

The Week That Was: 2013-10-12 (October 12, 2013)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *Political language “is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.” -- George Orwell [H/t Richard Lindzen]*

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Number of the Week: 6

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Due to travel commitments there will be no TWTW next week (Oct 19)

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THIS WEEK:

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

THIS WEEK

Chartsmanship. Steve McIntyre has another post on how the UN Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change manipulated graphs from its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) to the second order draft of the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) to the final of AR5. The second order draft, the last one sent out to reviewers, clearly showed observations were running well below the uncertainty envelope for AR4 model projections. In the final version, the IPCC removed the uncertainty envelope for AR4, yet retained these envelopes for the previous three assessment reports. McIntyre estimates that the new range of uncertainty for AR4 is about twice that of what appeared in the original. In brief, between the second order draft of AR5 and the final version, the range of uncertainty approximately doubled. Yet, the IPCC expressed 95 to 100% confidence in its work. Also, McIntyre has not found any peer reviewed literature supporting the new graphic. For the discussion to include comments from IPCC defenders see links under Climategate Continued.

No Improvement: Last week, TWTW discussed the presentation by Nir Shaviv that showed that from 1979 to 2013 there has been no significant improvements in the estimates of the critical question of how sensitive are earth’s temperatures to a doubling of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2)? The IPCC estimated range of uncertainty actually increased from AR4 to AR5, with a lowering of the lower boundary. Yet, all the values are above the laboratory derived values of about 1.1 °C. Shaviv suggests that the reason for no improvement in the science is that basic premise of the IPCC science is wrong. According to Shaviv, contrary to the IPCC, the climate is not very sensitive to increasing CO2 and that if one does not insist it was highly sensitivity, studies indicate the range of sensitivity is more in the order of 1 to 1.5 °C.

His comments prompted a revisit to a 2008 paper by Richard Lindzen, “Climate Science: Is it currently designed to answer questions?” Lindzen points out that the procedures used by the IPCC and the Climate Establishment [John Christy’s term] avoid the intense conflict between observations and theory, whereby theory is continuously refined to explain the observations until a solid theory is established. Instead, the procedures by the Climate Establishment focus on computer simulation of nature and various large programs purportedly to observe nature, which never end. As a result, theory is not refined, but large science programs are created to accommodate political correct positions. The entire effort is driven by government funding. For

the work of Shaviv see <http://www.sciencebits.com/AR5-FirstImpressions> and for the updated paper by Lindzen see <http://globalresearch.ca/climate-science-is-it-currently-designed-to-answer-questions/16330>.

Another Elephant? Last week, TWTW discussed two elephants in the room that the IPCC conveniently ignores in its grand pronouncements. One elephant is the failure of surface temperature to increase in a statistically significant way over the past 17 years even though atmospheric CO₂ has increased by about 10%. The atmospheric temperatures have not increased for a decade. The second elephant is the composition of the warming as measured by satellites: Notable warming in the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere (roughly 30°N Latitude), with little or no warming elsewhere.

In presenting their reasoning why they think the world is headed for a cooling period, German scientists Frank Bosse and Fritz Vahrenholt suggest a third elephant. Now that the IPCC has admitted the existence of the Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age, the IPCC has no theoretical basis for explaining why these warming and cooling periods occurred. It certainly was not from changing CO₂.

The authors bring up the concept of “missing heat” used in efforts to explain the failure of the globe to warm. Following a suggestion of Hans von Storch, they assert the heat was not missing, because it did not exist. They point out that the difference in surface temperatures from 1998 to 2012 northern Eurasia and from those in 1980 to 1997. The authors suggest that the strong decline in temperatures is the result of declining ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun, which can vary by 10%. UV radiation is unlike the full spectrum of solar radiation (mostly visible light) which varies little. See link under Science: Is the Sun Rising? and the study by Ermolli et al. that is linked therein.

Clouds: The solar-cosmic ray hypothesis for the formation of clouds advanced by Svensmark, et al. took a slight hit this week. Earlier, researchers at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, conducted experiments that seemed to support the hypothesis. This week they published further research on “solving a long-standing enigma in climate science: how do aerosols - tiny solid or liquid particles suspended in the air - form in the atmosphere, and which gases are responsible?” They made two discoveries. One, that small concentrations of amine vapors, similar to ammonia, combine with sulfuric acid to greatly accelerate the formation aerosols. And, two, that radiation has little effect on the process. As the press release asserts, this step forward in understanding how clouds are formed does not rule out a role of cosmic rays. See links under Science: Is the Sun Rising?

Other Mechanisms? One of the annoying arguments found in the UN IPCC reports such as the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) in AR5 is the claim that the human influence must be significant because the models cannot explain the temperature changes without a significant human influence. Although the SPM is still in a draft form, subject to revision, the report has a page with 18 graphs showing the difference between models using only natural forcings and models using both natural and anthropogenic (human caused) forcings. The entire thrust is an example of argument from ignorance. The assumption is that the models successfully include all the natural forcings, which is very doubtful.

In addition to solar UV radiation possibly having a significant effect on changing climate, as mentioned above, several other studies were published suggesting even other mechanisms. One

study, by Lam et al, suggests that the solar magnetic field influences the earth's climate by changing surface atmospheric pressure. Tim Ball has extensive commentary on this, suggesting the line of research should be taken further.

Judith Curry, co-author with Marcia Glaze-Wyatt, has a very interesting paper in Climate Dynamics discussing a possible mechanism for oscillation of climate over multiple decades. They liken it to the "stadium wave" often used at [American] football games, where the fans stand or sit in a coordinated pattern. They suggested that this wave pattern can be seen in records going at least as far back as 300 years.

Nicola Scafetta has a paper suggesting that a model based on the movement of the planets (planetary orbital oscillations) better explains climate variation than the General Circulation Models used by the UN IPCC. On her web site, Jo Nova has a good presentation of the paper and a number of useful comments. The descriptive power of the model may be just a statistical artifact, but it may promote useful discussion.

Now that it is becoming evident to many that IPCC science is failing, we may begin to see other directions of research. Of course, the government funding power to the IPCC makes it difficult to attract funding for research other than the standard claim that CO2 is the control knob for climate. Please see links under Science: Is the Sun Rising? and Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Failing Models: A group at the University of Hawaii used 39 models to forecast temperature trends in the tropics and elsewhere. They looked at temperatures of the period 1850 to 2005 as a base for climate variability and using the models projected the year when warming will exceed the historic monthly variability for many cities around the world. In general, they found that model output will exceed their calculated natural variability first in cities in the tropics, then elsewhere. They concluded that biodiversity will be highly vulnerable in the tropics with the emergence of unprecedented climates

Although recognizing that all the models run too hot, Judith Curry saw merit in the approach. But that merit may be lost in the alarmist press.

As Roy Spencer and John Christy have pointed out, all 73 climate models are forecast higher temperature trends in the atmosphere above the tropics, than what is being observed. Many of the models forecast trends that are more than twice of what is observed. A further issue with the study is that the period coinciding with the ending of the Little Ice Age is hardly the proper place to start the base. See links under Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague? and <http://www.drroyspencer.com/2013/06/still-epic-fail-73-climate-models-vs-measurements-running-5-year-means/>

Sea Levels: The World Bank and the IMF have embraced the concept that human caused global warming will cause significant sea level rise. Judith Curry writes that this attitude may present a major danger to the population of Bangladesh. A recent study shows that Bangladesh's sea level rise problem is not really driven by climate change, but by land subsidence. "...the risks here are that UN/WB adaptation solutions will be inadequate to help them deal with their sea level rise problem, or that Bangladesh will find itself ineligible for international climate adaptation funds." As Curry suggests, Bangladesh may become a victim of IPCC over simplification of the climate change issue and its solutions. See link under Changing Seas.

Number of the Week: 6. Federal agencies announcing new regulations or proposing new regulations publish such regulations in the Federal Register. Typically, each day, the Register is hundreds of pages long. On day 9 of the very partial government shutdown, the length of the Register was 6 pages. Draw your own conclusions. See Article # 1

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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 Shutdown in Print

Number of pages in the Federal Register on October 9: six.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304066404579125663359861806.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_2

2. A Chemistry Breakthrough That Could Fuel a Revolution

Now methanol can be made from natural gas and captured carbon dioxide.

By George Olah and Chris Cox, WSJ, Oct 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324577304579057623877297840.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

3. Honk if You Love the Mass-Produced Automobile

Critics note: Cars will soon use less energy and emit less pollution than public transit.

By Randal O'Toole, WSJ, Oct 4, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324549004579070813264002126.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: The 100 year anniversary of Henry Ford's moving assembly line.]

4. Using 'Sue and Settle' to Thwart Oil and Gas Drillers The Endangered Species Act is being employed more than ever to block development.

By Stephen Moore, WSJ, Oct 4, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579115234181105684.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEADTop

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

Current Sunspot Cycle Weakest In 190 Years – Recent Model Temperature Deviation Due To Solar Activity, Experts Say

The (tired) sun in September 2013 and spectral progress

By Frank Bosse and Fritz Vahrenholt, Trans. P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 7, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/07/current-sunspot-cycle-weakest-in-190-years-recent-model-temperature-deviation-due-to-solar-activity-experts-say/>

Amine a minor setback for Svensmark

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 7, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/10/7/amine-a-minor-setback-for-svensmark.html>

Link to press release: CERN's CLOUD experiment shines new light on climate change

By Staff Writers, CERN, Oct 6, 2013

Link to paper: Molecular understanding of sulphuric acid–amine particle nucleation in the atmosphere

By Almeida, et al, Nature, Oct 6, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nature12663.html>

Paper suggests solar magnetic influence on Earth's atmospheric pressure

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Oct 10, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/10/paper-suggests-solar-magnetic-influence-on-earths-atmospheric-pressure/>

Link to paper: The interplanetary magnetic field influences mid-latitude surface atmospheric pressure

By Lam et al. Environmental Research Letters, Oct 4, 2013

<http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/8/4/045001#.UIKoSpyGcV8.twitter>

Commentary on the Article about the Interplanetary Magnetic Field influences

By Tim Ball, WUWT, Oct 9, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/09/commentary-on-the-article-about-the-interplanetary-magnetic-field-influences/>

Climategate Continued

Fixing the Facts 2

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Oct 8, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/10/08/fixing-the-facts-2/>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

On letters from climate-change deniers

By Paul Thornton, Editorial, Los Angeles Times, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-climate-change-letters-20131008,0,871615.story>

The BBC betrayed its values by giving Professor Carter this climate platform

How can letting a geologist appear as a legitimate climate scientist to ridicule the IPCC report be in the public interest?

By John Ashton, Guardian, Oct 1, 2013

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/01/bbc-betrayed-values-carter-scorn-ipcc>

[SEPP Comment: A call for censorship.]

Challenging the Orthodoxy

The stadium wave

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 10, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/10/the-stadium-wave/>

Scafetta 2013: Simple solar astronomical model beats IPCC climate models

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Oct 11, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/10/scafetta-2013-simple-solar-astronomical-model-beats-ipcc-climate-models/#more-31111>

Climate forecast: All's well, despite what the IPCC says

Kesten Green, J. Scott Armstrong and Willie Soon, Financial Post, Oct 9, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/10/08/climate-forecast-alls-well-despite-what-the-ipcc-says/>

Lindzen: Understanding The IPCC AR5 Climate Assessment

By Richard Lindzen,, WUWT, Oct 8, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/08/lindzen-understanding-the-ipcc-ar5-climate-assessment/>

Gross Scientific Negligence – IPCC Ignored Huge Body Of Peer-Reviewed Literature Showing Sun’s Clear Impact

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 11, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/11/gross-scientific-negligence-ipcc-ignored-huge-body-of-peer-reviewed-literature-showing-suns-clear-impact/>

[SEPP Comment: A list of papers on solar variation and climate variation.]

Defending the Orthodoxy

BBC gives too much weight to climate sceptics, minister claims

Greg Barker, the climate change minister, has criticised the BBC's coverage of climate change claiming it gives undue weight to the opinions of sceptics.

By Nick Collins, Telegraph, UK, Oct 9, 2013

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/climatechange/10367061/BBC-gives-too-much-weight-to-climate-sceptics-minister-claims.html>

Climate change is real and denial is not about the science

By Andrew Dressler and Gerald North, My SA, Oct 6, 2013

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/opinion/commentary/article/Climate-change-is-real-and-denial-is-not-about-4866529.php>

Dessler & North Demonstrate Why Scientists Appear Clueless

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2013/10/dessler-north-demonstrate-why-scientists-appear-clueless/>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Kerry: 'Inviting catastrophe' on climate

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Oct 7, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/326935-kerry-nations-inviting-catastrophe-on-climate-change>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Decision-Based Evidence-Making: More Disgrace From UN Panel on Climate Change

They claim more certainty than ever in dangerous warming, while their own report's data contradict the statement.

By Tom Harris and Jay Lehr, PJ Media, Oct 11, 2013

<http://pjmedia.com/blog/decision-based-evidence-making-more-disgrace-from-un-panel-on-climate-change/?singlepage=true>

Climate Guru Puts ‘Global Warming on Ice

Low sunspot activity means Earth chilling until at least 2030

Interview of Tim Ball, WND Radio, Oct 6, 2013

<http://www.wnd.com/2013/10/climate-guru-puts-global-warming-on-ice/#b3Eew3FQa2kOkc6F.99>

Confidence levels inside and outside an argument

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 6, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/06/confidence-levels-inside-and-outside-an-argument/>

[SEPP Comment: A rather long post discussing IPCC's use of the logical fallacy of appealing to the consequences of belief]

The Taxonomy of Climate Opinion

By Barry Brill, WUWT, Oct 8, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/08/the-taxonomy-of-climate-opinion/>

Climate Models' Tendency to Simulate Too Much Warming and the IPCC's Attempt to Cover That Up

By Paul Knappenberger and Patrick Michaels, CATO, Oct 10, 2013

<http://www.cato.org/blog/climate-models-tendency-simulate-too-much-warming-ipccs-attempt-cover>

Does Global Warming Science Matter?

By Dennis Avery, Canada Free Press, Oct 11, 2013

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/58490>

Climate change 'scientists' are just another pressure group

The IPCC and its reports have been shaped by a close-knit group of scientists, all dedicated to the cause

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, Oct 5, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/climatechange/10356276/Climate-change-scientists-are-just-another-pressure-group.html>

Climate change is dominated by the water cycle, not carbon dioxide

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Oct 7, 2013

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2013/oct/7/climate-change-dominated-water-cycle-not-carbon-di/>

[SEPP Comment: The headline is a bit much.]

Pay No Attention to the Bad Data

Behind the curtain at the IPCC.

By Steven Hayward, Weekly Standard, Oct 14, 2013

http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/pay-no-attention-bad-data_759168.html

The climate alarmists have lost the debate: it's time we stopped indulging their poisonous fantasy

By James Delingpole, Telegraph, UK, Oct 6, 2013 [H/t Sam Karnick]

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100238550/the-climate-alarmists-have-lost-the-debate-its-time-we-stopped-indulging-their-poisonous-fantasy/>

The Media's Collusion in the IPCC's Irrational Fifth Assessment Conclusions

By Peter Glover, Energy Tribune, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/79413/the-medias-collusion-in-the-ipccs-irrational-fifth-assessment-conclusions#sthash.5jEzMxk8.dpbs>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

Ball or aerosol?

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 7, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/10/7/ball-or-aerosol.html>

[SEPP Comment: The public face of a high level of certainty disappears in private.]

Confidence, Doubt and Climate Change

By Nick Dunbar, His Blog, Oct 4, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.nickdunbar.net/articles/confidence-doubt-and-climate-change/>

[SEPP Comment: The public announcements stress great certainty, the details of AR5 show greater uncertainty than in the AR4.]

Clouds of (slightly less) unknowing

Researchers are beginning to understand aerosols and clouds better. The result is to lower estimates of how much they cool the climate

By Staff Writer, Economist, Oct 5, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21587194-researchers-are-beginning-to-understand-aerosols-and-clouds-better-result?src=scn/tw/te/pe/cloudsofslightlylessunknowing>

Seeking a Common Ground

The Danger of Hanging Your Hat on No Future Warming

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Oct 11, 2013

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2013/10/the-danger-of-hanging-your-hat-on-no-future-warming/>

Understanding multi-decadal climate changes

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 8, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/08/understanding-multi-decadal-climate-changes/>

[SEPP Comment: Reporting on a workshop hosted by the National Taiwan University]

Rising Sea Levels?

By Anthony Cox, NCTCS, Oct 9, 2013

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2013/10/rising-sea-levels.html>

Climate change sceptics aren't all alike, so don't tar them with the same brush

Denying the sceptics a voice on the IPCC report is surely bad for democracy and bad for science

By Ehsan Masood, Guardian, UK, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/oct/09/climate-change-sceptics-not-all-alike>

Lowering Standards

The Economic Case for Climate Action

World Bank, IMF Joint Seminar, Oct 8, 2013 [H/t Bud Bromley]

<http://www.imf.org/external/am/2013/seminars/climate/index.htm###>

Questioning European Green

Misguided energy policies have put Europe on a path to economic decline

By Larry Bell, City A.M., Oct 11, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.cityam.com/article/1381452108/misguided-energy-policies-have-put-europe-path-economic-decline>

The tyranny of renewable energy targets

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Oct 10, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/tyranny-renewable-energy-targets>

Crash boom bang

The smart money is starting to abandon the CO2 vessel

By Fred Mueller, WUWT, Oct 5, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/05/crash-boom-bang/>

Electricity Prices To Skyrocket

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Oct 10, 2013

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2013/10/10/electricity-prices-to-skyrocket/>

Reign of madness

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 11, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/10/11/reign-of-madness.html>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Axe green tax or energy bills will go up every year for a decade, says energy chief

Ministers are urged to initiate an immediate review of Britain's entire green energy strategy or risk forcing household gas and electricity bills up every year for the rest of the decade

By Steve Hawkes, Telegraph, UK, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/10371369/Axe-green-tax-or-energy-bills-will-go-up-every-year-for-a-decade-says-energy-chief.html>

The cost of climate

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t Anne Debeil]

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2013/10/10/the-cost-of-climate.html>

[SEPP Comment: How many preventable deaths from cold?]

German 'Land of Industry' Jeopardized by Green Push, Lobby Says

By Stefan Nicola, Bloomberg, Oct 9, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-09/german-land-of-industry-jeopardized-by-green-push-lobby-says.html>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Will Cooling Temperature And Economic Climates Finally Take The Wind Out Of Failed Energy Policies?

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/10/08/will-cooling-temperature-and-economic-climates-finally-take-the-wind-out-of-failed-energy-policies/>

Funding Issues

Green Climate Fund meets amid cash problems

By Staff Writer, EurActiv, Oct 11, 2013

<http://www.euractiv.com/development-policy/meeting-green-fund-amid-failure-news-530927>

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

D.C. climate will shift in 2047, researchers say; tropics will feel unprecedented change first

By Lenny Bernstein, Washington Post, Oct 9, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/dc-climate-will-shift-in-2047-researchers-say-tropics-will-feel-unprecedented-change-first/2013/10/09/f581b25e-3062-11e3-bbed-a8a60c601153_story.html

Link to paper: The projected timing of climate departure from recent variability

By Mora, et al. Nature, No Date

<http://www.soc.hawaii.edu/mora/PublicationsCopyRighted/Mora%20038.pdf>

Time of emergence of a warming signal

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 9, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/09/time-of-emergence-of-a-warming-signal/>

[SEPP Comment: Curry gives partially favorable review of the study immediately above.]

Get ready to adapt: Climate goes off the charts by 2047

By Alister Doyle, Reuters, MSN News, Oct 9, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://news.msn.com/science-technology/get-ready-to-adapt-climate-goes-off-the-charts-by-2047-1>

End Of The World Set For 2047. Plan Accordingly

By William Briggs, His Blog, Oct 10, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=9443>

[SEPP Comment: See links immediately above.]

Just in Time for Halloween Come Some Scary Global Warming Predictions

By Paul Knappenberger and Patrick Michaels, CATO, Oct 10, 2013

<http://www.cato.org/blog/just-time-halloween-come-some-scary-global-warming-predictions>

[SEPP Comment: See links above.]

Inconvenient Uncertainties

By Gernot Wagner and Martin Weitzman, Op-Ed, NYT, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/11/opinion/inconvenient-uncertainties.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=1&

Terrestrial ecosystems at risk of major shifts as temperatures increase

By Barbara Ferreira, Eurek Alert, Oct 8, 2013

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2013-10/egu-tea_1100713.php

[The scientist] hopes the new results can help inform the ongoing negotiations on climate mitigation targets, "as well as planning adaptation to unavoidable change."

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Lord Deben: Climate change science is 'akin to evidence linking cigarettes to cancer'

Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change warns some sceptics are being given too much coverage in the media

By Heather Saul, Independent, Oct 9, 2013

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/lord-deben-climate-change-science-is-akin-to-evidence-linking-cigarettes-to-cancer-8869266.html>

Metaphorical climate monsters

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Oct 4, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/10/04/peter-foster-metaphorical-climate-monsters/>

Schellnhuber Warns: Ocean Belch Would “Shock-Heat” Lower Troposphere Another 36°C Celsius (To Over 122°F)!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 10, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/10/schellnhuber-warns-ocean-belch-of-warmth-would-shock-heat-lower-troposphere-another-36c-celsius-to-over-50c/>

Why the media has gone silent on climate change

Climate change deniers have been waging a PR war on scientists who promote a path towards a post carbon economy.

By Hilal Elver, Al Jazeera, Oct 10, 2013

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/10/why-media-has-gone-silent-climate-change-20131081204138506.html>

Hilal Elver is Research Professor in Global Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Co-Director of the Climate Change Project.

[SEPP Comment: No discussion about the failure of Nature to obey her thoughts.]

Changing Weather

“Most Severe Winter Start In 200 Years!” + Euro Municipalities Now Ignoring Foolish Predictions Of Warm Winters

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 12, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/12/most-severe-start-of-winter-in-200-years-european-municipalities-now-ignoring-foolish-predictions-of-warm-winters/>

[SEPP Comment: One storm does not make a winter.]

Changing Climate

Medieval Warm Period in Other Asian Countries (Not including China, Russian or Japan)

By Staff Writers, SPPI and CO2 Science, Oct 9, 2013

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/originals/medieval_warm_period_in_other_asian_countries.htm
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Changing Seas

Bangladesh sea level rise

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 7, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/07/bangladesh-sea-level-rise/>

Rising Sea Levels?

By Anthony Cox, NCTCS, Oct 9, 2013

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2013/10/rising-sea-levels.html>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Global Sea Ice Overview, Walrus Gathering and Northern Regional Sea Ice Retrospective

By Just the Facts, WUWT, Oct 6, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/06/global-sea-ice-overview-walrus-gathering-and-northern-regional-sea-ice-retrospective/>

Giant channels discovered beneath Antarctic ice shelf

By Staff Writers, Exeter, UK (SPX), Oct 09, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Giant_channels_discovered_beneath_Antarctic_ice_shelf_999.html

Acidic Waters

Oceans are unprecedentedly alkaline

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 7, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/10/7/oceans-are-unprecedentedly-alkaline.html>

Ocean Acidification and Northwest Shellfish: Did the Seattle Times Get the Story Right?

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, Oct 9, 2013

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2013/10/ocean-acidification-and-northwest.html>

[SEPP Comment: An explanation of why enhanced atmospheric CO₂ probably did not cause recent shellfish problems from someone who is concerned about atmospheric CO₂. Mass also explains that oceans are not becoming an acid.]

Sassy Scallops

How will shellfish fare as ocean conditions shift?

By Elizabeth Halliday, Oceanus, Oct 9, 2013

<http://www.whoi.edu/oceanus/v2/viewArticle.do?id=177790>

[SEPP Comment: The test appears to be manipulative. Why not grow different sets of scallops in tanks with different pH levels? Transferring the scallops among tanks with different pH levels may be the cause of the found abnormalities.]

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Bt sweet corn can reduce insecticide use

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Oct 09, 2013

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Bt_sweet_corn_can_reduce_insecticide_use_999.html

Hawaii takes hypocrisy to new level

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Oct 9, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/10/hawaii-takes-hypocrisy-to-new-level/>

Norway's wheat production impacted by Climate Change

By David Archibald, WUWT, Oct 5, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/05/norways-wheat-production-impacted-by-climate-change/>

[SEPP Comment: A cooling climate can be dangerous.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Measuring and Modeling Global Vegetation Growth: 1982-2009

Reference: Mao, J., Shi, X., Thornton, P.E., Hoffman, F.M., Zhu, Z. and Myneni, R.B. 2013.

Global latitudinal-asymmetric vegetation growth trends and their driving mechanisms: 1982-2009. *Remote Sensing* 5: 1484-1497.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/8oct2013a1.html>

The CO₂ fertilization effect of the carbon dioxide emitted to the atmosphere by mankind's burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, gas and oil, is beginning to assume its vaulted position of being a

tremendous *boon to the biosphere*, as all of humanity and the entirety of the world's animal life depend ultimately upon having a sufficient supply of plant life to sustain themselves.

The Impact of Global-Warming-Induced Diurnal Temperature Range Reduction on Hospital Emergency Room Admissions in Beijing, China

Reference: Wang, M-z., Zheng, S., He, S-l., Li, B., Teng, H-j., Wang, S-g., Yin, L., Shang, K-z. and Li, T-s. 2013. The association between diurnal temperature range and emergency room admissions for cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive and genitourinary disease among the elderly: A time series study. *Science of the Total Environment* 456-457: 370-375.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/8oct2013a2.html>

The results of Wang et al., combined with those of Karl et al. (1984, 1991), make it clear that the diurnal nature of the global warming of the past century or so has helped to reduce the incidence of many life-threatening health problems of the elderly in Beijing, China, just as it has also done for many people, both old and young, in a number of other countries - including Australia (Xu et al., 2013), Hong Kong (Tam et al., 2009) and Korea (Lim et al., 2012) - as well as other parts of China (Kan et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2013).

Tropical Tree Seedlings Exposed to Elevated Nighttime Air Temperatures

Reference: Krause, G.H., Cheesman, A.W., Winter, K., Krause, B. and Virgo, A. 2013. Thermal tolerance, net CO₂ exchange and growth of a tropical tree species, *Ficus insipida*, cultivated at elevated daytime and nighttime temperatures. *Journal of Plant Physiology* 170: 822-827.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/8oct2013a3.html>

Krause *et al.* write that their most striking result was "the profound increase in biomass accumulation of plants under elevated nighttime temperature," which "contrasts with the widely assumed negative impact of increased nighttime temperature upon tropical tree growth and the general paradigm that warmer temperatures reduce tree growth in the tropics."

The Fate of Boreal Peatland Carbon in a Warming World

Reference: Loisel, J. and Yu, Z. 2013. Recent acceleration of carbon accumulation in a boreal peatland, south central Alaska. *Journal of Geophysical Research (Biogeosciences)* 118: 41-53.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/9oct2013a3.html>

In the concluding words of the two researchers, "these results are contrary to the widespread notion that higher temperature will increase peat decay and associated carbon dioxide release from peatlands to the atmosphere, contributing to the positive carbon cycle-climate feedback to global warming." Indeed, just the opposite appears to be the case in the real world of nature.

Litigation Issues

Supreme Court to Review Federal Court Decision Vacating CSAPR

By Sonal Patel, Power Mag, Oct 10, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/supreme-court-to-review-federal-court-decision-vacating-csapr/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2762276&hq_l=8&hq_v=5e660500d0

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Report: Carbon taxes, trading bring most cost-effective pollution cuts

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Oct 9, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/327443-report-carbon-taxes-trading-bring-most-cost-effective-pollution-cuts>

Link to report; climate and Carbon: Aligning Prices and Policies

By Staff Writers, OECD, Oct, 2013

<http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5k3z11hjg6r7.pdf?expires=1381513498&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=77809ADC00C6349DB7486850295AF1B7>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Let the wind PTC die down immediately

By Nicolas Loris, Heritage Foundation, Oct 8, 2013

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/10/wind-production-tax-credit-ptc-extension>

The diseconomy of the production tax credit

By Lisa Linowes, Wind Action, Oct 10, 2013

<http://www.windaction.org/posts/38754-the-diseconomy-of-the-production-tax-credit#.UIb0SICbPWs>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

An Uncritical View Of EPA: Why I Agree With Obama

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 10, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/10/10/an-uncritical-view-of-epa-why-i-agree-with-obama/>

[SEPP Comment: Clever!]

EPA power grab threatens Chesapeake Bay farmers

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Oct 11, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/examiner-editorial-epa-power-grab-threatens-chesapeake-bay-farmers/article/2537125?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest%20Reoccurring%20-%2010/11/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest

Industry pans low-sulfur gas regulations as costly, unneeded

By Ben Goad, The Hill, Oct 10, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energyenvironment/327847-industry-pans-low-sulfur-gas-regulations-as-costly-unneeded->

[SEPP Comment: The research on the supposed health benefits should be made public.]

UK fracking ambitions threatened by EU warning over methane emissions

The EU authorities have opened a new front in efforts to clamp down on shale gas, warning that the carbon footprint from methane emissions may be high enough to call into question the whole future of fracking in Europe.

By Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, Telegraph, UK, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/oilandgas/10370306/UK-fracking-ambitions-threatened-by-EU-warning-over-methane-emissions.html>

Energy Issues – Non-US

How Much Power Does Power Africa Really Need?

By Todd Moss and Madeleine Gleave, Center for Global Development, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t Roger Pielke, Jr.]

<http://www.cgdev.org/blog/how-much-power-does-power-africa-really-need>

[SEPP Comment: Significant numbers.]

Western Europe consumes less natural gas, more coal

By Staff Writers, PennEnergy Oct 8, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.pennenergy.com/articles/pennenergy/2013/10/western-europe-less-gas-power-more-coal-power.html>

[SEPP Comment: The indicated European landed price of LNG is about \$10.00 per million BTUs. If the transportation cost (including compression, etc.) is \$6 per million BTUs, and the US price for gas is about \$4 per million BTU, there is not much of a profit in shipping LNG from the US to Europe.]

Beijing aims to switch from coal to natural gas

By Staff Writers, Beijing (UPI), Oct 7, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Beijing_aims_to_switch_from_coal_to_natural_gas_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Replace some coal-fired power plants with natural gas ones.]

Indonesia's Increased Gasoline Demand Casts Shadow Over its Energy Planners

By Tim Daiss, Energy Tribune, Oct 14, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/79435/indonesias-increased-gasoline-demand-casts-shadow-over-its-energy-planners#sthash.wJ8r2Ny2.dpbs>

Energy Issues -- US

A Threat to Texas' World-Class Energy Market

By Staff Writers, NCPA, Oct 9, 2013

http://www.ncpa.org/sub/dpd/index.php?Article_ID=23685&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DPD

Link to study: A Texas Capacity Market: The Push for Subsidies

By Kathleen Hunker, Texas Public Policy Foundation, September 2013

<http://www.texaspolicy.com/sites/default/files/documents/2013-09-PP28-TexasCapacityMarketPushforSubsidies-CEF-KathleenHunker.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: Replace that which works well, but has a few imperfections, with that which works poorly, but it yields great profits to special interest groups.]

New England's Largest Coal and Oil Power Plant to Close

By Aaron Larson, Power Mag, Oct 10, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/new-englands-largest-coal-and-oil-power-plant-to-close/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2762276&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e660500d0

Washington's Control of Energy

Top Obama climate aide stepping down

By Ben Geman, the Hill Oct 7, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/326979-top-white-house-climate-aide-to-depart>

[SEPP Comment: The day after Sen. Vitter specifically requested that she testify before a Senate committee hearing. See link immediately below.]

Vitter asks Obama for federal witnesses at climate change hearing

By Julian Hattem, The Hill, Oct 7, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energyenvironment/326909-vitter-asks-obama-for-federal-witnesses-at-climate-change-hearing->

AEA's tactic: If you can't win, delay

By Margo Thorning, Washington (UPI), Sep 30, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Outside_View_AEAs_tactic_If_you_cant_win_delay_999.html

Is the US Falling Behind Canada in Exporting LNG to Japan?

By Michael Economides, Energy Tribune, Oct 9, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/79416/is-the-us-falling-behind-canada-in-exporting-lng-to-japan#sthash.MMsDCvIu.dpbs>

No Keystone XL pipeline approval this year: company

By Staff Writers, Ottawa (AFP), Oct 02, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/No_Keystone_XL_pipeline_approval_this_year_company_999.html

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Good News About Fracking

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Oct 8, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/10/08/good-news-about-fracking/>

U.S. expected to be largest producer of petroleum and natural gas hydrocarbons in 2013

By Hannah Breul, Linda Doman, et al. EIA, Oct 4, 2013

<http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.cfm?id=13251>

Return of King Coal?

Coal is the proven path to elevating the human condition.

By Frank Clemente, Energy Facts Weekly, Oct 7, 2013

<http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=29bc7d5d85828d574f86c157a&id=45669869e5&e=>

World Coal Association Promotes Practical Steps to Combat Climate Change

By Aaron Larson, Power Mag, Oct 10, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/world-coal-association-promotes-practical-steps-to-combat-climate-change/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2762276&hq_l=9&hq_v=5e660500d0

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Can bacteria combat oil spill disasters?

By Staff Writers, Leipzig, Germany (SPX) Oct 01, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Can_bacteria_combat_oil_spill_disasters_999.html

Methane seeps of the deep sea: A bacteria feast for lithodid crabs

By Staff Writers, Potsdam, Germany (SPX), Oct 10, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Methane_seeps_of_the_deep_sea_A_bacteria_feast_for_lithodid_crabs_999.html

Link to paper: Methane-Carbon Flow into the Benthic Food Web at Cold Seeps – A Case Study from the Costa Rica Subduction Zone

By Niemann, et al. Plos One, Oct 7, 2013

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0074894>

E. coli found in Colorado flood zones, but no oil, gas contamination

By Staff Writers, Denver Post, Oct 8, 2013

http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_24264793/e-coli-found-colorado-flood-zones-but-no

North Dakota Oil Spill: Tesoro Corp. Pipeline Breaks Near Tioga; Dumps More Than 20,000 Barrels Of Crude

By James MacPherson, AP, Oct 10, 2013

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/10/north-dakota-oil-spill-tesoro_n_4079323.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

First U.S. Concentrating Solar Power Plant with Thermal Storage Begins Operations

By Thomas Overton, Power Mag, Oct 9, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/first-u-s-concentrating-solar-power-plant-with-thermal-storage-begins-operations/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2762276&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

Gulf Coast beckons wind farms when West Texas gusts fade

By Staff Writers, Bloomberg, Oct 11, 2013

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2013/10/11/gulf-coast-beckons-wind-farms-when-west-texas-gusts-fade/>

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

Fallacious Claims Prop Up Ethanol

By Paul Driessen, Townhall, Oct 6, 2013

http://townhall.com/columnists/pauldriessen/2013/10/06/fallacious-claims-prop-up-ethanol-n1717824?utm_source=thdaily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nl

Forty Years After OPEC Embargo, U.S. Is Energy Giant

By Robert Bryce, Bloomberg, Oct 10, 2013 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-10/forty-years-after-opec-embargo-u-s-is-energy-giant.html>

[SEPP Comment: A mindset formed 40 years ago continues to paralyze US energy policy. Yet, Washington prevents development of US energy resources on US government controlled property.]

Industry sues EPA over Renewable Fuel Standard

By Ben Goad, The Hill, Oct 8, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/court-battles/327269-industry-sues-epa-over-renewable-fuel-standard->

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Reasons For Developing Electric Vehicles

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Oct 11, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/10/11/reasons-for-developing-electric-vehicles/>

[SEPP Comment: They are weak.]

All Fired Up About Tesla

By Eric Peters, American Spectator, Oct 9, 2013

<http://spectator.org/archives/2013/10/09/all-fired-up-about-tesla>

[SEPP Comment: The high performance of the Tesla is unsustainable.]

Carbon Schemes

Carbon Capture and Sequestration Falling Further Behind Demand

By Thomas Overton, Power Mag, Oct 10, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/carbon-capture-and-sequestration-falling-further-behind-demand/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2762276&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

Environmental Industry

Russia charges all 30 Greenpeace activists with piracy

By Staff Writers, Moscow (AFP), Oct 03, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Russia_charges_all_30_Greenpeace_activists_with_piracy_999.html

Other Scientific News

Animal mission to space gives clues to astronauts' vision problems

By Staff Writers, Moscow (UPI), Oct 4, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Animal_mission_to_space_gives_clues_to_astronauts_vision_problems_999.html

Englert And Higgs Awarded Nobel Prize In Physics For 2013

By Staff Writers, Stockholm, Sweden (SPX), Oct 08, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Englert_And_Higgs_Awarded_Nobel_Prize_In_Physics_For_2013_999.html

Early spring warming has greatest effect on breaking bud

By Staff Writers, Durham NC (SPX), Oct 09, 2013

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Early_spring_warming_has_greatest_effect_on_breaking_bud_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

3-D printed microscopic cages confine bacteria in tiny zoos for the study of infections

By Staff Writers, Austin TX (SPX), Oct 09, 2013

http://www.interndaily.com/reports/3D_printed_microscopic_cages_confine_bacteria_in_tiny_zoos_for_the_study_of_infections_999.html

The inexorable nature of technological progress

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Oct 7, 2013

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/the-inexorable-nature-of-technological-progress.aspx>
[SEPP Comment: Moore's law coming to an end? Ridley errs on the labor-wage cost of electric lighting in 1880. Thomas Edison did not open the Pearl Street Power Station until 1882.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Airy fairy theory

By John Brignell, Number Watch, Oct 6, 2013

<http://www.numberwatch.co.uk/2013%20October.htm#Airy>

An implication of the verbiage here is that the further modelling is based on guessed coefficients or, even worse, coefficients obtained from a computer model based on guessed coefficients.

[SEPP Comment: Dismissing the claim by the US National Center for Atmospheric Research that it "developed a global electric circuit model by adding an additional layer to a climate model."]

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ARTICLES:

1. The Shutdown in Print

Number of pages in the Federal Register on October 9: six.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304066404579125663359861806.html?mod=ITP_opinion_2

Nine days into the partial government shutdown, the operative word is partial. The best estimates are that about 83% of government outlays are still flowing, including to the military, Social Security, Medicare, airport screeners and the Postal Service. As for the rest, one benefit of the shutdown is that it has reminded the country that it can function well without the dozens of federal bodies that exist solely to layer more burdens on the private economy.

Consider the evidence in the Federal Register, which is the record of new government rules that Washington is imposing on the rest of us. Here are the number of pages published on certain recent days in the Register: 498 pages on September 11, 193 on September 17, 369 on September 20, and 401 on September 30. But after the shutdown, the number falls to 12 pages on October 7 and all of six on October 9. And yet our glorious Republic still stands.

The 401 pages on September 30 included such proud bureaucratic work as: a proposed Agricultural Marketing Service rule to increase assessment rates for blueberry promotion, a notice from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration about exemptions for commercial vehicle operators with diabetes, and a proposal from the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide threatened status for the bird known as the rufa red knot. Maybe the shutdown is helping the economy.

2. A Chemistry Breakthrough That Could Fuel a Revolution

Now methanol can be made from natural gas and captured carbon dioxide.

By George Olah and Chris Cox, WSJ, Oct 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324577304579057623877297840.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

In the three weeks since the Obama administration issued its long-promised proposal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, it has become clear the plan is far from perfect. By placing the burden of expensive new carbon capture and sequestration technology on the U.S. alone, and potentially requiring steep cuts in domestic energy to conform to carbon caps, the proposal could send the U.S. economy into shock without making a significant dent in global emissions.

There is a better approach that can reduce greenhouse-gas emissions while growing the economy and increasing U.S. energy independence.

In place of expensive mandates and wasteful subsidies, what is needed are powerful economic incentives. These incentives should operate not just in the U.S., but in other countries as well.

Thanks to recent developments in chemistry, a new way to convert carbon dioxide into methanol—a simple alcohol now used primarily by industry but increasingly attracting attention as transportation fuel—can now make it profitable for America and the world to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions.

At laboratories such as the University of Southern California's Loker Hydrocarbon Research Institute (founded by George Olah, one of the authors here), researchers have discovered how to produce methanol at significantly lower cost than gasoline directly from carbon dioxide. So instead of capturing and "sequestering" carbon dioxide—the Obama administration's current plan is to bury it—this environmental pariah can be recycled into fuel for autos, trucks and ships.

Related breakthroughs in chemistry now make it possible to efficiently convert natural gas from shale into methanol. Hydraulic fracturing is making shale gas so inexpensive and abundant that America now taps more natural gas than either Saudi Arabia or Russia. Until now, however, that abundance of supply has not translated directly into benefits for drivers in the form of lower fuel costs, or reduced dependence on foreign oil. The methanol-conversion process can be a game changer, because shale gas can immediately be put to use as liquid transportation fuel.

Methanol has long been known as a superior fuel for cars, one that is better for the environment than either gasoline or ethanol. Beginning in 1989, the California Energy Commission tested the viability of methanol as a vehicle fuel and found that it generates much lower vehicle emissions. Methanol-gasoline blends have cleaner burning properties than gasoline alone, reducing harmful NOx emissions—mono-nitrogen oxides, which produce smog and acid rain—and polluting particulate matter.

Methanol also provides higher performance. It has an octane rating of 100, greater than premium gasoline, one reason that pure methanol was used for decades to fuel the race cars at the Indianapolis 500. Yet putting methanol in the gas tank is economical, too. It is significantly cheaper per mile driven than either gasoline or ethanol. Unlike ethanol, methanol does not raise food prices.

These advantages are not limited to cars. Swedish advances in modified diesel engines have opened the way for using methanol in diesel-powered trucks and maritime transport. An independent MIT study in 2011 on "The Future of Natural Gas" led by Ernest Moniz, now the U.S. Energy Secretary, concluded that methanol is the best use of natural or shale gas in transportation.

At the University of Southern California, we have taken this idea much further, developing the concept of a comprehensive methanol economy supported by much enabling chemistry. (The university and the inventors stand to profit from patents on the processes involved.)

These new ways of converting shale gas and recycling carbon dioxide into methanol have already moved from the laboratory to wider deployment. In Iceland, the George Olah Renewable Methanol Plant, opened last year by Carbon Recycling International, is converting carbon dioxide from geothermal sources into methanol, using cheap geothermal electrical energy. The plant has demonstrated that recycling carbon dioxide is not only possible but commercially feasible.

Instead of paying extravagant sums to sequester unwanted carbon dioxide, we now can recycle it into valuable fuel while mitigating carbon-dioxide emissions. But one thing stands in the way. What is needed to permit large-scale use of this technology in the U.S. is an end to anticompetitive laws.

Given the advantages of methanol, it is not surprising that millions of U.S. and European cars today operate on gasoline mixed with methanol in countries around the world. Not so in America.

That is because for years, federal law has subsidized corn-based ethanol. Since 1980, those subsidies—largely in the form of tariff protections and tax credits—have exceeded \$45 billion. The subsidies expired in 2011, but Congress continues to mandate that the oil and gas industry purchase ever-larger quantities of ethanol each year to be blended into gasoline. All of this has tilted the playing field so that superior fuels such as methanol cannot compete.

There is another crippling legacy of this pro-ethanol government policy: Manufacturers of cars for the American market honor their warranties only for vehicles using mandated fuels (gasoline and diesel), which in turn may contain only ethanol as a blend. One means of addressing this inequity would be for Congress to pass the bipartisan Open Fuel Standard Act of 2013, which would put methanol, natural gas, and biodiesel on the same footing as ethanol (but without subsidies and without telling consumers which one to choose) for use in flex-fuel cars.

Little is required to achieve the objectives of a healthier environment, stronger economic growth, lower fuel costs and increasing energy independence that new technology and chemistry offer. We don't need to spend new billions of taxpayers' money on subsidies and imports. Federal law should allow other high-quality alternatives to gasoline—including methanol—to compete. If the Obama administration truly wants to do something about carbon dioxide from coal-fired power plants, the solution is as close as the family car.

Dr. Olah, a Nobel Laureate in chemistry, is a professor of chemistry and engineering at the University of Southern California. Mr. Cox, a USC trustee and member of the Loker Institute's board of advisers, is president of Bingham Consulting LLC.

3. Honk if You Love the Mass-Produced Automobile

Critics note: Cars will soon use less energy and emit less pollution than public transit.

By Randal O'Toole, WSJ, Oct 4, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324549004579070813264002126.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: The 100 year anniversary of Henry Ford's moving assembly line.]

Monday, Oct. 7, will mark the 100th anniversary of the opening of Henry Ford's moving assembly line for producing the Model T. This innovative production system allowed Ford to double worker pay while cutting the price of his cars in half, making it possible, for the first time, for auto workers to buy the cars they built.

Time magazine lists the Model T among its "50 worst cars of all time" because "the consequences of putting every living soul on gas-powered wheels" were (supposedly) so negative. The Obama administration seems to agree with that bleak summation. Its recent strategic plan for the Department of Transportation focuses exclusively on such negative consequences, which allegedly include the high dollar cost of driving, poorly designed cities, greenhouse gases and obesity. The "Livable Communities" section of the plan, for instance, says that Americans drive too much because cities are designed to make us "auto dependent," and the plan's goal is to rebuild cities to induce people to drive less.

In fact, many of the supposed negative costs of cars are purely imaginary, while others are rapidly declining. Each year's crop of new cars is safer, more fuel-efficient and less polluting than before. Department of Energy data show that in 1970 cars used twice as much energy per passenger mile as did mass transit. Today, they are practically tied, and in a few years driving will use less energy and emit less pollution than public transit.

For more than 60 years, Americans have consistently spent around 9% of their personal incomes on driving, even though per-capita miles have tripled since 1950. According to data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics—counting both user costs and subsidies—public transportation costs nearly four times as much per passenger mile as driving, while Amtrak costs well over twice as much.

The costs of driving are overwhelmed by the benefits of mass-produced automobiles, benefits largely ignored by the Obama administration and various anti-auto groups. Ford democratized mobility: Today, 91% of American households have at least one car, and 96% of commuters live in a household with at least one car. Curiously, Census Bureau statistics indicate that more than 20% of commuters who live in carless households still get to work by driving alone (apparently in borrowed cars).

By tripling urban travel speeds, autos gave workers access to better jobs and employers access to a wider pool of workers, contributing to a huge increase in worker productivity. Per-capita GDP has increased by nearly nine times in the last century, and autos are responsible for a large share of that increase.

Automobiles relieved people of the need to live in cramped tenements that were within walking distance of their jobs. By giving workers access to cheap, unregulated land at the urban periphery, cars contributed to a 50% rise in homeownership rates since 1940. Cars also gave everyone access to a huge variety of low-cost consumer goods. In 1913, the average grocery store had fewer than 500 products for sale; today, the average is more than 20,000. Without cars, modern retailers from Krogers to Whole Foods, Wal-Mart to Costco, and Tru-Value to Restoration Hardware simply could not exist.

Cars were an essential ingredient in both the civil rights and women's rights movements. The Montgomery bus boycott succeeded because enough blacks owned cars that they could share rides to work with former bus riders. Women's rights became a certainty when enough families owned two cars so that both spouses could drive to work.

Although cars are often blamed for urban sprawl, in fact they have preserved far more productive farm and forest land than urban areas have consumed. Before cars, trucks and tractors replaced animal power, farmers devoted close to a third of their land to relatively unproductive pasture. Since 1913, close to 200 million acres of that pasture has been converted to productive crop or forest land. By comparison, all the low-density suburbs in America occupy well under 100 million acres.

Mass-produced automobiles gave low- and moderate-income people access to forms of recreation previously available only to the rich. For example, in 1912, fewer than one out of 4,000 Americans visited Yellowstone Park; last year, it was more than one out of 100. Autos greatly contributed to human health and safety. Thanks to paved streets and automotive technology, fire departments and paramedics save hundreds of thousands of homes and thousands of lives each year.

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in 2005, New Orleans had the second-lowest per-capita auto ownership of any major city in America. As documented in news reports at the time, a result of the immobility was tragedy as hundreds of people died and tens of thousands were stuck

in the city. When Hurricane Rita hit Houston a few weeks later, autos allowed four million people to evacuate with almost no casualties.

Personally, I hate to be behind the wheel of a car and look forward to driverless cars. But as an economist, I realize that the mass-produced auto is one of the greatest inventions in history. Instead of trying to reduce driving, we should encourage it while continuing to make it safer, cleaner and more energy efficient.

Mr. O'Toole is a senior fellow with the Cato Institute and author of "Gridlock: Why We're Stuck in Traffic and What to Do About It" (Cato, 2010).

4. Using 'Sue and Settle' to Thwart Oil and Gas Drillers The Endangered Species Act is being employed more than ever to block development.

By Stephen Moore, WSJ, Oct 4, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579115234181105684.html?mod=W>
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Last week the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and an environmental advocacy group agreed to a legal settlement that will place nine species—including the Panama City crayfish, moccasinshell mussel and boreal toad—on the fast track for placement on the endangered species list. It is only the latest of many such listings.

The Center for Biological Diversity has petitioned Fish and Wildlife to designate some 250 species as endangered since 2008. Many of CBD's petitions—and lawsuits—are still in the pipeline. About 97% of the species that are designated as endangered never move off the list.

Next March, Fish and Wildlife will make a determination about whether to add the lesser prairie chicken, found in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Kansas to the list. Harold Hamm, president of Continental Resources, says that the habitat for the prairie chicken overlaps "some of the most promising land for oil and gas leases in the country."

Many Westerners suspect that this environmental activism isn't only or even mostly about saving species and obscure subspecies. Instead, it is about restricting land use on hundreds of thousands of acres of private and state land. The concern is that if these species are listed as endangered, their habitat could be placed off limits for economic development.

In the 1980s, environmentalists successfully used a listing of the Northern Spotted Owl as threatened to cripple the timber industry in Oregon and Washington, throwing many thousands out of jobs. This is the playbook now being used by groups like the CBD—which boasts on its website of its desire to end most oil and gas production in the United States.

Since taking office, the Obama administration and its green allies inside and outside federal agencies have been making expanded use of a tactic called "sue and settle" to issue new and expensive regulations. Groups like CBD and WildEarth Guardians, for example, petition Fish and Wildlife to list a species as endangered. Other environmental groups use a similar tactic to get new water and air regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency. Then, sometimes the very same day, the environmental groups file a lawsuit against Fish and Wildlife or the EPA to force the government to act—arguing that the regulatory process is too slow.

Amos Eno, a former Fish and Wildlife Service official who worked to save the grizzly bear and the condor, is critical of the tactic. Mr. Eno, who now runs Resources First, says the money wasted on these lawsuits could be used on conservation efforts to actually save species from extinction.

Because the federal agencies include former employees of green organizations, sue and settle can be a collaborative, not adversarial, process. The agency may be only too happy to sign a consent decree that courts then rubber stamp. Often, state and industry officials directly affected by the settlements have no opportunity to weigh in.

Increasingly, sue and settle is how rules are made in Washington. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has found that more than 60 times in the last four years the EPA agreed to settlements with environmental groups to pass regulations that in some cases impose tens of billions of dollars of costs on industry and land owners. The feds have even paid green groups millions of dollars in legal fees for the favor of suing the government.

The Obama administration didn't invent sue and settle, but the pace has increased dramatically since 2009—an era that Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt calls "sue and settle on steroids."

Last September Mr. Pruitt and 11 state attorneys general presented a Freedom of Information Act request to investigate the communications between the Obama administration and environmental litigants. Their suspicion is that the two are secretly working hand in hand to grease the process of regulating industries it doesn't like. A year has passed, but the EPA has refused to fully comply.

This summer Mr. Pruitt has joined with the other attorneys general—including from Texas and Utah—to sue the Obama administration to comply with the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Pruitt also believes that sue and settle "is an end run around the Administrative Procedures Act." This is the law that governs how regulations are promulgated, and requires among other things transparency and a reliance on science to justify new rules. "An administration which claims to only want to 'follow the science' has exploited a litigation mechanism to enact new rules imposed on us without reviewing the science," Mr. Pruitt says.

The attorneys general also cite new EPA regional haze rules—which came into being because of sue and settle—that could raise electricity costs in their states by as much as 20%. On behalf of his fellow attorneys general, Mr. Pruitt says that "we're very worried that under Obama sue and settle will be used by the EPA to issue new regulations on fracking." This could kneecap the oil and gas boom in Western states.

In its report "Sue and Settle: Regulating Behind Closed Doors," the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has counted more than 100 new major rules "with estimated compliance costs of more than \$100 million annually" that arose from this tactic. The result is a giant tax on the economy brought to you by the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund with little or no input or oversight from Congress.

Sen. Charles Grassley (R., Iowa) and Rep. Doug Collins (R., Ga.) have introduced "Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2013" that would require all proposed consent decrees to be posted for 60 days for public comment before being filed with a court—and allow affected parties to challenge them. Members of Congress in both parties who are worried about the Obama

regulatory assault will need to take corrective action if they have any hope of a true economic turnaround.

Mr. Moore is a member of the Journal's editorial board.

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