

The Week That Was: 2011-04-23 (April 23, 2011)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week:

"Climate change is the norm. If you want something to worry about, it would be if the climate were static. It would be like a person being dead." Richard Lindzen, as quoted in the first issue of *Nature Climate Change*.

Numbers of the Week: 2303, 18, 10, 0

THIS WEEK:

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

GOOD NEWS! Heartland Institute is sponsoring the Sixth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-6) to take place in Washington, DC from breakfast Thursday, June 30, to noon Friday, July 1, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. This event will be more modest than in the past, yet as informative and, perhaps, even more challenging to the orthodoxy. The principal speakers are S. Fred Singer, Craig Idso, and Bob Carter – all major contributors to the NIPCC reports. Of course, SEPP is a co-sponsor.

Congress is on a two week holiday, thus Washington has been quiet. This week marked the convergence of several events: Passover, Easter week, Earth Day (celebrated on Lenin's birthday), and the first anniversary of the Gulf oil spill. Guest Editorialist Tom Sheahan discusses how, for some, environmentalism is replacing traditional religions.

EPA celebrated Earth Day with a rap musical. One is tempted to suggest that EPA should stick to science, but EPA departed from rigorous science long ago in favor of speculation and regulation.

Reports on the costs of the Gulf oil spill and the Federal government's moratorium on drilling are becoming clearer. BP is paying dearly for the oil spill, as it should. However, thanks to government actions, the American public is paying as well.

The development of oil fields is a complex process that private corporations undertake with careful and prudent planning. The disruption of one facet, such as drilling, can have long term effects on oil production. As production in older wells decline, new ones are drilled. Published estimates state that in 2011, production in the Gulf will be about 13% below 2010 production and will remain below projections for several years. Recent discoveries of deep-water oil fields, including the discoveries by BP, held great promise for long-term production. The moratorium and the slow issuing of permits subsequent to the moratorium are no doubt contributing to the sharply increasing price of world oil and gasoline, thereby punishing consumers. The war in Libya is also contributing to these escalating prices.

In a speech in which he addressed increasing gasoline prices, President Obama ignored the contributions of his administration to these price increases, blamed greedy oil companies, and called for an end of subsidies to oil and natural gas companies. Please see Articles under

Communicating Better With the Public, The Political Games Continue, BP Oil Spill ..., and Other News ...

Numbers of the Week: 2303 birds; 18 sea turtles, 10 mammals; and 0 other reptiles. That is the total number of dead animals with visible oil collected by the US Fish and Wildlife Service along the Gulf Coast for the year following the Gulf spill (as of April 14, 2011). This does not mean that the animals died from the oil. For example, autopsies of sea turtles indicated that some, at least, died of suffocation, most likely while trapped in the nets of fishing trawlers. What the administration called the nation's worst ecological disaster has been something less than that, at least for major species of animals.

<http://www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill/pdfs/ConsolidatedWildlifeTable042011.pdf>

As nature stubbornly refuses to obey the dictates of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its models, global warming alarmists and IPCC promoters are changing their language. What was once "the science is settled" that humans are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming is becoming "the growing consensus on climate change." The above quote from Richard Lindzen on a static climate is appropriate.

Some alarmists, even some who claim they are seeking a middle ground, are trying to discredit skeptical researchers by claiming they are "linked to." The extent of the link is not specified. Are they on retainer, do they receive sizable grants, etc? Of course the ultimate link is to the dreaded ExxonMobil. One distinguished organization, the George C. Marshall Institute, is often smeared in this way. For years the Institute was one of the few organizations in greater Washington that had the courage to invite scientists that questioned the IPCC orthodoxy to open speaking events. Thus, those who use personal attacks frequently state these scientists are "linked to" the George Marshall Institute.

Another vague term that is becoming popular, especially on college campuses, is "sustainability." What sustainable or unsustainable means is open to individual interpretation. One can say that governments that run large budget deficits are "unsustainable." Please see Article # 1 by Fred Singer

Columnist Kimberly Strassel of the Wall Street Journal had an unusually frank interview with John Watson, CEO of Chevron. His views on peak oil, fossil fuels, alternative energy, and other issues are quite different than those of "energy experts" found inside of Washington's Beltway. Please see Article # 2.

The skeptical environmentalist Bjorn Lomborg has an unusually blunt article on China's "green" energy program. The article should be required reading for those politicians promoting "green" energy, be they in Australia, Europe, or the US. Unfortunately, Lomborg misses some important points, including Western monetary transfers to China for carbon credits, enriching cap-and-trade traders, and China's skillful capture of the most modern western technology for wind turbines, etc.; but he hits most of the main points. "A 2008 Citigroup analysis found that about one-third of China's wind power assets were not in use. Many turbines are not connected to the transmission grid." Please see Article # 3.

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SEPP GUEST EDITORIAL:

By Thomas P. Sheahan, Director of SEPP, (Ph.D, Physics, MIT)

The Surrogate Religion of Environmentalism

Environmentalism has replaced religion for many of its adherents.

The ending “-ism” denotes a way of thinking, perceiving and structuring one's life. Every “ism” is based on underlying assumptions, principles and beliefs that tell its adherents what they ought to do. Providing ethical guidance for its members is a major part of what an “-ism” does.

Followers of Judaism who observe Passover this week, and Christians who commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter, have no problem in acknowledging that these are matters of belief. They would never claim that science provides absolute proof of authenticity – although many find in science valuable support for the validity of their beliefs. Those who can see an underlying compatibility between science and religious faith are comfortable in both realms.

Environmentalism likewise provides ethical guidance, but its followers generally recoil from the suggestion that it's a religion. The traditional buildings and rituals are absent; moreover, many adherents come from a background of explicitly rejecting “institutional” religions. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the basic assumptions shows that environmentalism indeed meets the criteria of a *secular* religion.

A cornerstone *belief* of environmentalism is that mankind is just one species among many. This view opposes the Judeo-Christian *belief* that God considers mankind to be very special. “Mother earth” replaces God as the object of special devotion, causing some of environmentalism's subsequent assertions to be in direct opposition to the teachings of Christianity and Judaism.

Science *appears* to play a major role in environmentalism, but actually its role is distinctly secondary: Science is used subjectively, not objectively. After a set of *beliefs* has been established, various fields of science (and scholarly studies within those fields), are carefully sifted to select facts that support those beliefs. That's not the way science is supposed to work. But it happens every day in movies, magazines, blogs, TV and newspapers.

In his excellent book, “*The New Holy Wars: Economic Religion vs. Environmental Religion in Contemporary America*,” Professor Robert H. Nelson likens the contemporary struggle between those two secular religions to John Calvin's struggle against the establishment of Catholicism 500 years ago. Nelson's book concludes: “It is time to take secular religion seriously. It is real religion. In the twentieth century, it showed greater energy, won more converts, and had more impact on the western world than the traditional institutional forms of Christianity.”

For the believing environmentalist, there is a certain “Garden of Eden” narrative: the beginning of evil came with the development of agriculture, when mankind rose above hunter-gatherer status and began to control and improve on nature to meet his needs. Thereafter came civilization and all its negative environmental associations. The whole story hangs together within a religious framework.

In America today, the religion of environmentalism has the distinct advantage of being taught in the public schools, and receiving plentiful government funding. Some of its beliefs are fairly benign, such as sympathy for polar bear cubs. But other beliefs have had horrible consequences.

The chemical spray DDT is a powerful weapon against malaria. It wiped the disease out in the developed world. Sprayed on walls, it acts for six months or more with a single application, keeping mosquitoes out of homes, preventing them from biting, and killing any that land. But environmental

activism and incorrect scientific interpretations led politicians to believe DDT harmed birds and fish, and the insecticide was banned in the United States in 1972. Since then, it has been largely purged from the disease control arsenal worldwide, even though malaria still infects a billion people in poor countries every year, killing over one million. Since 1972, at least 20 million African children have died from malaria.

Throwing trash out of your car window is considered a sin by environmentalism. In other religions, allowing preventable deaths of millions of children is a far greater sin.

This year Easter, Passover and Earth Day all are close together. It's a good time to ask if environmentalism can be reconciled with traditional religions. Most religious people also want to protect the environment, and see ecological stewardship as part of their responsibility to God. Indeed, that is the message of another excellent book, "*Environmental Stewardship in the Judeo-Christian Tradition.*" Published by the Acton Institute a decade ago, it is a brief collection of essays by Protestant, Jewish and Catholic scholars who have pondered how and why their own faith embraces care for God's creation.

In all cases, these authors root their arguments in Scripture, abetted by an understanding of modern science. They stress that the word "dominion" used in the Bible doesn't mean you can wreck the planet; rather, mankind is a partner chosen by God to be a *responsible* steward of creation. Emphatically they do *not* regard mankind as just "one species among many." And they don't confuse "mother earth" with God.

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see: www.sepp.org.

1. The Sustainable Development Hoax

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Apr 22, 2011

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/the_sustainable_development_ho.html

2. Oil Without Apologies

By Kimberley Strassel, WSJ, Apr 16, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704013604576248881417246502.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

"What I see are people who want affordable energy," says Mr. Watson. "They want strong environmental standards—they want a lot of things—but first and foremost they want affordable energy. And if you want affordable energy, you want oil, gas and coal."

3. Hold the accolades on China's 'green leap forward'

By Bjorn Lomborg, Washington Post, Apr 20, 2011 [H/t David Manuta]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/hold-the-accolades-on-chinas-green-leap-forward/2011/04/19/AFLdZMEE_story.html?wpisrc=emailtoafriend

4. Home truths

Editorial, Nature, Apr 20 2011

http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v472/n7343/full/472260a.html?WT.ec_id=NATURE-20110421

[SEPP Comment: Part of the analysis on the failure of cap-and-trade in the US is correct. The part ignored by Nature, is that *Nature* itself refused to cooperate.]

5. Nature not listening to climate alarmists

By Roger Cohen, Letter, Durango Herald, Apr 14, 2010

<http://www.durangoherald.com/article/20110415/OPINION03/704159945/Nature-not-listening-to-climate-alarmists>

6. When Scientists Confuse Cause and Effect

By Matt Ridley, WSJ, Apr 16, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703385404576258783367180312.html#articleTabs%3Darticle>

7. A Statute Beyond Congress's Control

By Chris Horner, Letter, WSJ, Apr 20, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703551304576260851546798930.html?mod=ITP_opinion_1

8. THE CARBON TAX

By Prof Cliff Ollier, School of Earth and Environment, U. of Western Australia, Poem, Apr 2011

No URL

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Jaeah's Investigation

Mother Jones on Climategate

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Apr 22, 2011

<http://climateaudit.org/2011/04/22/jaeahs-investigation/#more-13486>

[SEPP Comment: A kind and thoughtful explanation of why it is difficult for the non-expert to understand what is significant in "hide the decline."]

Ka-Ching! More Greenpeace Money

By Donna Laframboise, No Consensus, Apr 22, 2011

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2011/04/22/ka-ching-more-greenpeace-money/>

[SEPP Comment: More "objective research" from Greenpeace in IPCC reports.]

Challenging the Orthodoxy

900+ Peer-Reviewed Papers Supporting Skepticism Of "Man-Made" Global Warming (AGW) Alarm

Global Warming Policy Foundation, Apr 14, 2011

<http://www.thegwpcf.org/science-news/2816-900-peer-reviewed-papers-supporting-skepticism-of-qman-madeq-global-warming-agw-alarm.html>

[SEPP Comment: The blogs defending the orthodoxy immediately claimed that 9 out of the top 10 authors are linked with ExxonMobil. As usual, the blogs do not specify the association: is it that the 9 out of 10 buy gasoline from ExxonMobil?]

NOAA NCDC bends the truth big-time in release

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Apr 17, 2011

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

[“March 2011 was the 15th coldest March in the 33 of satellite data for the globe using the much more reliable UAH data set. That of course can't be the case and be the 13th warmest in 122 years as NOAA claims.”]

Bias In the Peer Review Process: A Cautionary And Personal Account

By Roger Pielke, Sr, WUWT, April 20, 2011

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/04/20/bias-in-the-peer-review-process-a-cautionary-and-personal-account/>

Billions of dollars sneaks out the door through UN committees

By JoNova, Apr 23, 2011

<http://joannenova.com.au/>

[SEPP Comment: Those who try to compare how much are being spent on the global warming debate by traditional business corporations and environmental corporations usually fail to account for these tremendous amounts of money.]

World still waiting for '50 million climate refugees by 2010'

By Amos Aikman, Australian, Apr 21, 2011

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/world-still-waiting-for-50-million-climate-refugees-by-2010/story-fn59niix-1226042490227>

Voodoo Economics? How About Voodoo Climate Science?

By Patrick Michaels, Forbes, Apr 21, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]

<http://blogs.forbes.com/patrickmichaels/2011/04/21/voodoo-economics-how-about-voodoo-climate-science/>

Flood Risks: Not Worse than Predicted

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Apr 18, 2011

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2011/04/18/flood-risk-not-worse-than-predictably-predicted/>

Defenders of the Orthodoxy

The Clean Air Act Keeps Us Healthy

Congress can't be trusted to interfere with the EPA's scientific standards

By Arnold Schwarzenegger, WSJ, Apr 21, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703789104576273120525192318.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: Obviously, former Governor Schwarzenegger did not bother reading the three page bill limiting EPA control of CO2 prior to signing this op-ed. The article may be behind a pay wall.]

Seeking a Common Ground

Overstretching Attribution (Nature Climate Change)

By Ira Glickstein, WUWT, Apr 22, 2011

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/04/22/overstretching-attribution-nature-climate-change/#more-38444>

Communicating Better with the Public

EPA: Let's Rap About Climate Change

By James Robbins, Washington Times, Apr 20, 2011 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/blog/watercooler/2011/apr/20/lets-rap-about-climate-change/>

[SEPP Comment: Rap music from the EPA. This is so bad, both should be banned.]

Temperatures and Extreme Weather

Why it seems like severe weather is becoming more common when the data shows otherwise

By Anthony Watts, Daily Caller, Apr 20, 2011 [H/T ICECAP]

<http://dailycaller.com/2011/04/20/why-it-seems-like-severe-weather-is-becoming-more-common-when-the-data-shows-otherwise/>

Tornadoes “Unpredictable”? Hardly,

By Mike Smith, Meteorological Musings, Apr 17, 2011, [H/t WUWT]

<http://meteorologicalmusings.blogspot.com/2011/04/tornadoes-unpredictable-hardly.html>

Summary of the April 14-16 US tornado outbreak

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Apr 18, 2011

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/04/18/summary-of-the-april-14-16-us-tornado-outbreak/>

Smog casts a shadow over Easter: Health warning issued over pollution across Britain as millions begin their Bank Holiday break

By Staff Writers, Mail Online, Apr 22, 2011 [H/t Malcolm Ross]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1379159/Pollution-Health-warning-issued-smog-casts-shadow-Easter.html>

[Comments by Malcolm Ross: Unusual warmth and still air brought smog. "The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs advised the public to avoid taking short car journeys to reduce the build-up of ozone." Right. And is it not DEFRA that has done more than any to demonize harmless carbon dioxide as a "pollutant", promote the widespread adoption of diesels in the name of lowering CO2 emissions, when in fact it is those same oily, noisome diesels that emit massive concentrations of smog forming particulates and toxic nitrogen oxides?]

The Political Games Continue

Obama: No ‘silver bullet’ to bring down gas prices

By Gautham Nagesh, The Hill, Apr 23, 2011

<http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/157445-obama-no-qsilver-bulletq-to-bring-down-gas-prices>

["He said there are some steps the U.S. can take to improve the situation such as ramping up domestic oil production and ending subsidies for oil and gas firms. 'That's \$4 billion of your money going to these companies when they're making record profits and you're paying near record prices at the pump. It has to stop,' Obama said." SEPP Comment: By eliminating subsidies, oil and gas prices will fall?]

Nuclear safety must be first priority

By Rep. Edward Markey, The Hill, Apr 15, 2011

<http://thehill.com/opinion/op-ed/155919-nuclear-safety-must-be-first-priority>

[SEPP Comment: No one can argue with the headline, but anti-nuclear Markey ignores government guarantees to alternative energy production. How many wind farms would Wall Street finance without loan guarantees, subsidies, and mandates?]

A roadmap for America's energy future

By Rep. Devin Nunes, Washington Examiner, Apr 18, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/2011/04/heres-key-ther-roadmap-americas-energy-future>

Litigation Issues

Climate Change Goes To Court

Editorial, IBD, Apr 20 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=569812&p=1>

Supreme Court indicates it will dismiss 6-state global warming lawsuit

The suit, filed by California and others, seeks limits on carbon pollution from coal-fired power plants. Justices say the EPA, not the courts, should regulate greenhouse gases.

By David Savage, LA Times, Apr 20, 2011

http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-court-warming-20110420_0,5463771.story

[SEPP Comment: This is the lawsuit where state attorneys claim coal-fired power plants generating electricity are a “public nuisance” because the plants emit carbon dioxide, which is damaging the planet. Those who try to predict the findings of the Supreme Court are frequently wrong.]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

EPA: Jobs Don’t Matter

Editorial, IBD, Apr 18, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=569489&p=1>

EPA’s faith-based agitprop

Editorial, Washington Times, Apr 20, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/20/epas-faith-based-agitprop/>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

The carbon tax that ate Australia

By Anthony Cox, DrumTV, Apr 21, 2011 [H/t JoAnne Nova]

<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/113676.html>

Still not getting it

Money not the problem in US climate debate

By David Adam, SPPI, Apr 20, 2011

<http://sppiblog.org/news/still-not-getting-it>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

The Effects of Minnesota Renewable Portfolio Standard Legislation on the State Economy

By Beacon Hill Institute, Funding by American Tradition Institute & Minnesota Free Market Institute, Summary, April, 2011

http://www.atinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/ATI_MNFMI_RPS_Study_Quick_Findings.pdf

Riverside County solar project gets \$2.1-billion federal guarantee

By Tiffany Hsu, LA Times, Apr 18, 2011

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/greenspace/2011/04/blythe-solar-project-gets-conditional-21-billion-federal-loan-guarantee.html>

[“So far, 22 clean-energy projects -- including wind, geothermal and biofuels, in 14 states have been handed \$21 billion in conditional commitments.”]

The CFL Fraud

By Edmund Contosky, American Thinker, Apr 19, 2011

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/the_cfl_fraud.html

[SEPP Comment: As the average age of the nation’s population increases, and eyes dim, Congress has a better idea, dim bulbs.]

Energy Issues

Don’t Look Now, But CO2 Output Is Falling

Editorial, IBD, Apr 19, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/569632/201104191841/A-Green-World-Needs-Its-CO2.htm>

Energy: A Tale of Two Narratives

By Gary Jason, American Thinker, Apr 17, 2011

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/energy_a_tale_of_two_narrative.html

Nuclear Fears & Responses

Roadmap for Fukushima Daiichi restoration

By Staff Writers, World Nuclear News, Apr 18, 2011

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/RS-Roadmap_for_Fukushima_Daiichi_restoration-1804114.html

[Six to nine months to achieve a cold shutdown.]

Robots investigate Fukushima reactors

By Staff Writers, World Nuclear News, Apr 18, 2011

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/RS-Robots_investigate_Fukushima_reactors-1804115.html

Lives in Japan lost to disaster protocol

Principal begins new school year still haunted by tsunami's horror

By Christopher Johnson, Washington Times, Apr 21, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/21/japan-lives-lost-to-disaster-protocol/?page=1>

[SEPP Comment: A strikingly humane article on the horror of the earthquake and tsunami. The fear of landslides along a mountain road caused by after quakes was greater than the fear of a tsunami. Such human conflicts while experiencing disasters defy glib answers.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

New online chemicals database could alter natural gas fracking debate

By Lee Fuller, Washington Examiner, Apr 19, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/2011/04/new-online-chemicals-database-could-alter-natural-gas-fracking-debate>

About My Support for Natural Gas

By Joe Nocera, NYT, Apr 15, 2011 [H/t David Manuta]

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/16/opinion/16nocera.html?_r=1&emc=eta1#

What I Learned About Natural Gas from Boone Pickens

By Rich Karlgaard, Forbes, Apr 11, 2011 [H/t Roger Cohen]

<http://blogs.forbes.com/richkarlgaard/>

[Comment by Roger Cohen: "It would take 30 years to build another [Alaskan] pipeline, says Pickens." It took 3 years to build the first one.]

BP Oil Spill and Administration Control of Drilling

Post-spill gulf environment appears to have escaped catastrophe, for now

Much of the BP oil spill's effect on the ecosystem won't be known for years, and peril remains, experts warn. Still, the Gulf of Mexico has recovered more quickly than many expected last summer.

By Bettina Boxall, LA Time, Apr 20, 2011

<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/20/nation/la-na-gulf-oil-environment-20110420>

BP to pay an initial \$1B to restore Gulf

By Andrew Restuccia, The Hill, Apr 21, 2011

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/677-e2-wire/157225-bp-agrees-to-pay-initial-1-billion-for-gulf-restoration>

[SEPP Comment: The final cost to the corporation will be immense. But no one will pay for the cost to the nation for the moratorium the Federal government implemented using BP's mismanagement as justification.]

Spill's Toll on Oil Output Grows Clearer

Drilling Pause That Followed Explosion of Deep-Water Rig Leased by BP Saps Offshore Production
By Angel Gonzalez, WSJ, Apr 20, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703789104576273300797769750.html?mod=ITP_pageone_1

[SEPP Comment: Due to the drilling moratorium, 2011 production in the Gulf is estimated to go down to 13% below 2010 levels and expected to stay below prior projections for several years. The article may be behind a pay wall.]

Gas prices and the Gulf oil spill

One year later, Obama's energy plan is 'Brazil or bust'
Editorial, Washington Times, Apr 19, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/19/gas-prices-and-the-gulf-oil-spill/>

Gulf oil disaster still puzzles scientists

By John Sutter, CNN, Apr 11

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/US/04/20/gulf.oil.environment.recap/index.html>

[SEPP Comment: An alarmist view!]

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Energy

Time To Kill Ethanol Subsidies

Editorial, IBD, Apr 19, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/569631/201104191848/Time-To-Kill-Ethanol-Subsidies.htm>

The U.S. Should Follow Europe's Lead

By Paul Driessen, Netright Daily, Apr 21, 2011

<http://netrightdaily.com/2011/04/the-u-s-should-follow-europes-lead/>

[SEPP Comment: The US has not discovered that apparently Europe is switching course.]

Biofuels market about to turn the corner

By Rudolf ten Hoedt, European Energy Review, Apr 21, 2011

<http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=2926>

[SEPP Comment: Will Brazil satisfy Europe's need for biofuels?]

Questioning the European Green

On Green Energy: A Dutch (Re)Treat

By Kenneth P. Green, The American, Apr 10, 2011 [H/t Warren Wetmore]

<http://www.american.com/archive/2011/april/on-green-energy-a-dutch-re-treat>

California Dreaming

California Dreamin' – of Jobs in Texas

By John Fund, WSJ, Apr 22, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704570704576275051374356340.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

[“Texas has added 165,000 jobs during the last three years while California has lost 1.2 million.” Article may be behind a pay wall.]

Higher Energy Costs: Factor in California Business Exodus

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Apr 18, 2011

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2011/04/18/high-energy-costs-factor-in-california-business-exodus/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Central Pacific ENSO Events

Reference: Yeh, S.-W., Kirtman, B.P., Kug, J.-S., Park, W. and Latif, M. 2011. Natural variability of the central Pacific El Niño event on multi-centennial timescales. *Geophysical Research Letters* **38**: 10.1029/2010GL045886.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/19apr2011a4.html>

A New-and-Improved 457-Year History of ENSO Variability

Reference: Braganza, K., Gergis, J.L., Power, S.B., Risbey, J.S. and Fowler, A.M. 2009. A multiproxy index of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, A.D. 1525-1982. *Journal of Geophysical Research* **114**: 10.1029/2008JD010896.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/19apr2011a5.html>

Regional Climate Change: How Well Do the IPCC Models Really Perform?

Reference: Anagnostopoulos, G.G., Koutsoyiannis, D., Christofides, A., Efstratiadis, A., and Mamassis, N. 2010. A comparison of local and aggregated climate model outputs with observed data. *Hydrological Sciences Journal* **55**: 1094-1110.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/20apr2011a1.html>

Catastrophic Superstorms of the French Mediterranean Coast

Reference: Dezileau, L., Sabatier, P., Blanchemanche, P., Joly, B., Swingedouw, D., Cassou, C., Castaings, J., Martinez, P. and Von Grafenstein, U. 2011. Intense storm activity during the Little Ice Age on the French Mediterranean coast. *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* **299**: 289-297.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/20apr2011a2.html>

The Impact of Warming on Fungal Epidemics in Lakes

Reference: Ibelings, B.W., Gsel, A.S., Mooij, W.M., van Donk, E., van den Wyngaert, S. and Domis, L.N.deS. 2011. Chytrid infections and diatom spring blooms: paradoxical effects of climate warming on fungal epidemics in lakes. *Freshwater Biology* **56**: 754-766.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/20apr2011a4.html>

A Twentieth-Century Rainfall History of India

Reference: Joshi, M.K. and Pandey, A.C. 2011. Trend and spectral analysis of rainfall over India during 1901-2000. *Journal of Geophysical Research* **116**: 10.1029/2010JD014966.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/20apr2011a5.html>

Other Scientific News

Politics of asthma have outrun the science of the condition

By R. Harold Brown, Atlanta Journal Constitution, Apr 19, 2011 [H/t Jim Rust]

<http://www.ajc.com/opinion/politics-of-asthma-have-916629.html>

[SEPP Comment: EPA claims of the causes of asthma and the methods of reducing asthma are not substantiated, thereby deceiving the public as to the cure.]

Other News that May Be Of Interest

Top 10 Environmental Scams

By Staff Writers, Human Events, Apr 23, 2011 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=43111>

Celebrate Earth Daze!

Editorial, IBD, Apr 21, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=569972&p=1>

The hippie holiday

Humanity haters bemoan life on Earth Day

Editorial, Washington Times, Apr 20, 2011 [H/t Catharine French]

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/20/the-hippie-holiday/>

A \$500 Million Dollar Car?

By Issac Martin, American Thinker, Apr 18, 2001

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/a_500_million_dollar_car.html

[SEPP Comment: Still waiting for specifications, but with \$500 Million from the Federal government, no worries. The actual total is more than what the author suggests.]

No cost-benefit studies done for Obama’s \$53 billion high-speed rail boondoggle

By Diana Furchtgott-Roth, Washington Examiner, Apr 21, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/2011/04/no-cost-benefit-studies-done-obamas-53-billion-high-speed-rail-boondoggle>

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Food shipments introduce alien species to Antarctica

Shipments of food intended for researchers working to protect one of the world's most delicate and unspoiled habitats are unwittingly posing a threat to the native animals and plants that live there.

By Richard Gray, Telegraph, UK Apr 17, 2011

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/antarctica/8455800/Food-shipments-introduce-alien-species-to-Antarctica.html>

[SEPP Comment: Humans are an alien species to Antarctica. How many, if any, who have survived a winter in Antarctic cold without modern equipment would call Antarctica one of the world’s most delicate habitats?]

Tornadoes, Climate Change and the Disaster Gap

By Bryan Walsh, Time, Apr 18, 2011 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://ecocentric.blogs.time.com/2011/04/18/tornadoes-climate-change-and-the-disaster-gap/>

[“The fastest way to reduce deaths and damage from **extreme weather events**—whether they're **tsunamis**, **tornadoes** or **asteroid strikes**—is to invest in detection, preparation and response.” (Boldface added)]

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ARTICLES:

1. The Sustainable Development Hoax

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Apr 22, 2011

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/the_sustainable_development_ho.html

“Sustainable Development” (SD) is basically a slogan without a specific meaning. Linked to Earth Day (April 22), it masquerades as a call for clean air, green energy, and suggests a pristine bucolic existence for us and our progeny -- forever. But in reality, it has become immensely useful to many groups who use the slogan to advance their own special agenda, whatever they may be.

The term itself was invented by Gro Harlem Brundtland, a Norwegian socialist politician and former prime minister. After her term there, she landed in Paris and, together with Club of Rome veteran Alexander King, began publicizing SD. Indeed, the concept is a successor to the neo-Malthusian theme of the Club of Rome, which began to take hold around 1970 and led to the notorious book "Limits to Growth." In turn, the "Limits to Growth" concept was developed a few years earlier by US geologists like Preston Cloud and King Hubbert. In a report published by a panel of the National Academy, they promoted the view that the world was running out of resources: food, fuels, and minerals. According to their views, and those of the Club of Rome and Limits to Growth, most important metals should have become unavailable before the end of the 20th century.

(King Hubbert, of course, is best known for the concept of "Peak Oil" which achieved wide-spread popularity in the past few years. Princeton geologist Kenneth Deffeyes gained fleeting fame for his book "Hubbert's Peak," which predicted that world oil production would peak in 2008. Of course, it must peak sometime, but the date will be set by economic and technological factors that are difficult to predict.)

In turn, these neo-Malthusian concerns were opposed by the so called "Cornucopians." Their leading apostle was certainly the late Julian Simon, who went somewhat overboard in the other direction. Many will remember Julian Simon's famous bet with Paul Ehrlich, the noted Stanford University doomsday prophet, concerning the unavailability of minerals by 1990. Simon won the bet but he was certainly off-base in predicting that there would be no end to crude oil on this planet. Fossil fuels, of course, are essentially non-renewable. No matter how slowly they are used up, once used up, they are gone and not replenished over any reasonable time periods.

But in a certain sense this does not matter. Oil may become depleted -- at least low-cost oil -- but its essential function is to produce energy. And there we have a variety of ways to create energy for many millennia or even longer -- based on nuclear fission.

The debate between neo-Malthusians and Cornucopians came to a head in a 1969 symposium of the AAAS, published as a book titled "Is there an optimal level of population?" Both sides recognized that population levels and growth rates are equally important in discussing the possible depletion of resources. Those proposing larger populations, like Julian Simon, seemed oblivious also to the environmental costs that would rise rapidly as the natural ability of the environment to absorb waste is exceeded.

But all this is history. SD lives on because it is useful in selling various policies. Some examples are:

- 1) Restrictions on the use of fossil fuels, under the guise of "saving the climate"
- 2) Transfers of resources to less developed nations - now justified for climate reasons (but of course, quite contrary to resource conservation)
- 3) Striving for world government and UN sovereignty -- all for "sustainability",
- 4) Promoting a green energy future, using a solar and wind,
- 5) Advocating negative population growth, etc.

Among the worst policies being pushed with the help of SD is a scheme called Contraction and Convergence (C & C). The idea is that every human is entitled to emit the same amount of CO2. This of course translates into every being on earth using the same amount of energy -- and, by inference, having the same income. In other words, C & C is basically a policy for a giant global income redistribution.

Since the SD concept has been popularized, it has become a fashionable topic for research papers, especially in the social sciences. We may yet live to see the day when trendy universities establish programs to teach SD -- and eventually even departments of SD and endowed academic chairs. Never underestimate the drive for expansion in the academic world.

For Earth Day 2011, the National Association of Scholars, composed mostly of Conservative-leaning academics, released a Statement that critiques the campus sustainability movement. NAS president Peter Wood said:

"Sustainability sounds like a call for recycling and clean drinking water. But its proponents are much more ambitious. For them, a sustainable society is one that replaces the market economy with top-down regulation. They present students a frightening story in which the earth is on the brink of disaster and immediate action is needed. This is a tactic aimed at silencing critics, shutting down debate, and mobilizing students who never get the opportunity to hear opposing views."

Here are some excerpts from the Statement itself:

"Sustainability" is one of the key words of our time. We are six years along in the United Nations' "[Decade of Education for Sustainable Development](#)." In the United States, 677 colleges and universities presidents have committed themselves to a sustainability-themed "[Climate Commitment](#)." Sustainability is, by a large measure, the most popular social movement today in American higher education. It is, of course, not just a campus movement, but also a ubiquitous presence in the K-12 curriculum, and a staple of community groups, political platforms, appeals to consumers, and corporate policy.

The sustainability movement arrived on campuses mainly at the invitation of college presidents and administrative staff in areas such as student activities and [residence life](#). That means that it largely escaped the scrutiny of faculty members and that it continues to enjoy a position of unearned authority. In many instances, the movement advances by administrative fiat, backed up by outside advocacy groups and students recruited for their zeal in promoting the cause. Agenda-driven organizations-such as the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) and the [American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#)(ACUPCC)-have taken advantage of academic sensibilities to turn sustainability into what is in many cases, a campus fetish. Sustainability also gets promoted by resort to pledges, games, competitions, and a whole variety of psychological gimmicks that bypass serious intellectual inquiry.

Some results are relatively trivial. For example, at certain institutions, [cafeteria trays have been banned](#) to save food, water, and energy, leaving students and staff to juggle dishes, cups, and utensils as they move between counters and tables. Many campuses have also banned the sale of disposable [bags] to reduce plastic waste. Yet however laughable, such petty annoyances have a sinister penumbra. They advertise a willingness to bully that creates a more generalized climate of intimidation, spilling over into other domains.

In practice, this means that sustainability is used as a means of promoting to students a view that capitalism and individualism are "unsustainable," morally unworthy, and a present danger to the future of the planet.

Fascination with decline and ruin are nothing new in Western thought. The sustainability movement combines a bureaucratic and regulatory impulse with an updated version of the Romantics' preoccupation with the end of civilization, and with hints of the Christian apocalyptic tradition. These are the "end times" in the view of some sustainability advocates—or potentially so in the eyes of many others. The movement has its own versions of sin and redemption, and in many other respects has a [quasi-religious character](#). For some of the adherents, the earth itself is treated as a sentient deity; others content themselves with the search for the transcendent in Nature.

As a creed among creeds, sustainability constitutes an upping of the ideological ante. Feminism, Afro-centrism, gay-liberation, and various other recent fads and doctrines, whatever else they were, were secular, speaking merely to politics and culture. The sustainability movement reaches beyond that, having nothing less than the preservation of life on earth at its heart.

The religious creeds of faculty members and students are their own business, but we have reason for concern when dogmatic beliefs are smuggled into the curriculum and made a basis for campus programs as though they were mere extensions of scientific facts.

The sustainability movement is, in a word, unsustainable. It runs too contrary to the abiding purposes of higher education; it is too rife with internal contradictions; and it is too contrary to the environmental, economic, and social facts to endure indefinitely.

Atmospheric physicist S. Fred Singer is Professor Emeritus of Environmental Sciences at the University of Virginia and founding director of the US Weather Satellite Service. He is a Fellow of the Heartland Institute and the Independent Institute. His book "Unstoppable Global Warming - Every 1500 Years" (Rowman & Littlefield, 2007) presents the evidence for natural climate cycles of warming and cooling and became a New York Times best-seller. He is the organizer and chairman of NIPCC (Non-governmental International Panel on Climate Change), whose reports reach conclusions that contradict those of the UN-supported IPCC. Other books he has written or edited, including a monograph on the price of world oil, deal with energy and similar resource topics.

2. Oil Without Apologies

By Kimberley Strassel, WSJ, Apr 16, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704013604576248881417246502.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

["What I see are people who want affordable energy," says Mr. Watson. "They want strong environmental standards—they want a lot of things—but first and foremost they want affordable energy. And if you want affordable energy, you want oil, gas and coal."]

It's the day after President Obama delivered his most recent vision of America's energy future, and I'm sitting in the sunny corporate offices of Chevron, the country's second-largest oil company. Let's just say John Watson has a different view.

The Chevron CEO is a rare breed these days: an unapologetic oil man. For decades—going back to Jimmy Carter—politicians have been peddling an America free of fossil fuels. Mr. Obama has taken that

to an unprecedented level, closing off more acreage to drilling, pouring money into green energy, pushing new oil company taxes, instituting anticarbon regulations. America is going backward on affordable energy, even as oil hits \$110 a barrel.

Enter the tall, bespectacled Mr. Watson, who a little more than a year ago stepped into the shoes of longtime CEO David O'Reilly. An economist by training, soft-spoken by nature, the 53-year-old Mr. Watson is hardly some swaggering wildcatter. Yet in a year of speeches, he has emerged as one of the industry's foremost energy realists. No "Beyond Petroleum" (BP) for him. On energy, he says, America "has a lot to learn."

Starting with the argument—so popular among greens and Democrats—that we are running out of oil. "Peak oil"—the theory that global oil production will soon hit maximum levels and begin to decline—is a favorite among this crowd, and it is one basis for their call for more biofuels and solar power. Mr. Watson doesn't dismiss the idea but explains why it remains largely irrelevant.

In theory, he says, "we've been running out of oil and gas for a long time," yet technology creates new opportunities. Mr. Watson cites a Chevron field long in decline down the road in Bakersfield—to the point that for every 100 barrels of oil "in place," the company was extracting only 10 or 20. But thanks to a new technology called steam flooding, Chevron is now getting 70 to 80 barrels. "Price creates incentive, and energy will be developed if there's demand for it at the price you can develop it," Mr. Watson says. In that sense, "oil and gas are plentiful."

Don't believe it? Over the past 30 years, even as "peak oil" was a trendy theme, the world's proven reserves of oil and natural gas increased 130%, to 2.5 trillion barrels.

Or consider America's latest energy innovation: hydrofracking for abundant and cheap natural gas. This advance, says Mr. Watson, took even the industry "by surprise"—as evidenced by the many U.S. ports to import liquid natural gas that are now "sitting idle." Chevron last year paid \$3.2 billion to buy natural-gas producer Atlas Energy as its foray into this new market.

Mr. Watson has little time for the Beltway fiction that America will soon be able to do without, or nearly without, fossil fuels. Yes, "we need all forms of energy." But the world consumes 250 million barrels of energy equivalent today, only a "tiny fraction of which" is wind and solar—and even those "are not affordable at scale," he says.

As for biofuels, "we would need to consume land the size of states" to hit the country's current ethanol targets. Chevron is investigating biofuels, but Mr. Watson says the "economics aren't there" yet. Unlike many CEOs, Mr. Watson insists on products that can prosper without federal subsidies, which he believes are costly and lacking in transparency when "consumer pockets are tight, government pockets are tight."

Bottom line: "We're going to need oil and gas and coal for a long time if America wants to keep the lights on."

He seems to mean it, too: Chevron recently announced the largest capital and exploratory budget in its history, \$26 billion to drill in Australia, Western Africa and the Gulf of Thailand, among other places. Some of that cash will go to the Gulf of Mexico, though Mr. Watson wishes there were more U.S. opportunities.

"Most of the well-developed world—Australia, Western Europe—they develop their resources base, they inventory it, they develop it, and they view it as a good source of jobs and revenue," he says. The U.S.? "We are a country" that for too long has taken "affordable energy for granted."

The Chevron exec was "pleased" to see Mr. Obama acknowledge that "oil and gas were fuels of the future—because I hadn't heard that before. That's a significant step." Looking to reassure Americans about rising gas prices, the president nonetheless resorted to the old standby of calling for a one-third reduction in U.S. oil imports by 2025. Mr. Watson thinks that's a fine goal, but he points to the enormous disconnect between what the president is proposing and existing policies.

The only conceivable way to meet that goal is by dramatically increasing U.S. oil production—immediately. The White House recently bragged that last year American oil production hit its highest levels since 2003. What it failed to mention is that it takes years for leases to start producing, so credit for last year's surge goes to the Bush administration.

But what about the BP Gulf spill? Mr. Watson blames the "cultural aspects and behavioral aspects" of the particular drilling rig that exploded. He roundly disagrees with the finding of Mr. Obama's spill commission that the "root causes" of the spill were "systemic" to the industry.

"There is no evidence to support that. I don't know how that conclusion was reached. I know the industry has drilled 14,000 deep water wells without having this sort of problem." As for the moratorium, "I can understand taking a pause. I can't understand shutting down a whole industry for a better part of a year."

Chevron has three deep water rigs in the Gulf, so the ban cost it millions of dollars in idle rigs and lost jobs. For the country, says Mr. Watson, it means "less oil." Offshore drilling takes years of lead time. Mr. Watson cites Chevron's Gulf "Tahiti" project, which started producing about 18 months ago. It has taken "the better part of a decade to do the seismic work, drill the exploratory wells, evaluate those wells, drill other development wells, to delineate it, to build the facilities and to place the oil wells online," he explains.

The endless moratorium has already meant that "if you go out to the middle of the decade, there are already 200,000 to 300,000 barrels a day of oil that aren't going to be produced that year. . . . That won't be retrieved." And the lost production number is getting larger, since the new Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management is still dallying on permits—and those primarily for backlogged projects, not new leases.

Democrats are now arguing, as Mr. Obama did in his speech, that the oil industry already "holds tens of millions of acres of leases where it's not producing a drop." Some are advocating "use it or lose it," calling for the government to strip oil companies of their leases if they don't immediately start producing.

Mr. Watson explains why this is bogus. Only one-third of Chevron's offshore leases are classified as "producing" oil and gas today. The other two-thirds either are "unsuccessful" (they don't hold viable oil or gas) or "are in varying stages of development—seismic work, drilling wells, constructing facilities." Mr. Watson says companies would be crazy to sit on productive lands, since leases require costly bonus payments and annual rental payments to the government.

If Washington institutes Mr. Obama's "use it or lose it" policy, Mr. Watson says, it will mean less U.S. oil production. And how does this help Mr. Obama with his goal of reducing imported oil?

As for soaring oil prices, Mr. Watson blames growing demand, tighter supply, Mideast uncertainty and inflation. He doesn't predict future price trends, though during a recent analyst call he warned that the drilling moratorium would only make them higher. Lost production in the Gulf is "going to represent a sizable chunk of the spare capacity that the industry expects to see. And that will impact prices, and that will retard economic growth."

The economy is also why Mr. Watson won't pay the usual energy CEO lip service to new carbon regulations. The cap-and-trade bill the House passed in 2009 was "poorly conceived and it collapsed under its own weight for good reason," he notes.

The EPA move to regulate carbon is no better: "It's not why the Clean Air Act was put in place, and it doesn't seem to be the right way to attack concerns about greenhouse gas emissions," he says. The EPA is "placing huge new regulatory burdens on industries that are import sensitive." The regulations will place burdens on refineries, putting "their competitiveness at risk, and ultimately we'll produce less gasoline here and end up importing it from refineries that are less energy efficient overseas."

Mr. Watson says Americans can accomplish a great deal with "affordable conservation." And "a wealthy economy," he adds, "is better able to deal with the costs of greenhouse gas abatement than a poor economy." Since "large numbers" of countries are "unlikely to take aggressive action on greenhouse gas emissions," the "U.S. is going to have to decide, just as California is going to have to decide, if they want to go it alone. . . . Are they willing to place the burden on our economy and our consumers, at the expense of jobs?"

That pretty much sums up the broader choice America faces on energy policy. It can listen to the Washington siren song on alternative energy, pouring scarce dollars into green subsidies, driving up the cost of energy, and driving out U.S. manufacturing and jobs. Or it can embrace our own fossil fuel resources, which are cheap and plentiful.

"What I see are people who want affordable energy," says Mr. Watson. "They want strong environmental standards—they want a lot of things—but first and foremost they want affordable energy. And if you want affordable energy, you want oil, gas and coal."

3. Hold the accolades on China's 'green leap forward'

By Bjorn Lomborg, Washington Post, Apr 20, 2011 [H/t David Manuta]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/hold-the-accolades-on-chinas-green-leap-forward/2011/04/19/AFLdZMEE_story.html?wpisrc=emailtoafriend

As the world's factory floor, China is not an obvious environmental leader. It is beleaguered by severe pollution and generates more carbon emissions than any other nation. Yet many have trumpeted it as an emerging "green giant" for its non-carbon-based energy production and its aggressive promises to cut carbon emissions. New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman described China's "green leap forward" as "the most important thing to happen" at the end of the first decade of the 21st century.

But the facts do not support this "green" success story.

China indeed invests more than any other nation in environmentally friendly energy production: \$34 billion in 2009, or twice as much as the United States. Almost all of its investment, however, is spent producing green energy for Western nations that pay heavy subsidies for consumers to use solar panels and wind turbines.

China was responsible for half of the world's production of solar panels in 2010, but only 1 percent was installed there. Just as China produces everything from trinkets to supertankers, it is exporting green technology — which makes it a giant of manufacturing, not of environmental friendliness.

In wind power, China both produces and consumes. In 2009, it put up about a third of the world's new wind turbines. But much of this has been for show. A 2008 Citigroup analysis found that about one-third of China's wind power assets were not in use. Many turbines are not connected to the transmission grid.

Chinese power companies built wind turbines that they didn't use as the cheapest way of satisfying — on paper — government requirements to boost renewable energy capacity.

Consider the bigger picture: 87 percent of the energy produced in China comes from fossil fuels, the vast majority of it from coal, the International Energy Agency found in 2010.

The explosive recent growth in Chinese solar and wind generation equates to going from zilch to a small fraction: Wind today generates just 0.05 percent of China's energy, and solar is responsible for one-half of one-thousandth of 1 percent.

The avoided carbon emissions from all of China's solar and wind generation — even maintained over the entire century — would lower temperatures in 2100 by 0.00002 degrees Fahrenheit. That is the equivalent, based on mainstream climate models, of delaying temperature rises at the end of the century by around five hours.

Of course, proponents argue that China has promised to do much more: It vowed to cut carbon intensity (the amount of emissions produced per dollar of gross domestic product) 40 to 45 percent by 2020. But this is essentially promising to do nothing new: IEA projections, using expected growth and development and absent any new policies, show carbon intensity already on track to fall 40 percent. Even with this reduction, by 2020 China will have quadrupled its emissions from 1990.

China also aims for non-fossil-fuel energy sources to account for 11.4 percent of primary energy consumption by 2015. At best, this is a promise to slide backward merely slowly. Today, China gets 13 percent of its energy from non-fossil fuels, particularly biomass and hydropower, with a little nuclear energy and a minuscule amount of solar and wind power.

The reason China does not use more wind and solar power is simple: Even when mass-produced with cheap labor, solar panels and wind turbines are not cost-effective replacements for fossil fuels. They appear so in the West only where politicians create generous subsidies for their implementation.

There is, however, a mostly untold story from China that shows an area where the promise of a “green future” is not without foundation. China leads the world in the production of solar heaters. This industry doesn't receive subsidies because it doesn't need them: Solar heating is cost-effective.

Heat constitutes almost half of global energy demand, much of it from households wanting to cook, heat water or warm their environments. Solar heaters can heat water cheaply — at about one-quarter the price of an electric water heater. In China, solar heaters provide four times more energy than wind turbines. Exports of this product bring in more than \$6 billion a year.

Because solar heaters are cheaper than fossil fuel heating, consumers don't need to be paid large subsidies to use them.

This is the green lesson China holds: A green future will result not from subsidizing immature technology today but from developing competitive green technology that is effective and cheap. Wind and solar power are not yet competitive. Research would be a much better investment for Western countries than subsidizing imports of today's green technology from China. Until we can make alternative energy technology effective and affordable for everybody, there will be no happy ending to the “green” success story.

Bjorn Lomborg is director of the Copenhagen Consensus Center and the author of “Cool It: The Skeptical Environmentalist’s Guide to Global Warming.”

4. Home truths

Editorial, Nature, Apr 20 2011

http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v472/n7343/full/472260a.html?WT.ec_id=NATURE-20110421

*[SEPP Comment: Part of the analysis on the failure of cap-and-trade in the US is correct. The part ignored by Nature, is that **Nature** itself refused to cooperate.]*

In just over six months' time, officials from the world's nations will meet under the auspices of the United Nations to try again to complete the task that was beyond them in Copenhagen in 2009, to establish a legally binding treaty to curb global warming. It is hard to see why it could go any better this time — if anything, the global economic slump and the failure to pass cap-and-trade legislation in the United States will make it even harder. A report published this week in the United States does an excellent job of probing the reasons for this stalemate, and shines light on some uncomfortable truths. It should be essential reading for anyone with a passing interest in the climate-change debate.

The report, *Climate Shift: Clear Vision for the Next Decade of Public Debate*, is written by Matthew Nisbet, a professor of communication and environmental science at American University in Washington DC. It focuses on the situation in the United States, and particularly its political failure to pass comprehensive climate legislation. But the points it makes go far beyond Capitol Hill. And it effectively dismantles three of the most common reasons given by those who have tried, and failed, to garner widespread support for policies to restrict greenhouse gases.

First — the failure of the US Senate to pass a cap-and-trade bill in 2010 cannot be blamed directly on the financial lobbying muscle of the conservative movement and its allies in industry. In 2009, the report says, although a network of prominent opponents of cap and trade, including ExxonMobil and Koch Industries, spent a total of US\$272 million lobbying policy-makers, environmental groups in favour of cap and trade mobilized \$229 million from companies such as General Electric and other supporters to lobby for environmental issues. Indeed, the effort to pass cap and trade, Nisbet notes, “may have been the best-financed political cause in American history”.

Second — most of the mainstream media coverage of climate change gets it right. During 2009 and 2010, Nisbet writes, around nine out of ten news and opinion articles in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and CNN's online site reflected the consensus scientific position. *The Wall Street Journal* regularly presented the opposite view in its opinion pages, but eight out of ten news items still backed the science.

Third — conservative media outlets such as Fox News and controversies such as the coverage of e-mails hacked from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom have a minimal impact on public attitudes to climate change, because such influences tend to only reinforce the views of those who already hold doubts.

The failure of cap and trade in the United States, Nisbet concludes, was not down to poor communication, but was due to framing the issue of greenhouse-gas emissions as a problem that could be solved by a specific policy. More useful, he says, would be to present climate change as an issue that needs to be addressed at many levels, similar to public health or poverty. Those, of course, are far from ideal models — but we live in far from ideal times.

5. Nature not listening to climate alarmists

By Roger Cohen, Letter, Durango Herald, Apr 14, 2010

<http://www.durangoherald.com/article/20110415/OPINION03/704159945/Nature-not-listening-to-climate-alarmists>

Three years have passed since Dr. Richard Grossman and I lodged our “gentlemen’s bet” (we each donated \$5,000 to support Durango Nature Studies) on the course of world climate over a 10-year period. So it seems timely to give a brief update on what the Earth has been doing.

The Earth has cooled slightly during the last three years, compared to the previous three years (the betting base). This reflects the temperature flatline over the last 15 years or so, as Mother Nature refuses to adhere to the alarmist global warming script. Indeed, it appears that we may be in an extended slow-cooling period.

This was not supposed to happen, but alarmists just don’t have the science right. Human influence on climate exists but is small; natural variations dominate the climate.

This is not the first time that bad science has run amok and created great mischief. The famous 19th-century German biologist Ernst Haeckel developed an elaborate theory of human races, including the superiority of the “Caucasian race.” His views, which enjoyed considerable support from the European scientific establishment, reinforced and expanded European “scientific racism” well into the 20th century, with catastrophic results. Not just Europe: Early 20th-century America was first to practice eugenics with compulsory sterilization programs.

Ask a former Soviet citizen about the impact of Lysenkoism on that society. After decades of failed pseudoscience, Lysenko’s politically driven agricultural practices were finally abandoned because they did not agree with nature. Indeed, climate hysteria is our modern Lysenkoism, the result of aberrant social and political theories masquerading as science.

But delusions persist among the deluded. Now, the La Plata Climate and Energy Action Plan tells us that our county can help control the Earth’s climate and improve our economy via increased energy costs, higher taxes, enforced life-style regulation and by generally making our region less competitive than regions and countries without such fetishes.

This defies common sense and experience. Enacting it will do the opposite of everything it claims. But like Scrooge’s Ghost, this future does not have to be. We can choose otherwise.

6. When Scientists Confuse Cause and Effect

By Matt Ridley, WSJ, Apr 16, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703385404576258783367180312.html#articleTabs%3Darticle>

Scientists like to remind us not to confuse cause and effect. But they're not immune from making that mistake themselves. Last week, for example, a flurry of sociological headlines emanating from a conference included the claim that elderly Taiwanese people who shop every day are 27% less likely to die over 10 years than those who shop once a week; and the claim that 16-year-olds who read books at least once a month are more likely to be in managerial jobs at 33 than those who read no books at 16. It would be tempting but rash to conclude that shopping prevents death, rather than that ill health prevents shopping; or that reading causes career success rather than that a scholarly aptitude causes both reading and career success.

The nature-nurture debate has long been bedeviled by cause-effect confusion, as exemplified by the old joke: I'm not surprised that Johnny comes from a broken home; he would be enough to break any home.

Whole districts of Freudian theory are confused about cause and effect. For example, the incest taboo, forbidding people from mating with close relatives, turned out on closer investigation to be a codified expression of, rather than a cause of, incest avoidance. As Freud's rival Edward Westermarck argued, there's an innate tendency to develop revulsion at the idea of sex with close childhood contemporaries (who usually are siblings). A taboo turns this into a rule.

Nor is medicine immune. Some years ago epidemiologists found that women taking hormone replacement therapy had fewer heart attacks, but controlled trials found that HRT caused more heart attacks. It turned out that the women taking HRT in the epidemiological study were from higher socio-economic classes, so they ate and exercised better. Class caused both HRT and fewer heart attacks.

Even climate science has encountered cause-effect confusion. When in 1999 Antarctic ice cores revealed carbon-dioxide concentrations and temperature marching in lockstep over 400,000 years, many—including me— found this a convincing argument for attributing past climate change to carbon dioxide. (About 95% of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is natural, coming from the exhalations of living things. In the past, carbon-dioxide levels rose as the earth warmed at the end of ice ages and fell as it cooled at the end of interglacial periods.)

Then four years later came clear evidence from finer-grained analysis of ice cores that temperature changes *preceded* carbon-dioxide changes by at least 800 years. Effects cannot precede their causes by eight centuries, so temperatures must drive carbon dioxide, chiefly by warming the sea and causing carbon dioxide dissolved in water to "out-gas" into the air.

Climate scientists fell back on a "feedback" hypothesis, arguing that an initial change, probably caused by variations in the earth's orbit that affect the warmth of the sun, was then amplified by changes in carbon-dioxide levels. But this made the attribution argument circular and left the reversal of the trend after a period of warming (when amplification should be at its strongest) still harder to explain. If carbon dioxide is still driving the temperature upward but it falls instead, then other factors must be stronger than expected.

Some climate scientists see cause-effect confusion at the heart of climate modeling. Roy Spencer of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration argues from satellite data that the conventional view has one thing backward. Changes in cloud cover are often seen as consequences of changes in temperature. But what if the amount of cloud cover changes spontaneously, for reasons still unclear, and then alters the temperature of the world by reflecting or absorbing sunlight? That is to say, the clouds would be more cause than consequence. Not many agree with Mr. Spencer, but it is an intriguing idea.

7. A Statute Beyond Congress's Control

By Chris Horner, Letter, WSJ, Apr 20, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703551304576260851546798930.html?mod=ITP_opinion_1

Let me get Sen. Jim Webb's argument straight ("[Rockefeller Bill Was Our Best Hope.](#)" Letters, April 13). He writes that for Congress to amend the Clean Air Act to return it to the way it was written and interpreted for 35 years—until the Supreme Court in *Massachusetts v. EPA* said it actually means something very different—would be in "violation of the Supreme Court holding" in that case. Separation of powers, like the Constitution itself, truly is a thing of the past in some quarters.

A legislator, of all people, argues that when the Court speaks on the meaning of a statute, that reading is locked in amber, and that no matter if a majority in Congress disagree, or simply want to change the law for whatever reason, the peoples' representatives are hog-tied. I suppose repeal is out of the question.

Justice Antonin Scalia noted in his dissent that this opinion apparently delivered on stone tablets "defies common sense."

Perpetual motion machines remain elusive, but now we have the notion of the perpetual statute which, once written and interpreted, can never be pruned, only expanded by the unelected. How ironic then that it is the environmentalists who ritually invoke the specter of Frankenstein, of unleashing horrors on the world which slip the bonds of human control.

8. THE CARBON TAX

By Prof Cliff Ollier, School of Earth and Environment, U. of Western Australia, Poem, Apr 2011

No URL

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

We'll stop warming, have no fears,
(Maybe take a thousand years).
Like Canute we'll stop the waves.
Make sure that the sea behaves.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

Drought and floods will all be gone
(Miss Mackellar please move on).
Cyclones, bushfires, locusts, pests,
Carbon Tax will put to rest.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

Carbon's nasty, so they say
(scientists, within our pay)
So we tax it through the nose
Don't ask where the money goes.

Ministers for this and that,
Lots and lots of bureaucrats
Wish to use the Carbon Tax,
So pay up, and just relax.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

All the horrors we endure
Carbon Tax is sure to cure.
We will fix them, bye and bye,
Were we ever known to lie?

Notes for Non-Australians.

Our government proposes to introduce a Carbon Tax, after promising it would not do so at the last election.

*Canute was a king (around AD 1000) who commanded the tide to stop rising.
Dorothea McKellar wrote a great iconic poem about Australia that includes:
I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.*

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