Kevin Forbes, the director of the Center for the Study of Energy and Environmental Stewardship at Catholic University, told me: "Wind energy gives people a nice warm fuzzy feeling that we're taking action on climate change." Yet when it comes to CO2 emissions, "the reality is that it's not doing much of anything."

Mr. Bryce, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, recently published his fourth book, "Power Hungry: The Myths of 'Green' Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future" (PublicAffairs).

#####