

The Week That Was: 2012-08-11 (August 11, 2012)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim.* – George Santayana, *Life of Reason* (1905)

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Number of the Week: £124 Billion v. £13 Billion

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THIS WEEK:

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

Summer Hearings: As mentioned last week, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held an August 1 hearing titled “Update on the Latest Climate Change Science and Local Adaptation Measures” and Senator Boxer’s questioning of John Christy was worthwhile watching. She was trying to bait Christy into improper or inaccurate statements and Christy was not biting. Senator Boxer brought up the new study by Anthony Watts, et al., which was part of Christy’s written testimony. When Christy explained the bias in the surface thermometers, Boxer immediately asked are people lying, who was guilty? Apparently the concept of instrument bias is unknown to her. She then asked if the Watts et al. study was peer review and Christy confirmed it was not.

Then Senator Boxer showed a report by the California Climate Change Center titled “Our Changing Climate 2012” and asked Christy if he had seen it and Christy stated he may have seen an earlier draft. At this point Boxer commented the study came out the day before [just in time for the hearing]. Boxer emphasized that the study was based on over 30 peer reviewed studies and question why shouldn’t state and local officials accept this report rather than the Watt’s team study. Here Christy excelled. He pointed out that just released study probably does not contain his peer reviewed papers on climate change in California which show no change in snowfall for over 100 years and which show contamination of the surface temperature data.

She countered by asking isn’t Christy in the 1 to 2% of the scientists who do not agree with global warming as stated in a recent poll. Christy pointed out that the poll was based on 77 respondents and that the questions were “milk toast.” Do you agree that climate change is happening, and is the world is warming? He would probably have responded affirmatively. The poll is not meaningful. This episode was ignored in many articles reporting on the hearing. It shows how deceitful opinion polls of scientific issues can be. Christy’s comments can be found starting about 130 on the Archived Flash Video at:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Choose&Hearing_id=c0293eca-802a-23ad-4706-02abdbf7f7c3

During the hearing, the current drought and the recent heat wave in the US were emphasized by the Democrats and their witnesses. In the 1930s, particularly in 1934 & 1936, the US had a more extreme drought that lasted several years (the Dust Bowl) and a worse heat wave in terms of setting state-wide record temperatures. (Christy produced a chart similar to Figure 25 in http://www.sepp.org/publications/NIPCC_final.pdf)

One can speculate how senators would have reacted then if many government-funded scientists proposed that the drought and heat wave were caused by carbon dioxide emissions and, in response, a government agency (EPA today) was forcing the closure of coal-fired power plants.

Many of the Senators of that time would have remembered what a benefit the electrification of America was and that many Americans without electricity were then demanding the expansion of the grid with coal-fired central plants. The dominant fuel was coal as it was from about 1885 when it exceeded wood to about 1950 when it was eclipsed by petroleum (today a transportation fuel). Most likely, the Senators of that day would have been horrified by the suggestion that burning coal was causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming, and droughts. They would have demanded hard proof rather than speculation. Times have changed. Many politicians do not recognize what life was like before affordable, reliable electricity.

The Watts Team: In discussing the work of the Watts team last week, TWTW did not report that the airport temperature data was excluded because the current instruments in use give unrealistically high readings. The team also reports that it is working on the Time of Observation Bias. If a warming bias is still confirmed, it applies to only a small part of the earth's surface. However, other surface temperature would have to be checked for such a bias. The findings of Steirou and Koutsoyiannis indicate it is a global problem. (TWTW 12-07-21)

The BEST Affair: One of the amusing items coming out of reports on the BEST temperature findings is the emphasis many reporting entities placed on the fact that BEST was partially funded by the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation (\$150,000 out of \$623,087 for the first phase). This is amusing because many of these reporting entities often accuse (often wrongly) other entities of receiving funds from coal, oil, and gas interests, when they disagree with the Climate Establishment (John Christy's term). Koch Industries is the second largest private corporation in the US and is heavily involved in fossil fuels. Once again, the BEST affair demonstrates that the source of funding does not necessarily influence the results. For link please see:

<http://berkeleyearth.org/donors/>

Other Surface Temperature Data: Roy Spencer posted a new analysis of US temperature trends since 1943 using only stations that report four times at daily, at specific times. This data set is from only about 50 stations, but is roughly equally distributed throughout the country. The data set avoids the Time of Observation Bias. When tested for the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect using population as the proxy, it appears that UHI gives a warming bias. Please see links under Measurement Issues.

Hyperbole by Hansen: James Hansen of NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies made another media splash by announcing his surface data confirms that climate change is worse than he thought when he testified at the famous Senate Hearing in 1988. Yet, Mother Nature failed to fulfill his predictions. Somewhat surprisingly, the New York Times article on Hansen's announcement included comments by Martin Hoerling of NOAA dismissing the Hansen's findings.

Among other issues, the findings ignore the 1930s, the Southern Hemisphere, and temperature trends after 1999. Hansen uses a normal (Gaussian) distribution for climate events. Contrary to

his statements, if warming causes a shift in the distribution, that extreme cooling should become more unlikely.

The timing of the NASA press release was curious. It was posted by a Kathryn Hansen (relationship unknown) a few hours after the successful landing of the new Mars exploration rover. Perhaps this is something the “Right Climate Stuff” team will explore. Please see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and Defending the Orthodoxy.

Environment Defense Fund: Craig Idso wrote a powerful response to an op-ed by Fred Krupp of the Environmental Defense Fund that appeared in the Wall Street Journal. Craig, of course, is an editor of the reports from the Nongovernment International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). Please see link under Challenging the Orthodoxy and the Krupp article as Article #3 .

Madrid 1995: Bernie Lewin completed his history of what he terms the Last Day of Climate Science. It is a three part analysis on how, in Lewin’s view, the integrity of the scientific process of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was abandoned to expedite a political end. This included the insertion of a distinct human fingerprint in the Summary for Policymakers that was not agreed upon in prior drafts and was inconsistent with the scientific chapter (which was subsequently changed). Please see link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Post Normal Science? Last week Judith Curry carried an essay justifying what is called Post Normal Science, but not necessarily agreeing with it. Roy Spencer has a thoughtful rebuttal of the very concept. Please see link under Seeking a Common Ground.

New York Review of Books: Fred Singer and economist William Nordhaus have exchanged views in the highly influential NYRB. Please see Articles #1 & #2.

Merchants of What? Naomia Oreskes is on tour in Australia touting her personal attack on four distinguished scientists (two of whom were founders of SEPP). On her blog, Jo Nova posted devastating comments on Oreskes. It is indicative of the Climate Establishment that it should accept Oreskes as its climate science historian. She and her fellow author did not even get basic history correct. They attacked several scientists for exaggerating the military power of the Soviet Union because everyone knew that its economy could not sustain it. This is simply backwards. When President Reagan proposed an anti-ballistic missile system, many economists, including the venerated Paul Samuelson, declared that the Soviet Union would match the US because its economy was comparable to that of the US. They used the military power of the Soviet Union as proof of its economic power. A simple check of early 1980s economic text books will verify Oreskes’ false history.

Amplifications and Corrections: The report from an independent commission investigating the Fukushima nuclear disaster stated that Unit 1 was damaged by the earthquake as well as the tsunami, contradicting the earlier report from the power company stating it was from the tsunami alone. Please see link under Nuclear Energy and Fears.

The many boutique blends of summer gasoline in the US (usually required between May 1 and September 15) are not solely the result of US EPA regulations, but also the result of local and regional regulations. The purpose is not only to reduce exhaust emissions, but also to reduce

summertime evaporation, which contributes to air pollution. (The evaporation potential is measured by the Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) index. These regulations lead to structural rigidity in the distribution of gasoline and regional variation in price. Over the past 50 years, the general improvement in summer air quality in the US is significant. However, with the development of much tighter controls of gasoline tank caps, filling procedures, tailpipe standards, etc., the benefits of the boutique requirements are probably marginal. A search of the web failed to find any current cost-benefit analysis of the various summer blends.

<http://www.theoildrum.com/story/2006/9/13/234043/431> (September 15, 2006)

http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/bureaucratic-gas_634424.html?page=3 (April 2, 2012)

Number of the Week: £124 Billion v. £13 Billion. Professor Gordon Hughes authored a study on the U.K. Government's target for renewable energy (wind) which he submitted to the House of Commons Energy and Climate Change Committee on behalf of the Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF). As quoted by Andrew Montford: "Meeting the UK Government's target for renewable generation in 2020 will require total wind capacity of 36 GW backed up by 21 GW of open cycle gas plants plus large complementary investments in transmission capacity. Allowing for the shorter life of wind turbines, the investment outlay for this Wind scenario will be about £124 billion. The same electricity demand could be met from 21.5 GW of combined cycle gas plants with a capital cost of £13 billion."

No doubt, some energy analysts would think the good professor is too generous to wind power with only a 58% back-up requirement and believe a 100% back-up is necessary. No doubt, some politicians would think the good professor does not understand the imperative of green jobs. Please see links under Questioning European Green.

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ARTICLES:

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

1. The Climate Contrarians

By S. Fred Singer, reply by William D. Nordhaus, New York Review of Books, Aug 16, 2012
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/aug/16/climate-contrarians/?pagination=false>

2. Informal Comments to Editor of the New York Review of Books

By S. Fred Singer, to Editor of the NYRB, Aug 8, 2012
[http://www.sepp.org/key_issues/Informal Comments to Editor of the New York Review of Books.pdf](http://www.sepp.org/key_issues/Informal_Comments_to_Editor_of_the_New_York_Review_of_Books.pdf)

3. A New Climate-Change Consensus

It's time for conservatives to compete with liberals to devise the best, most cost-effective climate solutions.

By Fred Krupp, WSJ, Aug 6, 2012 [H/t Roger Cohen]
[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444320704577569231537988226.html?mod=WSJ Opinion LEADTop](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444320704577569231537988226.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEADTop)

4. When 600 Million People Lost Power

With constant electricity shortages, India won't abandon coal any time soon.

By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Aug 5, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390443687504577565041028069420.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

5. Heat waves are not new or unprecedented

By Charles Battig, Letter to Editor, Times-Dispatch, Aug 9, 2012

<http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/letters-to-the-editor/2012/aug/09/tdopin01-letters-to-the-editor-ar-2118186/>

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

Don't mention the Peer Review! New Zealand's NIWA bury the Australian review

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Aug 7, 2012

<http://joannenova.com.au/2012/08/dont-mention-the-peer-review-new-zealands-niwa-bury-the-australian-review/#more-23150>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Madrid 1995: The Last Day of Climate Science

By Bernie Lewin, Enthusiasm, Scepticism and Science, Aug 7, 2012 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://enthusiasmscepticismscience.wordpress.com/2012/08/07/madrid-1995-the-last-day-of-climate-science/#more-820>

You call this 'compromise'?

By Craig Idso, American Thinker, Aug 8, 2012

http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2012/08/you_call_this_compromise.html

The Perspective of a Lifetime on Atmospheric Modeling

By Anthony J. Sadar, American Thinker, Aug 4, 2012

http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/08/the_perspective_of_a_lifetime_on_atmospheric_modeling.html

[SEPP Comment: Results of air quality models are not reliable after a brief time yet they are coupled with climate models.]

Climate Distortion

By Cliff Mass, his Weather Blog, Aug 9, 2012

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2012/08/climate-distortion.html?spref=tw>

[SEPP Comment: Challenging Hansen's statistical interpretation of climate extremes.]

NASA Scientist Out of Control

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Aug 8, 2012

<http://drtimball.com/2012/nasa-scientist-out-of-control/>

NASA's James Hansen's big cherry pick

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 6, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/08/06/nasas-james-hansens-big-cherry-pick/>

Hansen's Study: Did Global Warming Cause Recent Extreme Weather Events?

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Aug 8, 2012

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2012/08/08/hansens-study-did-global-warming-cause-recent-extreme-weather-events/>

[SEPP Comment: A look at all the data.]

Dear NOAA and Seth, which 1930's were you comparing to when you say July 2012 is the record warmest?

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 8, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/08/08/dear-noaa-and-seth-which-1930s-were-you-referring-to-when-you-say-july-is-the-record-warmest/>

Environmental Benefits of Energy Regulations Are Negligible

By Ted Gayer, W. Kip Viscusi, Mercatus Center, Aug 2, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://mercatus.org/publication/environmental-benefits-energy-regulations-are-negligible>

[SEPP Comment: According to this analysis, 87% of the net benefits from increased energy efficiency due to Federal regulatory mandates is from "Benefits from correcting consumer 'irrationality.'" Numbers the regulators create.]

Defending the Orthodoxy

Climate change is here — and worse than we thought

By James Hansen, Washington Post, Aug 3, 2012 [H/t Conrad]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/climate-change-is-here--and-worse-than-we-thought/2012/08/03/6ae604c2-dd90-11e1-8e43-4a3c4375504a_story.html

The New Climate Dice

By Kathryn Hansen, NASA Blog, Aug 3, 2012

http://blogs.nasa.gov/cm/blog/whatonearth/posts/post_1344022702866.html

Research Links Extreme Summer Heat Events to Global Warming

By Kathryn Hansen, Press Release, NASA , Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/warming-links.html>

Study Finds More of Earth Is Hotter and Says Global Warming Is at Work

By Justin Gillis, NYT, Aug 6, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/07/science/earth/extreme-heat-is-covering-more-of-the-earth-a-study-says.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120807

A Dark Victory: How vested interests defeated climate science

By Robert Manne, The Monthly, Aug 2012

<http://www.themonthly.com.au/how-vested-interests-defeated-climate-science-dark-victory-robert-manne-5853>

The economic cost of increased temperatures

Study: Warming episodes hurt poor countries and limit long-term growth.

By Peter Dizikes, MIT News, Aug 7, 2012 [H/t WUWT]

<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2012/the-economic-cost-of-increased-temperatures-0807.html>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

What Really Triggers a Resource Crisis?

By Dennis Avery, SPPI, Aug 9, 2012

<http://sppiblog.org/news/what-really-triggers-a-resource-crisis>

The Politicalization of The US National Academies With Respect To Climate Science

By Roger Pielke Sr, Climate Science, Aug 10, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/08/10/the-politicalization-of-the-us-national-academies-with-respect-to-climate-science/>

[SEPP Comment: More advocacy from the Koshland Science Museum run be the National Academies.]

The Climate of Opinion

By Steven Kates, Quadrant, Aug 9, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/08/the-climate-of-opinion>

[SEPP Comment: A lengthy and amusing read on alarmism prompted by the comment: “Ageing conservative white males are many times more likely than any other segment of the population to be denialists” in the Dark Victory essay linked under Defending the Orthodoxy.]

“The Damage to the Credibility of My Profession Is Huge”

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, Aug 9, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2012/08/the-damage-to-the-credibility-of-my-profession-is-huge.php>

Goodness Glaciers! More Unprecedented Global Warming Meltdowns?

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Aug 5, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/08/05/goodness-glaciers-more-unprecedented-global-warming-meltdowns/>

The political posturing of ‘climate astrology’

By Eric Heyl, Tribune Review, Aug 10, 2012

<http://triblive.com/opinion/2379398-74/global-warming-hansen-climate-globally-record-trying-activists-hottest-proof>

The Utter Desperation of Global Warming Liars

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Aug 7, 2012

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2012/08/the-utter-desperation-of-global-warming.html>

Get Dense

It’s time to stop wasting land and resources in the name of environmentalism.

Robert Bryce, City Journal, Winter 2012

http://www.city-journal.org/2012/22_1_environmentalism.html

Questioning European Green

The Impact of Wind Power on Household Energy Bills

By Gordon Hughes, GWPF, presented Jul 10, 2012 [H/t Benny Peiser]

<http://thegwgf.org/images/stories/gwgf-reports/hughes-evidence.pdf>

Gordon Hughes on the economics of wind power

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Aug 6, 2012

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2012/8/6/gordon-hughes-on-the-economics-of-wind-power.html>

Germany's Green Energy Transition May Force Out Industry

By Daniel Wetzel, Die Welt, via GWPF, Aug 8, 2012

<http://thegwpf.org/international-news/6345-germany-s-green-energy-transition-may-force-out-industry.html>

Wind Power: We Pay Price for Folly of Green Politics

By Leo McKinstry, Express, UK, Aug 8, 2012

<http://www.express.co.uk/ourcomments/view/338258/Leo-McKinstry>

George Osborne: Britain must be more attractive to 'remarkable' oil and gas industry

George Osborne will promise to make Britain an “even more attractive place” for the oil and gas industry in a blow to Liberal Democrat ambitions to shift away from fossil fuels.

By Rowena Mason, Telegraph, UK, Aug 7, 2012

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9457102/George-Osborne-Britain-must-be-more-attractive-to-remarkable-oil-and-gas-industry.html>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Low income earners burnt as cost of solar subsidy spirals

By: Tuck Thompson, Courier-Mail, AU, Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/poor-burnt-as-cost-of-solar-subsidy-spirals/story-e6freoof-1226443382710>

Lawson bats for China in climate debate

Former UK chancellor warns Europe, US against setting up trade barriers to developing nations

By Andrew Moody, China Daily, Aug 10, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-08/10/content_15657322.htm

[SEPP Comment: Lawson is the founder of the Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF).]

Expanding the Orthodoxy

U.N. Climate Change Goals: U.S. Reaffirms Support After Criticism

By Alister Doyle, Reuters, Aug 8, 2012

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/08/un-climate-change-goals_n_1754657.html

[SEPP Comment: If the temperature increase goes beyond the artificial limit of 2 deg C, what are the countries going to do to stop it, as if they can?]

Problems Within the Orthodoxy

Climate: US call for 'flexibility' on warming spurs row

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Aug 8, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Climate_US_call_for_flexibility_on_warming_spurs_row_999.html

Seeking a Common Ground

Post-Normal Science: Deadlines, or Conflicting Values?

“Never have so many scientists forecast so far into the future such fearful weather with so little risk of consequence for being wrong.” – I just made that up.

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 5, 2012

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2012/08/post-normal-science-deadlines-or-conflicting-values/>

Political bias in the academy

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Aug 9, 2012

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2012/8/9/political-bias-in-the-academy.html>

[SEPP Comment: Surely no one suspected this!]

Have Muller or Watts transformed the AGW landscape?

By Lubos Motl, Reference Frame, Jul 30, 2012

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2012/07/have-muller-or-watts-transformed-agw.html>

The BEST Affair

The ‘BEST’ global warming science goes lukewarm

By Patrick Michaels, Daily Caller, Aug 2, 2012 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://dailycaller.com/2012/08/02/the-best-global-warming-science-goes-lukewarm/>

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

Ray Evans reviews The Denialist Victory

By Ray Evans, JoNova, Aug 8, 2012

<http://joannenova.com.au/2012/08/ray-evans-denialist-victory-manne/#more-23167>

Droughts show global warming is 'scientific fact'

NASA researcher's study 'reframes the question,' UVic professor says

By Staff Writers, CBC News, Aug 4, 2012 [H/t Peter Salenius]

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2012/08/04/climate-change-real-scientist.html>

Cut emissions further or face risks of high air pollution, study shows

By Staff Writers, Brussels, Belgium (SPX) Aug 06, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Cut_emissions_further_or_face_risks_of_high_air_pollution_study_shows_999.html

[SEPP Comment: No need to adjust the models for the dramatic improvement in air quality in western countries through economic growth. Carbon dioxide emissions are lumped with known air pollutants.]

Weather Channel continues its decline chasing CNN - announces 6 hourly features on “tipping points”

By Staff Writers, ICECAP, Aug 5, 2012

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/weather_channel_continues_its_decline_chasing_cnn_announces_6_hourly_featur/

The shape of British summers to come?

It's been a dull, damp few months and some scientists think we need to get used to it. Melting ice in Greenland could be bringing permanent changes to our climate

By Fiona Harvey, Guardian, UK, Aug 8, 2012 [H/t GWPF & Real Climate]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2012/aug/08/shape-of-british-summers-to-come>

[SEPP Comment: A few months ago it was predicted to be a hot, dry summer.]

Mapping the future of climate change in Africa

By Staff Writers, Austin TX (SPX), Aug 06, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Mapping_the_future_of_climate_change_in_Africa_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Further nonsense with a DOD grant.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Oreskes, the Queen of Climate Smear, ignores the big money, has no evidence, throws names

By Joanne Nova, Her Blog, Aug 8, 2012

<http://joannenova.com.au/2012/08/oreskes-big-money-no-evidence-skeptics-merchant-of-doubt/#more-23189>

Measurement Issues

U.S. Surface Temperature Update for July, 2012: +1.11 deg. C

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2012/08/u-s-surface-temperature-update-for-july-2012-1-11-deg-c/>

A New Analysis of U.S. Temperature Trends Since 1943

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2012/08/a-new-analysis-of-u-s-temperature-trends-since-1943/>

Climate Catastrophe or Media Hype?

Are extreme weather events on the rise?

By Madhav Khandekar and Tom Harris, PJ Media, Aug 7, 2012 [H/t Marc Morano]

<http://pjmedia.com/blog/climate-catastrophe-or-media-hype/?singlepage=true>

Heat Wave

An ‘inconvenient result’ – July 2012 not a record breaker according to data from the new NOAA/NCDC U.S. Climate Reference Network

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 8, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/08/08/an-inconvenient-result-july-2012-not-a-record-breaker-according-to-the-new-noaa-cdc-national-climate-reference-network/>

July hottest month on record in US

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP) Aug 9, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/July_hottest_month_on_record_in_US_999.html

July 2012 Hottest Ever in the U.S.? Hmmm....I Doubt It

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 8, 2012

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2012/08/july-2012-hottest-ever-in-the-u-s-hmmm-i-doubt-it/>

[SEPP Comment: It is not the daytime highs what are hotter, but the nighttime lows that are hotter.]

Changing Weather

This Drought's No Dry Run: Lessons Of The Dust Bowl

By David Schaper, NPR, Aug 4, 2012 [H/t Climate Etc.]

<http://www.npr.org/2012/08/04/158119458/soaked-in-drought-lessons-from-the-dust-bowl>

[SEPP Comment: Not yet a multi-year drought.]

Extreme Climate Change: The 1933-1938 Period Was One of Very Severe Weather Events, Including Global Heat Waves

By C3 Headlines, [H/t Peter Salonijs]

<http://www.c3headlines.com/are-droughts-floods-more-frequent/>

Global Temperature Report: July 2012 From The University Of Alabama At Huntsville

By Roger Pielke Sr, Climate Science, Aug 6, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/08/06/global-temperature-report-july-2012-from-the-university-of-alabama-at-huntsville/>

Changing Climate

Cold spell gripped Europe 3,000 years before 'Little Ice Age,' says study

By Staff Writers, Phys.org, Aug 6, 2012

<http://phys.org/news/2012-08-cold-europe-years-ice-age.html>

[SEPP Comment: Consistent with the demise of the Harappan civilization on the Indus plain and the views of HH Lamb on the Sahara. TWTW <http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2012/TWTW%20-%206-2-12.pdf>]

Changing Seas

Sea levels ignore government forecasts

By Tony Thomas, Quadrant, Aug 10, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/08/sea-levels-ignore-government-forecasts>

[SEPP Comment: Mother Nature refuses to obey government proclamations.]

Are July 2012 Sea Surface Temperatures for U.S. Coastal Waters Also At Record Levels?

By Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Aug 10, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/08/10/not-hot-ocean-sst-around-the-usa-not-anywhere-near-record-levels/#more-68961>

[SEPP Comment: One would expect that sea surface temperatures would lag behind land temperatures.]

Changing Sea Ice

Aerial photos reveal dynamic ice sheet

By Staff Writers, Copenhagen, Denmark (SPX), Aug 06, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Aerial_photos_reveal_dynamic_ice_sheet_999.html

Despite the current and rapid melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet, it remains far from certain just when we will have reached a point when scientists will be able to predict its disappearance.

[SEPP Comment: Surprise! The breaking off of 0.007% of the ice sheet will not continue into the indefinite future once winter arrives.]

Changing Earth

13-year Cascadia study complete - and earthquake risk looms large

by Staff Writers: Corvallis OR (SPX) Aug 07, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/13_year_Cascadia_study_complete_and_earthquake_risk_looms_large_999.html

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

UN official: US must cut back on biofuels

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Aug 10, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/243053-un-us-must-cut-back-on-biofuels>

Asia, US plains facing water extraction crisis

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Aug 8, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Asia_US_plains_facing_water_extraction_crisis_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Water extraction for agriculture is a future problem in many parts of the world. Another benefit of enhanced CO₂, making the plants less susceptible to drought.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Regional Climate Models: How Well Do They Work?

Reference: Mishra, V., Dominguez, F. and Lettenmaier, D.P. 2012. Urban precipitation extremes: How reliable are regional climate models? *Geophysical Research Letters* 39: 10.1029/2011GL050658.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/7aug2012a1.html>

[SEPP Comment: Misleading or just plain wrong.]

The Carbon Debts of Land-Use Changes for Biodiesel Production

Reference: Achten, W.M.J. and Verchot, L.V. 2011. Implications of biodiesel-induced land-use changes for CO₂ emissions: *Case studies in tropical America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. Ecology and Society* 16: 10.5751/ES-04403-160414.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/7aug2012a2.html>

[SEPP Comment: Unsustainable?]

Effects of Elevated CO₂ on Coral Calcification: It Makes a Huge Difference Whether the Coral is Dead or Alive!

Reference: Sandeman, I.M. 2012. Preliminary results with a torsion microbalance indicate that carbon dioxide and exposed carbonic anhydrase in the organic matrix are the basis of calcification on the skeleton surface of living corals. *Revista de Biologia Tropical* 60 (Supplement 1): 109-126.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/7aug2012a3.html>

Twelve Hundred Years of Winter Surface Air Temperatures in Svalbard and Northern Norway

Reference: Divine, D., Isaksson, E., Martma, T., Meijer, H.A.J., Moore, J., Pohjola, V., van de Wal, R.S.W. and Godtliobsen, F. 2011. Thousand years of winter surface air temperature

variations in Svalbard and northern Norway reconstructed from ice-core data. *Polar Research* 30: 10.3402/polar.v30i0.7379.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/7aug2012a4.html>

Rate of Sea Level Rise: Predictions vs. Measurements

Reference: Boretti, A.A. 2012. Short term comparison of climate model predictions and satellite altimeter measurements of sea levels. *Coastal Engineering* 60: 319-322.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/8aug2012a1.html>

Cosmic Rays and Climate Change

Reference: Ram, M., Stolz, M.R. and Tinsley, B.A. 2009. The terrestrial cosmic ray flux: Its importance for climate. EOS, Transactions, *American Geophysical Union* 90: 397-398.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/aug/8aug2012a4.html>

Health, Energy, and Climate

Scientists find 50-year decline in some Los Angeles vehicle-related pollutants

By Staff Writers, AGU, Aug 9, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

http://www.agu.org/news/press/pr_archives/2012/2012-37.shtml

[SEPP Comment: A great regulatory success. One volatile organic compound has not dropped – ethanol, which is mandated by Washington.]

Debating Locavores: Food to Energy to Smart Action (response to critics)

By Pierre Desrochers and Hiroko Shimizu, Master Resource, Aug 10, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/08/debating-locavores/#more-21219>

[SEPP Comment: The fanaticism of those who insist that others should eat locally grown food.]

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Profits on Carbon Credits Drive Output of a Harmful Gas

By Elisabeth Rosenthal and Andrew Lehren, NYT, Aug 8, 2012 [H/t Steve Malloy]

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/09/world/asia/incentive-to-slow-climate-change-drives-output-of-harmful-gases.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120809

[SEPP Comment: To think that some people in other countries would take advantage of the system!]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

54.5 MPG And The Law Of Unintended Consequences – OpEd

Rules that make cars less affordable – and less safe – are unethical and should be reconsidered

By Bishop Harry Jackson, Eurasia Review, Aug 8, 2012

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/08082012-54-5-mpg-and-the-law-of-unintended-consequences-oped/>

Analysis: U.S. regulators get tougher on oil pipelines

By Ayesha Rascoe. Reuters, Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/06/us-usa-pipeline-restart-idUSBRE8750WI20120806>

[SEPP Comment: Tough regulations are not necessarily sensible. An agency can be punitive to the company for violations without being punitive to the public.]

Rethinking Polar Bear Evolution

By Doug Hoffman, The Resilient Earth, Aug 5, 2012

<http://theresilientearth.com/?q=content/rethinking-polar-bear-evolution>

Obama regulations chief pressed attacks on ozone standards

By Ben Geman and Kevin Bogardus, The Hill, Aug 8, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/242667-obama-regs-chief-pressed-attacks-on-ozone-standards>

The outgoing White House regulations chief circulated industry attacks on proposed smog standards among high-level advisers to President Obama, emails released to The Hill through a FOIA request show.

Energy Issues – Non-US

Energy Clarity

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Aug 7, 2012

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2012/08/07/energy-clarity/>

[SEPP Comment: In understanding policy clarity of definitions is extremely important and often obfuscated.]

Not much to fear from CNOOC

The takeover in no way represents a ‘predator’ stealing ‘our’ oil

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Aug 8, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/08/08/peter-foster-not-much-to-fear-from-cnooc/>

[SEPP Comment: On the purchase of a Canadian energy firm by a Chinese energy firm.]

Australia PM calls for electricity reform

By Staff Writers, Sydney (UPI), Aug 7, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Australia_PM_calls_for_electricity_reform_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Our Aussie friends will comment on this one.]

China Drills Into Shale Gas, Targeting Huge Reserves Amid Challenges

By Catherine Yang, National Geographic Daily News, Aug 8, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2012/08/120808-china-shale-gas/>

[SEPP Comment: The shale deposits are not necessarily the same as in the US and the techniques used in the US may or may not apply.]

Energy Issues -- US

Delays, Funding Hurdles, and Cancellations for Three Major U.S. Transmission Lines

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Aug 9, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/4854.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2500110&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Two of the three projects, TransWest Express and Tres Amigas, were designed for wind generation or connection to the smart grid.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Proved Gas Reserves Up 50% From 2005 to 2010: Where's The Gas Ponzi Scheme?

By John Hanger, His Blog, Aug 3, 2012

<http://johnhanger.blogspot.co.uk/2012/08/proved-gas-reserves-up-50-from-2005-to.html>

It's a disaster that 'peak oil' is not a disaster

By Ivo Vegter, Daily Maverick, Aug 7, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2012-08-07-its-a-disaster-that-peak-oil-is-not-a-disaster>

UT study finds earthquakes occur more frequently near injection wells

By Bill Hanna, Star-Telegram, Aug 6, 2012

<http://www.star-telegram.com/2012/08/06/4158348/ut-study-finds-earthquakes-occur.html>

[SEPP Comment: The earthquakes are not caused by hydraulic fracturing.]

Washington's Control of Oil and Gas

CBO: Drilling ban removal would bring limited new revenues

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Aug 9, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/243015-cbo-drilling-ban-removal-would-bring-limited-new-revenues>

[SEPP Comment: A typical Washington approach: it will not immediately accomplish things, therefore do nothing. Since it takes several years to develop an oil field, government revenues will not shoot up immediately. If the policy decisions taken 10 years ago were to open ANWR and other public lands, they would be yielding significant revenues to the US treasury today. The mind-set is classic example of short sightedness about revenue possibilities.]

Return of King Coal?

Coal Comfort

The EPA hates the carbon-heavy fuel, but it's here to stay.

By Robert Bryce, City Journal, Summer, 2012

http://www.city-journal.org/2012/22_3_coal.html

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Video Shows View Inside Nuclear Disaster

Operator of Japan's Fukushima Plant Releases Tapes of Command Centers During Crisis; 'We Have a Big Problem'

By Mitsuru Obe and Phred Dvorak, WSJ, Aug 6, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390443659204577572971995899222.html?mod=IT_P_pageone_3

[SEPP Comment: May be behind a paywall.]

Fukushima Fallout: Commission Finds Nuclear Plant Disaster A "Made In Japan" Human Failure

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Aug 7, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/08/07/fukushima-fallout-commission-finds-nuclear-plant-disaster-a-made-in-japan-human-failure/>

Yucca Mountain court case on hold

By Staff Writers, WNN, Aug 6, 2012

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/RS-Yucca_Mountain_court_case_on_hold-0608127.html

[SEPP Comment: The Senate Majority Leader, Harry Reid of Nevada, stridently opposes Yucca Mountain. Is this a reason why the Senate has failed to pass a budget for three years?]

UPDATED: NRC Freezes Final License Decisions, Court Prolongs Yucca Mountain Saga

By Sonal Pael, Power News, Aug 9, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/UPDATED-NRC-Freezes-Final-License-Decisions-Court-Prolongs-Yucca-Mountain-Saga_4858.html

A Glut of Natural Gas Leaves Nuclear Power Stalled

The outlook is bleak in the U.S. and complicated in other countries.

By Martin Lamonica, MIT Technology Review, Aug 9, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.technologyreview.com/news/428737/a-glut-of-natural-gas-leaves-nuclear-power/>

[SEPP Comment: According to the article the small modular reactors under development can be competitive with natural gas combined cycle plants with gas prices of \$6 to \$8 per million BTUs. The EIA projects gas prices in the range of \$4.50 per million BTUs in the later part of this decade.]

Britain Gives Nuclear a 2nd Chance

By Stanley Reed, NYT, Aug 8, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/09/business/energy-environment/09iht-green09.html?_r=1

[SEPP Comment: Guaranteeing a rate twice the current rate is not a subsidy? Or do members of the British government making such a guarantee acknowledging that wind power will double rates in nine years?]

UK Can Run Power Grid for 500 Years On Waste Plutonium Stores

By Al Fin, GWPF, Aug 8, 2012

<http://thegwgf.org/uk-news/6344-uk-can-run-power-grid-for-500-years-on-waste-plutonium-stores.html>

[SEPP Comment: May be a tad over optimistic.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Wind power not coming through for California – power alert issued by the CAISO

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 9, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/08/09/wind-power-not-coming-through-for-california-power-alert-issued-by-the-caiso/#more-68938>

Q: Where is wind power in all of this, is it performing? A: “Well as you know, wind has to blow for wind power to be effective. “

White House Expedites Seven Solar and Wind Energy Projects

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Aug 9, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/4855.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2500110&hq_l=11&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Oil, gas, nuclear, etc. need not apply.]

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

Dangerous and Fool Hardy

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Aug 10, 2012

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2012/08/10/dangerous-and-fool-hardy/>

DoD-Interior agreement opens way for more renewable energy projects

By Sarah Chacko, Federal Times, Aug 6, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.federaltimes.com/article/20120806/FACILITIES04/308060004/DoD-Interior-agreement-opens-way-more-renewable-energy-projects?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

[SEPP Comment: A military test range is not a military use? The grid is vulnerable to disruption, but solar and wind are not?]

White House to seek \$7B in green energy contracts for military

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Aug 7, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/242593-army-announces-renewable-energy-contracts-as-white-house-continues-green-push>

[SEPP Comment: How about helmets with solar collectors or wind turbines to power rechargeable batteries.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Taxpayer-Funded A123 May Get a Chinese Bailout

By Paul Chesser, NLPC, Aug 9, 2012

<http://nlpc.org/stories/2012/08/09/taxpayer-funded-a123-may-get-chinese-bailout>

California Dreaming

Petro-State Of California Needs Crude Awakening

By Tom Gray, IBD, Aug 8, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/article/621501/201208081905/petro-state-of-california-needs-crude-awakening.htm?p=full>

[SEPP Comment: High unemployment, massive state and local budget problems, huge petroleum resources; what to do? Build more solar and wind!]

California on course for renewable energy

By Staff Writers, Sacramento (UPI), Aug 3, 2012

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/California_on_course_for_renewable_energy_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Not one word on energy costs. The jobs study from Berkeley Law School must be interesting.]

Environmental Industry

Do Greens Have A None-Of-The-Above Energy Policy?

By John Merline, IBD, Aug 9, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/article/621692/201208091842/environmentalists-have-none-of-the-above-energy-policy.htm>

[SEPP Comment: Graph of land use by energy type.]

Other Scientific News

'Enormous step forward' as NASA lands rover on Mars

By Staff Writers, Pasadena, California (AFP), Aug 6, 2012

http://www.marsdaily.com/reports/Enormous_step_forward_as_NASA_lands_rover_on_Mars_999.html

Happy landings for nuclear rover

By Staff Writers, WNN, Aug 6, 2012

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NN-Happy_landings_for_nuclear_rover-0608128.html

Curiosity's second day on Mars 'flawless': NASA

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP). Aug 8, 2012

http://www.marsdaily.com/reports/Curiositys_second_day_on_Mars_flawless_NASA_999.html

Scientists Define New Limits of Microbial Life in Undersea Volcanoes

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Aug 08, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Scientists_Define_New_Limits_of_Microbial_Life_in_Undersea_Volcanoes_999.html

Physicists celebrate centenary of the discovery of cosmic rays

By Staff Writers, Hamburg, Germany (SPX), Aug 07, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Physicists_celebrate_centenary_of_the_discovery_of_cosmic_rays_999.html

Dust Dominates Overseas Aerosol Imports to North America

By Staff Writers, NASA Earth Observatory, Aug 3, 2012 [H/t Jim Rust]

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=78742&src=ea-iotd>

According to the analysis, 64 million tons of dust, pollutants, and other particles cross the oceans and mix into the air over North America each year. That’s nearly as much as the estimated 69 million tons of aerosols produced domestically by natural processes, transportation, and industrial sources.

Other News that May Be of Interest

Fingering the culprit that polluted the Solar System

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Aug 08, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Fingering_the_culprit_that_polluted_the_Solar_System_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Clever headline.]

New Hampshire leads U.S. in tree cover

By Staff Writers, Syracuse, N.Y. (UPI), Aug 6, 2012

http://www.terraily.com/reports/New_Hampshire_leads_US_in_tree_cover_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Virtually all the forests of New Hampshire are second or third growth, meaning it was all logged for lumber, fuel, and farms.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Carbon Eaters on the Black Sea

By Staff Writers, Greenbelt MD (SPX), Aug 07, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Carbon_Eaters_on_the_Black_Sea_999.html

[SEPP Comment: An interesting article until the pitch for funding using the “ocean acidification” plea.]

Kerry: Climate Change ‘As Dangerous’ as Iran’s Nukes and Possibility of War

By Patrick Goodenough, CNS News, Aug 2, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://cnsnews.com/news/article/kerry-climate-change-dangerous-iran-s-nukes-and-possibility-war>

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ARTICLES:

1. The Climate Contrarians

By S. Fred Singer, reply by William D. Nordhaus, New York Review of Books, Aug 16, 2012
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/aug/16/climate-contrarians/?pagination=false>

In the Climate Casino: An Exchange from the April 26, 2012 issue

Why the Global Warming Skeptics Are Wrong from the March 22, 2012 issue

To the Editors:

Readers may have followed the ongoing debate between a group of prominent scientists and the nation’s leading environmental economist, Yale professor William D. Nordhaus [“Why the Global Warming Skeptics Are Wrong,” NYR, March 22; “In the Climate Casino: An Exchange,” NYR, April 26]. I have not been involved so far but will comment briefly on the provocative questions Nordhaus has put forward. For detail, please see www.americanthinker.com/s_fred_singer/.

I raise here two crucial points that may have been overlooked in the debate:

1. Evidence for anthropogenic global warming (AGW) is problematic.
2. A modest warming is likely to be beneficial—not damaging.

First, Professor Nordhaus asks three related fundamental questions: *Is the planet in fact warming? Are human influences an important contributor to warming? Is carbon dioxide a pollutant?* Most thermometers at weather stations indeed report rising temperatures during the crucial interval 1978 to 2000. [Note: Please ignore the year 1998 and temperature spike caused by Super El Nino.] The UN’s climate science panel, the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), considers this warming trend as its main evidence for AGW. But we don’t see any significant warming of the atmosphere; observations from radiosondes carried in weather balloons are backed up by completely independent temperature data from weather satellites. The oceans, covering 71 percent of the earth’s surface, show no appreciable warming either. Also, non-thermometer data from so-called “proxies” (tree rings, stalagmites, etc) show mostly no warming during this period.

So in spite of rising CO2 levels, undoubtedly anthropogenic, most observations show no warming trend. That’s a real scientific puzzle—all climate models calculate major warming. Do weather stations simply report local warming and cooling rather than global trends? Yet the IPCC reaches its conclusion based on surface thermometers; its Summary for Policymakers ignores contrary evidence (“inconvenient truths”—to paraphrase Al Gore). The debate among scientists now centers on the validity of various climate data.

Nordhaus also asks: *Are we seeing a regime of fear for skeptical climate scientists?* Being fairly senior, I am not much affected. My concern would be for younger scientists just trying to establish their professional careers.

Are the views of mainstream climate scientists driven primarily by the desire for financial gain? This is a leading question; but I would assume that scientific curiosity is the main driving force.

Finally, Nordhaus asks: *Is it true that more carbon dioxide and additional warming will be beneficial?* Briefly, my answer is: Yes. Here I tend to rely mainly on the published studies of two dozen resource economists, led by Nordhaus's Yale colleague Professor Robert Mendelsohn.

Overall then, I mostly support the arguments of the scientist-debaters, but I applaud Professor Nordhaus for not surrendering to climate alarmism and for resisting drastic mitigation policies to "save the climate."

S. Fred Singer
Professor Emeritus
University of Virginia
Director of the Science and Environmental Policy Project

William D. Nordhaus replies:

This month marks two decades since the Rio Earth Summit. That meeting resulted in the first international agreement on climate change, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Under the Framework Convention, countries agreed on a goal of "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." The Framework Convention was signed by US President George H.W. Bush and ratified unanimously by the US Senate. In the two decades since the signing of the Framework Convention, earth scientists have confirmed the basic climate science through both modeling and observations. Warming and other changes to the earth system are underway, and the dangers look even more grave than they did two decades ago.

All this time, a small band of contrarian scientists had been fighting a rear-guard action to undermine the scientific research and findings in this area. I discussed one example—an article by "sixteen scientists"—in these pages in the March 22, 2012, issue. The letter from S. Fred Singer takes the baton from the sixteen and restates their major arguments in a conclusory fashion, but he provides no new evidence.

Among the standard arguments used by climate contrarians and echoed by Singer is: "So in spite of rising CO₂ levels, undoubtedly anthropogenic, most observations show no warming trend." Singer uses the data selectively to support his argument. As I showed in my earlier pieces, if we use the standard statistical techniques for examining trends, then it is clear that the globe is warming, and in fact it has warmed faster over the period of the rapid growth in CO₂ concentrations than in earlier periods. However, with a volatile series, such as the stock market or global temperatures, there are always periods of decline. But in both cases the trend has been upward and significantly so.

The other point Singer makes is that “a modest warming is likely to be beneficial.” If he means a “modest warming” of 1/2 or 1°C, then there is evidence that the combination of CO2 accumulation and warming will have benefits in some sectors and in some regions. But we need to take into account the scientific evidence for “realistic warming” projected to be 3–4°C along with other geophysical changes—such as potential melting of the major ice sheets, rapid sea-level rise, and hurricane intensification—by the end of this century, if nations fail to take significant steps to slow climate change. The evidence from hundreds of scientific and economic studies finds serious to grave impacts on agriculture, coastlines and associated settlements, and ecosystems, as well as increasing acidification of the oceans and threats to many species around the world.

Science progresses, the earth warms, glaciers melt, the oceans become increasingly acidic, but the climate contrarians change not.

2. Informal Comments to Editor of the New York Review of Books

By S. Fred Singer, to Editor of the NYRB, Aug 8, 2012

[http://www.sepp.org/key_issues/Informal Comments to Editor of the New York Review of Books.pdf](http://www.sepp.org/key_issues/Informal%20Comments%20to%20Editor%20of%20the%20New%20York%20Review%20of%20Books.pdf)

I was glad to see my letter in print in the Aug 16 issue of the NYRB, followed by a response by Prof. Wm. D. Nordhaus. Here are brief comments; you may forward them to him if you wish:

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Bill Nordhaus avoids any direct response to my two arguments – for obvious reasons.

1. He relies entirely on surface temperature data – as does the IPCC summary – and studiously ignores atmospheric (from both weather balloons and satellites) and ocean temperatures as well as proxy data. All four independent data sets agree that there was no significant warming in the crucial 1978-2000 interval – in contrast to land-surface data. [Note: Please ignore the year 1998 and temperature spike caused by Super El Nino.]

The latter, largely from poorly sited weather stations, are highly problematic – notwithstanding the hype generated last week in a NYT op-ed by Prof. Rich Muller. Two independent critiques of such data (by Prof. D. Koutsoyiannis and by Anthony Watts *et al.*) were just released. Nordhaus may wish to take note of these.

2. Bill admits that a modest warming may be beneficial – esp. when coupled with higher CO2 levels. His response therefore assumes unreasonably high levels of future average temperatures. But one cannot deal here with global averages. Climate models calculate that most warming occurs in winter nights at high latitudes – and little in the tropics. So we may be talking about winter temperatures in Siberia of -35 degrees instead of -40 degrees.

It sort of lends a different perspective to the economic argument, doesn't it?

3. A New Climate-Change Consensus

It's time for conservatives to compete with liberals to devise the best, most cost-effective climate solutions.

By Fred Krupp, WSJ, Aug 6, 2012 [H/t Roger Cohen]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444320704577569231537988226.html?mod=W>
[SJ Opinion LEADTop](#)

One scorching summer doesn't confirm that climate change is real any more than a white Christmas proves it's a hoax. What matters is the trend—a decades-long march toward hotter and wilder weather. But with more than 26,000 heat records broken in the last 12 months and pervasive drought turning nearly half of all U.S. counties into federal disaster areas, many data-driven climate skeptics are reassessing the issue.

Respected Republican leaders like Govs. John Kasich of Ohio and Chris Christie of New Jersey have spoken out about the reality of climate change. Rupert Murdoch's recent tweet—"Climate change very slow but real. So far all cures worse than disease."—may reflect an emerging conservative view. Even Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson, during public comments in June, conceded the reality of climate change while offering assurances that "there will be an engineering solution" and "we'll adapt."

Even if my outlook differs, these views may turn out to be a welcome turning point. For too long, the U.S. has had two camps talking past each other on this issue. One camp tended to preach and derided questions about climate science as evidence of bad motivation. The other camp claimed that climate science was an academic scam designed to get more funding, and that advocates for action were out to strangle economic growth. Charges of bad faith on both sides—and a heavy dose of partisan politics—saw to it that constructive conversation rarely occurred.

If both sides can now begin to agree on some basic propositions, maybe we can restart the discussion. Here are two:

The first will be uncomfortable for skeptics, but it is unfortunately true: Dramatic alterations to the climate are here and likely to get worse—with profound damage to the economy—unless sustained action is taken. As the Economist recently editorialized about the melting Arctic: "It is a stunning illustration of global warming, the cause of the melt. It also contains grave warnings of its dangers. The world would be mad to ignore them."

The second proposition will be uncomfortable for supporters of climate action, but it is also true: Some proposed climate solutions, if not well designed or thoughtfully implemented, could damage the economy and stifle short-term growth. As much as environmentalists feel a justifiable urgency to solve this problem, we cannot ignore the economic impact of any proposed action, especially on those at the bottom of the pyramid. For any policy to succeed, it must work with the market, not against it.

If enough members of the two warring climate camps can acknowledge these basic truths, we can get on with the hard work of forging a bipartisan, multi-stakeholder plan of action to safeguard the natural systems on which our economic future depends.

Many conservatives start out as climate skeptics for understandable reasons. To begin with, it's an issue that's long been associated with liberal Democrats. We're all skeptical about issues presented by leaders with whom we normally disagree. Secondly, conservatives naturally insist on extensive evidence when a claim seems to justify more government action.

But one of the hallmarks of modern conservatism is to try to see the world as it is, not as one hopes it would be. Skeptics who make their decisions based on the best available information have long said they would reconsider their conclusions as the facts dictate. And many of them are concluding that the planet is warming in ways that outpace its natural rhythms. In a recent University of Texas poll, 70% of Americans, and 53% of Republicans, accepted the reality of climate change. This is not just a function of the summer's brutal heat.

In a 2011 study, funded in part by the climate-skeptical industrialists David and Charles Koch, University of California, Berkeley physicist Richard Muller (also a climate skeptic) confirmed that temperatures have been climbing over the past five decades. His conclusion: "You should not be a skeptic, at least not any longer."

Mr. Muller's Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature research project has since come out with a new analysis of global temperatures over the past 250 years. From that analysis, currently under review by the scientific community and available on the project's website, he concludes that climate change is "almost entirely" due to greenhouse-gas pollution.

That gases such as carbon dioxide and methane can trap heat is an undisputed matter of basic physics. But what is most telling is that as concentrations of these greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have increased, the global average temperature has increased in near-unison.

Agreeing with Mr. Muller does not necessarily require conservatives to embrace more government regulation. To the contrary, they should promote policies that fit their views of government and the market. One example is the revolution in natural gas. It makes environmentalists uncomfortable, but we cannot afford to ignore this potentially lower carbon fuel. CIA Director David Petraeus had it right when he said last month in an interview at Dickinson College, "assuming it can be done in an environmentally safe way, which is obviously a must, [natural gas] is going to provide an incredible boost to our economy." The key is ensuring that methane leaks in the system don't undermine the carbon advantages of gas, and that our groundwater remains clean and safe.

We'll have a much better shot at developing solutions to our climate and energy problems that are good for our economy if leaders from across the political spectrum get re-engaged in the debate. It is time for conservatives to compete with liberals to devise the best, most cost-effective climate solutions. Solving this challenge will require all of us.

Mr. Krupp is president of the Environmental Defense Fund and co-author of "Earth: The Sequel" (W.W. Norton, 2008).

4. When 600 Million People Lost Power

With constant electricity shortages, India won't abandon coal any time soon.

By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Aug 5, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390443687504577565041028069420.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

Blackouts crippled India last week, leaving more than 600 million people without electricity. Trains were stranded, traffic snarled, and the country's economy ground to a halt. According to news reports, the blackouts were caused by excess demand, with some states in northern India taking more power than they had been allotted by the grid operator. And while the investigation into the disaster continues, one result is certain: India won't be abandoning coal any time soon.

While the Sierra Club pushes its "beyond coal" campaign here in the U.S., and the Obama administration continues its regulatory attack on the coal industry—an effort that includes the Environmental Protection Agency's plan to prohibit the construction of new coal-fired generation units—India and other countries around the world are rapidly increasing their coal consumption.

Proof of that can be seen in the fact that, according to the BP Statistical Review of World Energy, global coal consumption over the past decade has increased by more than the growth in oil, natural gas, hydro and nuclear combined. Much of that surge in coal use has occurred in India, the world's third-largest coal consumer, behind only China and the U.S. Increasing coal use helps explain why India's carbon-dioxide emissions, up by 80% since 2002, and global carbon-dioxide emissions—up by 30% since 2002—continue to soar.

India's current coal use, which is the energy equivalent of about 5.9 million barrels of oil per day, has nearly doubled over the past decade. Yet the country remains chronically short of electricity. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), India's per capita electricity consumption is about 600 kilowatt-hours per year. This is a small amount compared to the other big electricity users. The average Chinese uses about five times as much electricity as the average Indian, while the average American uses about 20 times more.

To alleviate the shortages, India is aggressively expanding its electricity generation and transmission infrastructure. It is also working hard to increase its natural-gas and nuclear-generation capacities, but it still relies on coal for about two-thirds of its electricity production. With 60 billion tons of domestic coal reserves—enough to last a century at current rates of extraction—India has plenty of the carbon-heavy fuel. But the country's mines are inefficient and coal deliveries have been hamstrung by poor-quality transportation and ham-handed government policies. The result: India imported about 20% of the coal it used in 2011, and it may soon surpass China as the world's biggest coal importer.

For years, Indian leaders have been saying they will not let concerns about climate change impede their push to generate more electricity. In 2009, shortly before the big climate-change meeting in Copenhagen, that message was delivered by none other than Rajendra Pachauri, the Indian academic who chairs the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "Can you imagine 400 million people who do not have a light bulb in their homes?" he asked. "You cannot, in a democracy, ignore some of these realities and as it happens with the resources of coal that India has, we really don't have any choice but to use coal."

Use it they will. In the wake of the blackouts, Indian officials are talking about expediting the permits needed to produce and transport more coal. And the IEA is projecting that India's coal consumption will nearly double by 2030, allowing it to surpass the United States. But even if that occurs, India will likely continue to lag the developed world in producing electricity—the currency of modernity.

Slogans like "beyond coal" may appeal to Sierra Clubbers and to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who gave the environmental group \$50 million to help "end the coal era." But with 1.3 billion people on the planet still lacking access to electricity, the priority for leaders in places like New Delhi isn't carbon-dioxide emissions or "clean energy." Their primary aim is to bring their people out of the dark.

Mr. Bryce, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, is the author, most recently, of "Power Hungry: The Myths of 'Green' Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future" (PublicAffairs, 2010).

5. Heat waves are not new or unprecedented

By Charles Battig, Letter to Editor, Times-Dispatch, Aug 9, 2012

<http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/letters-to-the-editor/2012/aug/09/tdopin01-letters-to-the-editor-ar-2118186/>

For those bemoaning a sweltering summer, be consoled that it is neither unprecedented nor unusual. Hollywood provides historical evidence that the 1930s were a time of "heat waves." For the 1933 musical "As Thousands Cheer," Irving Berlin produced "Heat Wave," and Ethel Merman belted out the lyric, "We're having a heat wave," in the 1938 film "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Marilyn Monroe sang it in the 1954 film "There's No Business Like Show Business."

Scientific confirmation of these heat waves comes from the State Climate Extremes Committee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the U.S. National Climatic Data Center in its latest revamp of historical, statewide weather records. Analysis of data confirms that the 1930s, the Dust Bowl years, produced an unmatched 24 maximum temperature records. [Please see Figure 25 in http://www.sepp.org/publications/NIPCC_final.pdf]

The 1950s were the first decade since the 1930s to establish new temperature records (a total of five, including a few ties with earlier years). The decades of 1970, 1980 and 1990 set few new maximum temperature records. Since the 1990s up through 2011 there were no new maximum temperature records. This year may bring some new records for Georgia and South Carolina.

This historical perspective gives no scientific credence to those wailing about man-made climate change. Atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were approximately 25 percent lower in the temperature record-setting 1930s.

Surely the devastating derecho event this past June must be unique and related to man-made global warming. No, the term dates to 1888. A similarly destructive one occurred during a period of global cooling on July 4, 1977. The widespread misery resulting from electrical power outages did give a glimpse into the world envisioned by U.N. luminary Maurice Strong: "Current lifestyles and consumption patterns of the affluent middle class, involving . . . use of fossil fuels, appliances, air-conditioning . . . are not sustainable."

Tell that to those who sweltered awaiting the resumption of electric power.

Charles Battig, Virginia — Scientists and Engineers for Energy and Environment.

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