

The Week That Was: 2010-12-11 (December 11, 2010)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

PLEASE NOTE: The complete TWTW, including the articles, can be downloaded in an easily printable form at the web site: <http://www.haapala.com/sepp/the-week-that-was.cfm>

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no TWTW on December 25, 2010 – Christmas Day

Fred Singer will be traveling again, this time to Southern California. His tentative schedule for the first and second week of January includes stops at JPL, Cal Tech, UCLA, Chapman U., UC-I, and Scripps Oceanographic Institute. For possible lectures open to the public, please contact Ken@Haapala.com.

SEASONS GREETINGS

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SEASONS GREETINGS

If you are seeking a somewhat unusual holiday gift, may we suggest the weather instrument store of Anthony Watts, creator of the blog *Watts Up With That* (www.wattsupwiththat.com)? Anthony led the invaluable physical examination of US weather stations maintained by NOAA, the bulk of which fail the most basic test for bias. Anthony's store offers a wide variety of instruments at reasonable prices:
<http://www.weathershop.com/>

Quote of the Week:

"This is the way the world ends; This is the way the world ends; This is the way the world ends; Not with a bang but with a whimper." T.S. Eliot *The Hollow Men*

Number of the Week: Less than 1%

THIS WEEK:

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

The 16th Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is finishing up in Cancun. The gathering is part of the UN's constant battle against UN claimed human-caused global warming. The conference started with a prayer Ixchel, a Mayan goddess, offered by Christina Figueres, the executive secretary of the conference to Perhaps some other gods were angered because the conference is closing with six days of record-breaking cold.

Not much of significance has been reported from the conference. This is partly because, unlike last year in Copenhagen, most international leaders decided not to participate which, in turn, resulted in a smaller press corps. Also much of the activity takes place behind closed doors, out of sight, where backroom deals can be made. No doubt weighty announcements will be made at the close of the conference. However, they will be largely of two types. One category will be the pressing need for more carbon burning conferences to save the planet. The second category will be the need to intensify the Copenhagen accord that promises to deliver massive amounts of money from the West to developing countries. Those who hope to profit from this handover will insist upon it.

As Fred Singer has put it, this would be a transfer of wealth from the poor in rich countries to the rich in poor countries.

Late last week, the *Guardian* newspaper, a recipient of WikiLeaks, the emails leaked from the US State Department, revealed how the State Department used spying, threats, and monetary promises to obtain support for the Copenhagen Accord. Interestingly, few US newspapers followed up on this although they reported on other WikiLeaks stories. (Please see Article # 3 and the *Guardian* article under Climategate Continued.)

Whatever US monetary commitments come out of Cancun, they will require backing by the US House of Representatives, where all revenue bills must originate. The Republicans, many of whom doubt human-caused global warming, will control the House starting in January. They may have challenging questions for the State Department as it tries to explain its activities and the need to continue with additional COPs.

Given the extreme cold during last year's COP in Copenhagen and record breaking cold in Cancun during this year's COP, there may be few locations that would care to host such an activity in the future. Is this the way the world ends?

Please see Article #4 and the referenced articles under "On to Cancun. "

During the Cancun conference, *Science Magazine* issued a press release to a few groups embargoed until late this week. [By declaring the article embargoed, *Science Magazine* demand it not be publically disclosed until after publication.] The release highlighted a study that claims to demonstrate that the feedback from clouds is positive rather than negative.

If the net feedback from warming caused by CO2 emissions is positive, then the total warming from CO2 emissions could be significant, as claimed by the UN IPCC. If negative, then the total warming would be negligible. Normally, TWTW would not discuss such a technical topic; however, since TWTW carried a two part book review of Roy Spencer's book, *Blunder*, the article and Roy Spencer's rebuttal are referenced. In brief, Spencer says that the authors of the new article made the same mistake as previous modelers and confused cause with effect. Please see the referenced articles under "Cloudy Issues."

The British Met Office is quickly losing any credibility it had remaining in England after the Climategate email leaks. In 2000, it predicted that, due to global warming, snow would become a rare event in England. In the latter part of 2009, it predicted that 2010 would be the hottest year on record. The 2009-2010 winter was one of extreme cold and a snow that covered the entire United Kingdom. According to

reports, over 25,000 people died in England and Wales due to cold. This fall the Met Office predicted a mild winter for the UK. Thus far, December has been extremely cold in the UK and northern Europe and another snow storm covered most of the UK. Now, the Met is predicting that 2010 will be the hottest year on record, but not in England. [Or, elsewhere where it is cold?] In a thoughtful article, the Scientific Alliance reminds us that weather events are not the same as climate change. Please see Article #1 and the articles under “Extreme Weather.”

The US EPA has declared it will delay the implementation of new regulations on ground level ozone and on industrial boilers. The latter requires the approval of a federal judge. In both instances the EPA stated it needs more time to study the regulations as well as to study the scientific and health issues of ozone and smog effects.

Certainly, the environmental industry is not pleased, particularly after many supported these regulations that EPA declared necessary to save lives. Please see articles referenced under “EPA and other Regulators on the March.”

THE NUMBER OF THE WEEK: is less than 1%. Less than 1% of US electricity is generated from using oil according to the 2009 Electric Power Industry report by the US Energy Information Administration This fact clearly falsifies claims that mandates and subsidies for renewable sources to generate electricity are needed to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

The report also states that due to the recession, electrical generation fell by the greatest amount in over 60 years. The total generation is the lowest since 2003. The largest decrease is in coal-generated power, now producing about 44.5% of electricity (from about 48.2%), the largest increase is natural gas generated power now producing about 23.3% (up from about 21.4%). Wind generates about 1.9% of total electricity (up from 1.3%). The figures for wind do not reflect the back-up requirements for wind due to its unreliability. Please see Electric Power Industry 2009 under “Energy Issues.”

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ARTICLES:

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

1. Climate threats and policy

Scientific Alliance, Dec 10, 2010 [The Scientific Alliance web site was not functioning as of this writing.]
<http://www.icecap.us/>

[SEPP Comment: Towards understanding the important distinction between climate and weather and reminding that one must not jump to hasty generalizations.]

2. Comment on the French Academy of Sciences report on climate change submitted to the Minister of Higher Education and Research on October 28, 2010

By Vincent Courtillot (Nov. 2, 2010)

[SEPP Comment: Professor Courtillot, one of those who prompted a debate on global warming science by the French Academy, explains why he signed the final document. The Academy report was the subject of a TWTW Science Editorial on November 6.]

3. Eco-Diplomacy, The Chicago Way

Editorials, IBD, Dec 6, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/555925/201012061906/Eco-Diplomacy-The-Chicago-Way.htm>

4. Cuckoo In Cancun

Editorial, IBD, Dec 6, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/555921/201012061906/Cuckoo-In-Cancun.htm>

5. The Great Transmission Heist

Editorial, WSJ, Nov 7, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304772804575558400606672006.html>

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

WikiLeaks cables reveal how US manipulated climate accord

Embassy dispatches show America used spying, threats and promises of aid to get support for Copenhagen accord

By Damian Carrington, Guardian, UK, Dec 3, 2010 [H/t Bill Readdy]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/dec/03/wikileaks-us-manipulated-climate-accord>

Questions arise about modification of New Zealand climate data

By Tony Hake, Washington Examiner, Nov 25, 2010 [H/t Randy Randol]

<http://www.examiner.com/climate-change-in-national/questions-arise-about-modification-of-new-zealand-climate-data>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Controlling the Science: National Academies and Consensus

By Dennis Ambler, SPPI, Dec 9, 2010

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/originals/controlling_the_science.html

[SEPP Comment: Former Rep. Sherwood Boehlert issued a demand for Republicans to accept human caused global warming. Boehlert, a Republican, was chairman of the House Committee on Science. This rebuttal highlights the significant representation from environmental industry on the National Academy of Sciences panel that produced the reports known as America's Climate Choices which Boehlert references.]

'Green' Climate Policies: Probably unnecessary, Certainly ineffectual, Ruinously expensive

By Roger Helmer, Member European Parliament, Dec, 2010

<http://www.rogerhelmer.com/greenclimatepolicies.asp>

What happened to the 'warmest year on record': The truth is global warming has halted

By David Rose, Daily Mail, UK, Dec 5, 2010 [H/t Warren Wetmore]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1335798/Global-warming-halted-Thats-happened-warmest-year-record.html>

CO2-induced Vegetation Growth Slows Global Warming

World Climate Report, Dec 8, 2010 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://www.worldclimatereport.com/index.php/2010/12/08/co2-induced-vegetation-growth-slows-global-warming/#more-460>

[SEPP Comment: An additional negative feedback.]

Democrats lament demise of a committee

GOP to abolish House panel on global warming

By Sean Lengell, Washington Times, Dec 5, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/dec/5/democrats-lament-demise-of-a-committee/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Climate: UN report highlights ocean acidification

AFP, Physorg.com, Dec 2, 2010, [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://www.physorg.com/news/2010-12-climate-highlights-ocean-acidification.html>

Global warming ideology still on top

The science has crumbled, but too much money backs the scare

By Tom Harris and Bryan Leyland, Washington Times, Dec 8, 2010

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/dec/8/global-warming-ideology-still-on-top-the-science-h/?page=1>

On to Cancun

WikiLeaks adds twist to climate hopes

By Shaun Tandon, Sydney Morning Herald, Dec 7, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/wikileaks-adds-twist-to-climate-hopes-20101207-18n2o.html>

Cancun climate conference: the warmists' last Mexican wave

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, Dec 4, 2010

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8181558/Cancun-climate-conference-the-warmists-last-Mexican-wave.html>

Mercury rising

By The Viscount Monckton of Brenchley SPPI Blog, Dec 9, 2010 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://sppiblog.org/news/mercury-rising#more-3646>

Climate Talks reach Final Day With No Deal

By John Broder, NYT, Dec 10, 2010

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/11/science/earth/11climate.html?ref=science>

“Gore Effect” on Steroids: Six straight days of record low temperatures during COP16 in Cancun Mexico – more coming

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 10, 2010

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2010/12/10/gore-effect-on-steroids-six-straight-days-of-record-low-temperatures-during-cop16-in-cancun-mexico/#more-29188>

Extreme Weather

Now the Army moves in to clear away snow in coldest December for 100 years as fuel runs out at petrol stations in Scotland and East Anglia

By Daily Mail Reporter, Daily Mail, Dec 9, 2010

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1336705/UK-big-freeze-Army-standby-coldest-December-100-years.html#ixzz17crJQeVH>

[SEPP Comment: Do the warmists at the Climatic Research Unit in East Anglia need shoveling out?]

Britain Is Freezing to Death

By Tracey Boles and Lucy Johnston, Express, UK, Dec 5, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/215510/Britain-is-freezing-to-death>

Britain has coldest year since 1996 (but it will be the second hottest year since 1850 for the rest of the world)

By David Derbyshire, Daily Mail, UK, Dec 3, 2010 [H/t Warren Wetmore]
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1335056/Britain-coldest-year-1996-hottest-year-1850-rest-world.html>

BP Oil Spill and Aftermath

Rigs in Gulf Ready to Drill, but There's Little Work

By Clifford Krauss, NYT, Dec 7, 2010
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/08/business/energy-environment/08offshore.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=a25>

Gulf residents fret backlash may scare off drillers

Industry-related businesses fear shift to deep-water sites overseas
AP, Washington Times, Dec 5, 2010
<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/dec/5/gulf-residents-fret-backlash-may-scare-drillers/>

Energy Issues

Electric Power Industry 2009: Year in Review

US Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, Nov 23, 2010
http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/epa/epa_sum.html?src=email

Emissions reductions are not blowin' in the wind

By Martin Nicholson, Tom Biegler and Barry Brook, The Australian, Nov 29, 2010 [H/t John Droz, Jr.]
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/emission-reductions-are-not-blowin-in-the-wind/story-fn59niix-1225962376534>

Supreme Court to Hear Pivotal Climate Change Public Nuisance Case

Power news, Dec 8, 2010
http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3259.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2102664&hq_l=4&hq_v=5e66050d0

North America: The new energy kingdom

By Neil Reynolds, Globe and Mail, Toronto, Dec 8, 2010
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/commentary/neil-reynolds/north-america-the-new-energy-kingdom/article1828896/>
[SEPP Comment: The erroneous first sentence of the article has been corrected.]

Black & Veatch: 16% of U.S. Coal Fleet to Be Retired by 2020

Power News, Dec 8, 2010
http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3260.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2102664&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e66050d0
[SEPP Comment: What will replace it?]

Whistling in the Wind

Ten EU Countries Sign Up to Build North Sea Offshore Supergrid

Power News, Dec 8, 2010
http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3263.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2102664&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e66050d0

Altamont wind-energy company to pay \$2.5 million and replace turbines to reduce raptor deaths

By Denis Cuff, Contra Costa Times, Dec 6, 2010 [H/t Mark Duchamp]
http://www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci_16790686?nclink_check=1

Dick and Jane Talk Wind Energy (a teachable moment: Part I)

By John Droz Jr., Master Resource, Dec 8, 2010

<http://www.masterresource.org/2010/12/dick-jane-talk-wind-energy/>

[SEPP Comment: A cartoon presentation on the issues of wind power.]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Defying the will of the people, Obama governs by regulation

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Dec 5, 2010

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/editorials/2010/12/examiner-editorial-defying-will-people-obama-governs-regulation>

E.P.A. Delays Tougher Rules on Emissions

By John Broder and Sheryl Gay Stolberg, NYT, Dec 9, 2010

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/10/science/earth/10epa.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=a2

[SEPP Comment: In February, EPA will address a real environmental – human health issue: it is holding its second National Bed Bug Summit. (H/t Cooler Heads Digest)]

Consumer groups call for end to EU light bulb ban

The Local, Germany's News in English, Dec 3, 2010

<http://www.thelocal.de/national/20101203-31563.html>

Exelon Reaches a Deal to Shut Nuclear Plant

By Rebecca Smith, WSJ, Dec 10, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703766704576009572158054218.html?mod=WSJ_Energy_leftHeadlines

[SEPP Comment: The heat in discharged cooling water is being used to shut down the plant because it is now environmentally damaging – after 40 years of operation.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

The \$7-billion carbon scam

By Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post, Dec 5, 2010 [H/t Anthony Watts, WUWT]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2010/12/05/lawrence-solomon-the-7-billion-carbon-scam/#ixzz17RIo17Jm>

Wasting tax dollars on ethanol

Editorial, Washington Post, Dec 8, 2010 [H/t David Manuta]

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/08/AR2010120805821.html?referrer=emailarticle>

Tide ebbing for ethanol?

By Vincent Carroll, Denver Post, Dec 5, 2010 [H/t Warren Wetmore]

http://www.denverpost.com/carroll/ci_16763841

California Dreaming

Stuck In The Sticks In California

Editorial, IBD, Dec 7, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/556038/201012071831/Stuck-In-The-Sticks-In-California.htm>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Competition Among Species in a CO₂-Enriched World

Reference: Lau, J.A., Shaw, R.G., Reich, P.B. and Tiffin, P. 2010. Species interactions in a changing environment: elevated CO₂ alters the ecological and potential evolutionary consequences of competition. *Evolutionary Ecology Research* 12: 435-455.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/dec/7dec2010a3.html>

Global Warming and the Intensification of Rainfall Events

Reference: Hossain, F., Jeyachandran, I. and Pielke Sr., R. 2009. Have large dams altered extreme precipitation patterns? *EOS, Transactions, American Geophysical Union* 90: 453-454.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/dec/7dec2010a5.html>

Arctic Warming “Then and Now”

Reference: Wood, K.R. and Overland, J.E. 2010. Early 20th century Arctic warming in retrospect. *International Journal of Climatology* 30: 1269-1279.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/dec/8dec2010a2.html>

More Evidence for Solar Driven Climate Change

Reference: Shaviv, N.J. 2008. Using the oceans as a calorimeter to quantify the solar radiative forcing. *Journal of Geophysical Research* 113: 10.1029/2007JA012989.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/dec/8dec2010a5.html>

Cloudy Issues

El Nino Lends More Confidence to Strong Global Warming

By Richard Kerr, Science, Dec 10, 2010

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/330/6010/1465.summary>

[Subscription required for full text]

The Dessler Cloud Feedback Paper in Science: A Step Backward for Climate Research

By Roy Spencer, Dec 9, 2010

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/>

Other Issues that May Be Of Interest

Power Blip Jolts Supply of Gadget Chips

By Don Clark and Juro Osawa, WSJ, Dec 10, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703766704576009071694055878.html?mod=WSJ_hps_sections_tech

[SEPP Comment: A chip manufacturing facility suffered drop in voltage that caused a power outage for 0.07 seconds. The back-ups failed and 8 to 12 weeks of production was lost. Another illustration on how vulnerable high tech industry is to unreliable electricity.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Venezuela’s Chavez blames capitalism for deluges

By Andrew Cawthorne, Reuters, Dec 5, 2010 [H/t GWPF]

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKN0517626320101205>

[SEPP Comment: Maybe he is planning to join the US lawsuits against coal burning utility companies.]

Canada blamed for lost civilizations: scientist

By Randy Boswell National Post, Dec 10, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]

<http://www.nationalpost.com/todays-paper/Canada%20blamed%20lost%20civilizations%20scientist/3956051/story.html>

[SEPP Comment: Someone has to be blamed for sea level rise, even if it is natural.]

Coral reefs ‘could disappear in our children’s lifetime’

By J.E.N. Vernon, Yale Environment 360, Guardian, UK, Dec 7, 2010 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/dec/07/coral-reefs-disappear-lifetime>

Happy cows taste better, say scientists

By Natascha Mirosch, Courier-Mail, Dec 9, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/lifestyle/food-wine/happy-cows-taste-better-say-scientists/story-e6frer56-1225967875902>

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ARTICLES:

1. Climate threats and policy

Scientific Alliance, Dec 10, 2010 [The Scientific Alliance web site was not functioning as of this writing.]

<http://www.icecap.us/>

[SEPP Comment: Towards understanding the important distinction between climate and weather and reminding that one must not jump to hasty generalizations.]

Much of northwest Europe is having an unusually cold start to winter (*another deadly one - fourth in a row*). Admittedly, the British transport network tends to crumble at the first hint of snow, but our near continental neighbours have also suffered disruption. In the meantime, Iceland and Greenland have enjoyed relatively mild weather, so we cannot simply conclude that the northern hemisphere winter is cold and that this therefore puts in doubt the generally-accepted global warming trend. Supporters of the enhanced greenhouse hypothesis rightly argue that it is the longer-term pattern which is important, not short-term weather patterns, however unusual.

The distinction between weather and climate is important. Records for temperature, rainfall, windspeed or whatever are broken somewhere in the world on an almost daily basis. Some maximum and minimum temperature records have stood for many years because they were caused by an atypical coincidence of factors. They tell us nothing about climate unless there is a definite trend over an extended period of time.

Climate itself is not amenable to a simple definition, although it is normally taken to mean the range of typical seasonal weather patterns over a 30 year period. Earlier Springs, for example, can be seen as a sign of a shift in the climate, if such a pattern is consistent over many years. The occasional heatwave or localised flood, on the other hand, are just weather. Shifting jetstream patterns, which have a strong influence on weather patterns in western Europe are one important component of a weather system, but only represent a change in climate if there is an apparently permanent shift north or south.

These distinctions do not, of course, stop the natural human tendency to ascribe a significance to unusual weather patterns which fits their own viewpoint. So, some sceptics will gleefully point to the present cold snap (and even more gleefully at the snow which fell while the UK parliament was voting on the Climate Change bill) as evidence that the IPCC interpretation of climate is wrong. These same people, on the other hand, would dismiss the 2003 heatwave across western Europe (with well-publicised increases in

the numbers of elderly people dying in France) as extreme weather caused by a blocked area of high pressure.

On the other hand, for those who subscribe to the mainstream view on the human influence on climate, the interpretation would be reversed. The cold start to winter (following as it does last year's severe one) is part of the normal variability to be expected. And while most people are careful not to blame global warming for individual weather events, guilt by association is the common position. Thus, 2003 was used by many as an example of what could become the norm in years to come. Meanwhile, there will always be someone prepared to make a link between hurricanes or an unusual monsoon season (with this year's floods in Pakistan being a case in point) and a warming world.

The distinction between weather and climate is extremely important. Is the Scottish skiing industry just seeing a couple of freak years of good snowfall before it continues a long-term decline, or will a change to colder weather make it a reliable source of income over coming decades? And will those who have invested in English vineyards see a favourable shift in climate which makes them more competitive with continental neighbours or will the English wine industry sink back into obscurity this century?

In truth, no-one knows, although everyone has an opinion. The thousands of negotiators in Cancun are all of the belief that there is a long-term trend towards a warmer world and that the primary driver of that is human activity. With this as a starting point, the goal of most delegates remains to agree a binding commitment to drastic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions over the next few decades. It is accepted that this will not be achieved this year and almost certainly not in 2011, but the strategy remains the same.

Tactically, however, things are very different in Cancun than in the lead-up to Copenhagen. Then, there was still some hope that at least the basics of a post-2012 policy could be agreed. Now, the main aim is to keep the talks alive and relevant for the next couple of years. Once lost, the momentum created over many years would be all but impossible to revive. Inevitably, with so much political and scientific capital invested in the UNFCCC process, many participants are using all the tools available to them to keep the juggernaut rolling forward.

Climate activists and some scientists point to the dangers inherent in a world where average temperatures are 4C or more higher. The latest issue of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society has the theme 'Four degrees and beyond: the potential for a global temperature increase of four degrees and its implications'. Keepers of temperature series, including NASA and the UK Meteorological Service, are talking up the likelihood of 2010 being one of the three warmest on record (despite there being two months' worth of data yet to be included). Some small island states continue to insist that rising sea levels will see their demise, despite evidence that coral atolls have remained just above sea level as water levels have risen steadily over thousands of years.

Clearly the last thing that any of the many vested interests want is for the debate about the scientific evidence and its interpretation to be opened up. If the basic science is regarded as settled, the difficult process of agreeing a mitigation policy has a chance of success. If not, the logical way forward is to take whatever emissions reduction steps which make economic sense anyway (in particular, increasing energy efficiency) while concentrating on effective adaptation in areas which are vulnerable (flood defences, water storage and drought-tolerant crops, for example). And as for the move away from fossil fuels, this will inevitably happen during the 21st Century as extraction becomes more difficult, prices rise and viable alternatives are developed. This makes more sense than betting now on wind and solar power to fulfil a large part of our energy needs, at least with the current state of development.

A lot is at stake for all of us, and the distinction between weather and climate is crucial to this. Given the present impasse in negotiating a post-Kyoto deal, practical policymakers should surely be focussing more on adaptive strategies. The distinction between weather and climate can only be made with hindsight.

2. Comment on the French Academy of Sciences report on climate change submitted to the Minister of Higher Education and Research on October 28, 2010

By Vincent Courtillot (Nov. 2, 2010)

[SEPP Comment: Professor Courtillot, one of those who prompted a debate on global warming science by the French Academy, explains why he signed the final document. The Academy report was the subject of a TWTW Science Editorial on November 6.]

Following a strange petition signed by hundreds of self-designated climate scientists addressed to the French minister of research and asking her to disavow what they viewed as erroneous and aggressive positions against them by Claude Allègre and myself, the minister decided on April 1st to ask the Academy of Sciences (of which we both are members) to organise a debate, in order to allow for a “serene confrontation of points of view and methods and establish the current state of the art on scientific knowledge of climate change”. The Academy decided to hold the debate in September, after a phase in which academicians interested in participating were invited to submit written statements on the Academy intranet site. Academicians and a number of scientific institutions were also asked to propose names of climate scientists who would participate. Altogether, over 40 written contributions were submitted prior to the debate, which was held at the Academy on September 20. Some 120 academicians and other scientists attended a full day with four sessions, each organized in the same way and chaired by a “neutral” Academy member : two summaries of the written contributions by Academy members, then two or three short (7 mn, 5 overheads) presentations introductory to the debate. Each of these sessions was followed by a full hour of open discussion. The four topics were: recent climate observations, past climate, numerical models, and physical processes. I gave one of the 7mn presentations on observations of recent climate change and our published work on evidence for solar forcing. There was no other “labeled climate-skeptic” presentation, but a number of presentations were critical of significant aspects of the majority view as expressed by the IPCC reports. That view remained (although of course no vote was taken) the majority view, but I was impressed by the quality and number of distinguished academicians expressing what I found to be very sensible remarks that supported at least partly the “skeptical” view and in any case insisted that the debate should remain elegant and open (which was the case for most of the day). Four colleagues wrote the final report (a geologist, an astrophysicist, plus the president and vice-president of the Academy, who are specialists in mechanics and cardiology, by the way all of them colleagues with whom I have the most friendly relationships). This report was submitted to the minister on October 28, and has been the subject of reports in the French media since then.

Several of these media view the report as definitely vindicating the IPCC conclusions. This is not at all what the September debate showed, and in my view is neither what the report given to the minister says, provided one takes the time to read it fully and carefully. Because of the distortion, I give here my own analysis of that report, and explain why I would have voted for it, had I been in the room on October 26. However, I was in Martinique, attending the annual meeting with the local authorities regarding the state of the Montagne Pelée volcano, which is monitored by my Institute (IPGP).

In recent interviews, journalists often start by insisting on the fact that I am “close to Claude Allègre”. This is certainly true and has been for 40 years. It does not mean we think alike on all matters, we both are free and independent scientists. Of course, by saying this from the outset, the journalists are immediately trying to deflect the public’s attention to Claude’s political career and profile, both fascinating but irrelevant to the research topic under discussion. When asked about my position, I remind that it is based on 9 papers published over the past 5 years in international, peer-reviewed journals, written together with my close colleague Jean-Louis Le Mouél (actually our leader on this program) and

three Russian colleagues, all specialists in applied mathematics, Elena Blanter, Mikhail Shnirman and Volodia Kossobokov. That some of our papers are debated is true and fine. But they cannot be ignored. And as the Academy report states on its page 1: “the debate was very rich and had high scientific quality”, which I believe is true and applies to both sides (if one wants to simplify the debate in terms of only two sides; it is actually richer and more subtle than this). The report continues by saying that the debate allowed to “identify points of convergence and divergence and remaining uncertainties”. And indeed a number of large uncertainties was discussed during the day, including by specialists who were not engaged in climate research but brought their expertise from, for instance, fluid mechanics and chaos theory. The style and quality of the debate, the space taken by minority views, even if they remain in this circle minority views, show such an evolution with respect to previous similar debates and reports (for instance by the Royal Society, though it is in the process of possibly revising its previous statement under the request of a significant number of RS members) that this is the reason why I would have voted in its favor, viewing it as a progress report and a significant move forward.

Some say this report is a “compromise”. I would say a “reasonable balance” at the present time. Since the September 20 debate clearly showed that there were several distinct positions, there can in principle be no single, unanimous synthesis. The four writers did their best to summarise sometimes divergent positions. And it is healthy that there were divergent positions on such a complex field as climate change, with so many as yet unresolved issues. As far as I am concerned, reading carefully the 11 pages which form the body of the final report (in which many of my comments on three previous versions were taken into account), I find 12 points of agreement and 8 of disagreement. In the concluding page, I find 6 bullet points I agree with and 4 I disagree with. This does mean that I agree with a majority of the report. But I assume anyone agreeing in total with the IPCC views will also agree on some points of the Academy report but disagree with several others. One who reads too fast or too superficially will fail to see that the report actually contains paragraphs that contradict each other. An unattentive or unfair journalist could equally extract a synthesis of the report appearing to fully support or on the contrary largely criticize the IPCC views! How could it be otherwise, unless there were two sections, a majority and a minority report, which is what I myself would suggest for the next IPCC report, but is apparently not (yet?) in the French habits.

So, what are the main points I disagree with? First, the statement that most of the increase in temperature from 1975 to 2003 is mainly due to the increase in carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere during the same period. I note however that the word “acceleration” which had been used in a previous version has in at least one instance been replaced by “increase”. Indeed, if one follows for instance the Met Office website, monthly temperatures are seen to increase from about 1910 to 1930, almost as much as in the last 30 years of the century. And the period from 1930 to 1970 shows a slight but clear decrease. So “acceleration” or “slowing down” can both be argued, depending on which segment one compares. And the report forgets to say (although this was clearly shown in the oral debate) that temperature has been slightly decreasing since the maximum in 1998 (2003 for another data center, again demonstrating uncertainty). Which leads to the second point of disagreement. The report says that because solar activity has been decreasing since 1975, it cannot be linked to temperature change that was increasing. But that is wrong: solar activity has been decreasing since 1990 and temperature also, since 2000. This is precisely one of the reasons why we believe solar activity may have been under-estimated as a partial forcing factor of climate change.

But there are also a large number of points with which I agree, and which are not emphasised in the IPCC report (an under-statement). Yes, climate should be studied based on observations obtained over long periods. Many data series cover only the satellite era since the 70s and are therefore too short for climate-related conclusions. We need another one or two decades of high quality observations and I believe the debate will largely be resolved one way or the other. If the solar connection we propose is right, and as the Sun may have entered a particularly quiet period after several decades in a high mode

(see the work by de Jager and Duhau), the temperature decrease of the past decade could continue for one or two more decades and one would then be far away from the IPCC predictions. On the other hand, the curve may turn upwards again: only the future with hard observations will tell us. Another strong recommendation is that data should be widely accessible, including raw data in non-processed format, in case one team would find errors in the processing scheme of another. This is exactly the kind of refusal we faced some years ago, when we started working on the subject. We were denied access to CRU raw data. We now know we were far from being alone... I recall that in the cases of Europe and the US, which we recalculated, we find mean temperature curves for the 20th century that are rather significantly different from the IPCC curves and that are not fit well by the available numerical climate models. The report also concludes that there are many remaining uncertainties and lack of proper understanding of some mechanisms that affect climate: clouds are an essential part (acknowledged by IPCC reports, but not leading to the more careful conclusions that this implies), solar effects (many authors), cosmic rays (Svensmark), atmospheric electricity (Tinsley)... The Academy report concludes rightly that this implies the need for a lot of future research. This is the reason why one should view with great caution the 90% confidence level with which some of the main conclusions of the IPCC and recommendations to political leaders are stated. The Academy report carefully avoids using such a number. Yet, I acknowledge that after all these excellent appeals to caution and emphasis on uncertainties and unsolved questions, the report has a couple of definite statements in the concluding page that are in contradiction with the rest of the text and can only be viewed as some form of careful compromise (I call it balance) which, given the tension and the level of attacks in some of the media, I can understand only too well. Among the comments made by a number of Academy members, I was particularly struck by the questions from an expert on chaos theory: the report does say that the potentially highly unstable and chaotic behaviour of the coupled system formed by the atmosphere, the ocean, the cryosphere and continental surfaces were another important factor of uncertainty.

Again, given the positive parts which had not previously been stated at this level, I take the report as a welcome move in the right direction: on the importance of unresolved uncertainties, encouragement of further research, this is really ahead of a number of previous such reports, which most media have decided to ignore (or failed to understand). To me, this means that in the Academy the debate is now open, accepted, when in many circles it is still considered as closed. And this is only a stage, a progress report; the story is not yet fully told... Wait and see: a decade, or a bit more, might suffice.

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3. Eco-Diplomacy, The Chicago Way

Editorials, IBD, Dec 6, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/555925/201012061906/Eco-Diplomacy-The-Chicago-Way.htm>

International Relations: Leaked embassy dispatches show an America bribing some and threatening others to get support for a climate change accord, revealing just how weak the case for such a treaty really is.

Sometimes it is worth seeing how the sausage — or in the case of climate change, the baloney — is made. While the WikiLeaks focus has been on the leaking of classified documents, the content of some of them is revealing.

David Carrington in Britain's Guardian shows how the U.S., after failing to get a successor treaty to the failed Kyoto Protocol in Denmark, bribed, threatened and cajoled nations to get support for a "Copenhagen accord" under which nations would pledge to meet individual goals in the absence of a binding one-size-fits-all treaty.

In one instance, Hillary Clinton's State Department, acting on a request from the CIA, sent a secret cable on July 31, 2009, seeking "human intelligence" from U.N. diplomats on which nations were being naughty and which were being nice on climate change and which might be making deals to circumvent Copenhagen goals.

We were essentially seeking dirt on nations opposed to the administration's approach to fighting alleged global warming, and we were not above blackmail to get nations to comply with our position or threats that involved the cutting off of financial assistance promised to poorer nations said to be impacted by climate change.

The accord promised \$30 billion in aid to these nations impacted by climate change. A Feb. 2, 2009, cable from Ethiopia reports that in a meeting between U.S. Undersecretary of State Marcia Otero and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, the U.S. threatened to cut off assistance unless Ethiopia loudly backed the accord.

Zenawi, who heads the African Union's climate-change negotiations, agrees to support the accord but wonders why the threat was made after receiving personal assurances from President Obama that the promised aid would be delivered.

A Feb. 23, 2010, cable shows the Maldives' ambassador-designate to the U.S., Abdul Ghafoor Mohamed, telling the U.S. deputy climate change envoy, Jonathan Pershing, to essentially "show me the money," asking for "tangible assistance" in exchange for support for the accord and noting that other nations would then see "the advantages to be gained by compliance."

The linkage between financial aid and support for the accord appeared again Feb. 11, when Pershing met with Connie Hedegaard, EU climate action commissioner, in Brussels. A cable shows her telling Pershing "the Aosis (Alliance of Small Island States) countries 'could be our best allies' given their need for financing."

Once again we are confronted with the one thing that is missing from this picture — sound science. Climate change hysteria has been generated as a means to redistribute the world's wealth and to provide a rationale for expanding government control over every aspect of our lives. But this climate Kabuki theater has little to do with saving the Earth from a real and imminent threat.

Confronted with a demonstrably cooling planet and a corrupt and fraudulent global climate-change bureaucracy, our government is reduced to bribes and coercion to cobble together a new agreement. In the absence of sound science and a rationale for committing global economic suicide, we are quite simply trying to make the world an offer it can't refuse.

4. Cuckoo In Cancun

Editorial, IBD, Dec 6, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/555921/201012061906/Cuckoo-In-Cancun.htm>

Environmentalism: Still think those who continue to push the idea of man-made climate change are well-grounded and rational? Think again.

Consider Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. She opened the U.N.'s global warming conference last week with a prayer to Ixchel, the Mayan goddess of the moon.

This mythological supreme being of fertility is supposed to be good for sending rain for crops. Maybe that's the sort of blessing Figueres had in mind when, from Cancun's — no joke — Moon Palace, she called Ixchel "the goddess of reason, creativity and weaving" and hoped delegates would be inspired by her.

And did we mention that the multitasking Ixchel is also some kind of jaguar? Given her many roles, is it really reasonable to ask her to also save the planet from global warming?

But then if she did that, the alarmists wouldn't have to take junkets to balmy resorts in December to save the world from mankind.

One might think the climate change conference silliness would have a limit. But one would be wrong.

A week into the proceedings, the Sacramento Bee published a column by Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. Her topic? Negotiations at the global climate meeting, she believes, "should be an opportunity for empowering women."

Moving on, we find a professor from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine who wants to use the summit to fight obesity. Fossil fuel energy, says Ian Roberts, is causing the world to get hotter, and fatter. How? As the British Telegraph reports, Roberts believes the use of cars and other fossil-fuel-using machines has made us all fatter.

Maybe Roberts should have taken his fight against obesity to summit delegates, as well. They threw themselves a party on the first night that was bursting with food, adult beverages and pinatas.

Did any give even a fleeting thought as to how their outsized carbon footprints would affect their waistslines?

Did a single one look at the virtually unlimited bounty before them and recognize the hypocrisy of promoting rationing in the developed world to cut carbon emissions?

Lest you think there's been no serious work done, Bolivia is using the summit to bring up — again — its idea for an International Tribunal for Climate Justice to prosecute "ecocide" — defined as a crime against an ecosystem "to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished."

"Supporters of a new ecocide law," the British Guardian reported in April, "believe it could be used to prosecute" the "climate deniers" who "distort science and facts to discourage voters and politicians from taking action to tackle global warming."

The hinges that are supposed to anchor these people to reality are quite obviously missing. There's more clear thinking at the typical UFO convention, tin hats and all, than at any global warming conference — including this year's big party on the beach.

5. The Great Transmission Heist

Editorial, WSJ, Nov 7, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304772804575558400606672006.html>

How would you like to pay higher utility bills to finance expensive electricity from solar and wind power, which you would never use? That's the issue now before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), and it deserves more public and political scrutiny before it becomes a reality.

FERC has a draft rule that could effectively socialize the costs of paying for multi-billion dollar transmission lines to connect remote wind and solar projects to the nation's electric power grid. If FERC rules in favor of Big Wind and Big Solar, the new policy would add billions of dollars onto the utility bills of residents of at least a dozen states—including California, Michigan, Oregon and New York—that will receive little or no benefit from the new power lines.

Transmission lines connect coal, natural gas and nuclear plants to the electric grid so that power can be delivered to homes and businesses. The costs of building this infrastructure, hooking up to the national electric grid and transporting electricity to the end users has traditionally been paid by the industries and passed on to rate payers. This long-standing user-pays policy would be replaced with a policy of everyone pays under FERC's plan.

As FERC chairman Jon Wellinghoff has put it: "This is a country where transmission lines have traditionally been built by the incumbents who serve that area; the question is whether we should continue that policy in the future." He told Congress that we should steer away from pricing that would "calculate the precise monetary benefits expected to accrue from a new transmission facility." But that's exactly what investors try to do in assessing the economic viability of any new project.

The big winners from socializing transmission costs would be wind and solar projects that tend to be in remote areas, like the desert or offshore. In many cases, thousands of miles of new transmission lines would have to be built to get the power to the end user. Google recently announced it will be a major investor in a \$5 billion wind farm off the coasts of New Jersey, Delaware and Virginia that will require hundreds of miles of underwater transmission lines. No one is saying who will pay for those transmission costs, but it's a safe guess the investors are betting that FERC will decide to socialize them.

Very big dollars are at stake in this fight. By some estimates the cost of building out new transmission lines to accommodate renewable energy and other new electric power sources could exceed \$160 billion. Wind and solar proponents insist that renewable energy standards can only be reached if transmission costs are shared by everybody. This sounds like an admission that these energy sources are inefficient sources of power that can't compete in the marketplace without subsidies. The policy the renewables are pushing would be analogous to taxpayers underwriting the cost of tankers and truckers that transport oil to service stations.

Senators Harry Reid of Nevada and Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, both of whom have big wind and solar projects in their states, pushed a Senate energy bill this summer that would have socialized these transmission costs. That bill has stalled, so FERC—supported by the White House and Democratic leaders—may move on its own.

Fortunately, the "loser" states are finally catching on to how much this cost-shifting would add to their utility bills. Last year Governors Jan Brewer of Arizona, Jim Gibbons of Nevada, Christine Gregoire of Washington, Ted Kulongoski of Oregon and Arnold Schwarzenegger of California opposed the plan as "inappropriate to assess the cost of transmission build-out to customers that cannot make use of the facilities, or who elect not to because they can access more cost effective options that do not rely on large, new transmission investments to meet environmental goals."

Eleven eastern governors have raised similar objections, arguing that this policy would "undermine the significant renewable energy potential along the East Coast by subsidizing distant terrestrial wind resources which would stifle economic recovery in the east by destabilizing competitive electricity market structures and increasing energy prices in regulated markets." Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and

Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles, hardly a Milton Friedman apostle, describes cost-sharing as "a radical Soviet-style approach to transmission planning."

One of the biggest losers would be Michigan. One economic analysis sponsored by Michigan utilities found that, despite some initial gains for certain wind projects in the northern part of the state, under a proposed regional payment scheme, "Michigan will be sending hundreds of millions of dollars annually outside the state to fund transmission projects which not only provide little value to the State, but will actually harm our ability to develop our own renewable energy market." Michigan rate payers would have to subsidize 20% of the cost of some \$16 billion of transmission projects outside the state. Talk about outsourcing.

This is all the more maddening given that renewable energy projects already receive tens of billions of dollars of loans, grants, tax credits, earmarks, renewable energy mandates, stimulus money, and on and on. According to a 2007 U.S. Department of Energy study, wind and solar already receive subsidies that are more than 20 times greater per kilowatt of electricity than conventional power sources. But as with ethanol, even these subsidies are never enough.

Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee has sponsored legislative language that would instruct FERC to allocate transmission line costs in a way that is "reasonably proportionate to measurable economic and reliability benefits." In other words, no charging rate payers in New Jersey for the costs of a wind farm in Texas based on vague benefits of reduced planetary carbon emissions.

The courts have also generally ruled that pricing for electric projects must be commensurate with benefits derived by rate payers. If Congress or FERC mandate a cost-spreading scheme for transmission projects, then the highest subsidies will go to the least efficient projects. That wastes money and energy, which doesn't sound too green to us.

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