

The Week That Was: 2013-12-21 (December 21, 2013)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: • *“We’re spending money that we don’t have, to solve a problem that doesn’t exist, at the behest of people we didn’t elect.”* Douglas Carswell, Tory MP for Clacton, UK

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Number of the Week: 80%

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In 2014, we will continue to hear false claims of global warming/climate change, and face a large number of proposed EPA regulations that will do little for the environment but will certainly retard or even stop economic growth.

Our task for 2014 is to challenge the false claims and to show that most of these regulations are destructive, unscientific, and unnecessary. For a more complete statement of goals please see www.SEPP.org.

Also, we will address regulations from other Federal agencies that desire to control or stop the clean use of coal as a fuel, the expansion of oil and natural gas production in the US, and invoke false issues such as the “social cost of carbon”, to support needless environmental regulations restricting economic growth and general prosperity.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

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Please Note: There will be no TWTW on December 28. TWTW will resume on January 4, 2014

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THIS WEEK:

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

House of Commons: In October, the Energy and Climate Change Committee of the U.K. House of Commons requested comments on the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) by the UN

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The request included specific questions such as how robust are the conclusions, how much scope is there to questions the report's conclusions, what areas need further effort to reduce the levels of uncertainty? This week the Committee published some of the responses.

In general, institutions such as the Royal Meteorological Society and the Royal Society supported the AR5. A number of independent groups did not. Craig Idso, Bob Carter, Fred Singer, and Willie Soon submitted comments on behalf of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). The comments referenced the NIPCC reports and were severely critical of AR5. The criticisms include that the conclusions are not robust, a proper scientific investigation has not been conducted, the hypotheses are not falsifiable, the IPCC has not provided proof that recent global warming/climate change is beyond the range of natural variability, thus the IPCC has failed to meet the burden of proof that humans are the cause. Further, the IPCC ignores the work of many who disagree with its reports.

Independent climate researcher Nicholas Lewis uses the opportunity to extensively discuss the sensitivity of the climate to increasing carbon dioxide (CO₂). Under a heading of "Poor experimental design and unsuitable data, Lewis asserts there are major problems with the estimates of the influence of aerosols (small particles or liquid droplets in the atmosphere that may be of natural or human origin) to include estimating the influence aerosols from global temperature data. [Since temperature data is used to estimate the influence of CO₂, the influence of aerosols must be estimated separately.]

Richard Lindzen uses the opportunity to challenge the entire process. *Given the destructive, expensive and corrupting nature of the proposed (or, alas, implemented) policies (as well as their demonstrable irrelevance to climate) leaves one with a disturbing view of the proposed agenda. It would appear that the privileged members of the global society regard as dogma that the rest of humanity is a blight on the planet, and all effort should be devoted to preventing their economic improvement and development.*

Lindzen attaches a prior paper *Falsification of climate models used in experimentation and scenario construction*. The introduction in the paper underscores the major problems in the approach of the IPCC and those entities that are categorized as the climate establishment: *The notion of 'falsification' plays a central role in science when applied to a theory which is a coherent chain of reasoning where each step depends on the preceding step. Theories frequently lead to models, but, unfortunately, climate models do not constitute a theory. Rather, the models at issue are attempts to solve the relevant equations for motion, energy, composition, etc. using numerical methods with inadequate resolution, where unresolved processes like boundary layer turbulence, convection, clouds, gravity waves, etc. are parameterized. The parameterizations are generally ad hoc devices designed to behave in a manner that is thought to be appropriate where 'appropriate' sometimes simply means that the parameterization is designed to compensate for obvious model problems. In addition, fundamental model inputs such as aerosol distributions and properties, solar forcing, and even the radiative forcing by important greenhouse gases are, at best, only approximate, and are sometimes almost completely unknown. In the latter case, they become little more than adjustable parameters. The problem, from the perspective of 'falsification' is that the resulting models get many things demonstrably wrong, but that does not mean that they get everything wrong. Thus, it is possible that though models may fail to predict something like global mean temperature over extended periods of time, they might still be right concerning the long term impact of greenhouse gases. Falsification, thus, does not simply mean*

showing that models fail for many things, but rather that specific aspects of the models are wrong. With respect to climate concerns, there are several aspects that are of central importance:

1) The sensitivity of global mean temperature anomaly to increasing greenhouse forcing.

2) The relation of global mean temperature anomaly to the various other features that are the current focus of much of our climate change concerns: extreme weather, sea level rise, etc.

It should be noted that the above concern models for which increases in greenhouse gases have been specified, and do not specifically concern the origins of these increases. There may be legitimate questions as to how much of the increase is due to emissions, but these are not addressed in the present context.

In short, climate science as proclaimed by the IPCC is a morass where what is scientific knowledge cannot be easily separated from speculation and what is wrong. The links to these responses and more are found under U.K. Parliament: Seeking a Common Ground.

Enter the PNAS: The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) is publishing a special feature on climate impacts. The introductory piece starts with the fable of how blind men describe an elephant if each one can only touch a piece of it. Supposedly bringing these pieces together will illuminate us on the dire impacts from global warming/climate change. It states: *By all accounts the impacts on our physical environment and society would be starkly different in our planet warmed by “just” 2°C, by a “dangerous 4°C, or by a “mind-boggling 6-8 °C.* The article announces the Inter-Sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (ISI-PIP).

The project includes more than 30 research teams from 12 countries systematically comparing state-of-the-art computer simulations of climate change impacts on a broad range of sectors. The effort is coordinated by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Austria and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany whose director is Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, a co-author of several of the articles, including the one quoted above.

The first article on water scarcity gives a flavor of what can be expected. *“Here we use a large ensemble of global hydrological models (GHMs) forced by five global climate models and the latest greenhouse-gas concentration scenarios (Representative Concentration Pathways) to synthesize the **current knowledge about climate change impacts on water resources.** We show that **climate change is likely to exacerbate regional and global water scarcity considerably.** In particular, the ensemble average projects that a global warming of 2 °C above present (approximately 2.7 °C above preindustrial) will confront an additional approximate 15% of the global population with a severe decrease in water resources...”* [Boldface added]

In short, speculation from computer models that have not been validated is called knowledge. As John Christy emphasized last week, all groups of models overestimate the warming trends over the tropics by some 2 to 5 times. Rather than undergoing the difficult, but rewarding, task of validating a global climate model, the new effort will just add to the morass. See links under Lowering Standards – A PNAS Special Feature.

Oscillations: German scientists H. Luedecke and C.O. Weiss had an interesting post on Watts Up With That in which they assert that 2 separate cycles can account for virtually all the global temperature change since about 1750. The cycles are the 65 year cycle called the Atlantic/Pacific

oscillation (AMO/PDO) and a 200+ year cycle of solar activity. Based on their analysis the authors state the maximum warming influence of doubling of atmospheric CO₂ would be 0.1° to 0.2° (C?). If correct, this renders the entire global warming/climate change apparatus obsolete. The historic part of the work was published by Climate of the Past.

Anthony Watts urges caution when considering the claim. All too often, scrupulous work turns out to be a curve fitting exercise. A tight statistical fit does not need to apply into the future.

In correspondence, Apollo scientist Harold Doiron said he found an approximately 62 year cycle in the surface temperature data published by the Hadley Centre and the Climatic Research Unit (HadCRUT4). Starting in 1850, the HadCRUT4 is a shorter data set than the central European one used by the German scientists. Doiron is focusing on an upper bound analysis on the maximum possible warming impact from a doubling of atmospheric CO₂, which he estimates is about 1.5-1.6 °C, or at the lower end of the range published by the IPCC of 1.5-4.5 °C. Doiron is circulating his work among The Right Climate Stuff research team and hopes to publish it early next year. Would PNAS publish such an upper bound analysis after publishing statements such as: *society would be starkly different in our planet warmed by “just” 2°C, by a “dangerous 4°C, or by a “mind-boggling 6-8 °C?*

The US Global Change Research Program has a budget in excess of \$2 Billion, yet US government funded scientists have failed to perform an upper bound analysis. That retired scientists such as Doiron are doing this needed work speaks volumes on the quality of government funded climate science. TWTW will discuss Doiron's critical work when it is finished. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

How Low Can NOAA Go? This week NOAA announced that, globally, November 2013 was the hottest November in 134 years of record keeping. A quick look at the monthly atmospheric temperatures published by the University of Alabama at Huntsville shows this claim is false.

NOAA and the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) have repeatedly lowered historic US temperature records (such as the 1930s) so their pronouncements about temperature history cannot be accepted. Writing in ICECAP, following his amusing poem, Joe Bastardi of WeatherBELL Analytics states what he thinks of NOAA's latest. See links under Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up, Measurement Issues, and Questioning the Orthodoxy

EPA: John Beale, a senior regulator at EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, which develops policies and regulations regarding air pollution and global warming/climate change, was sentenced to prison for theft of government property and impersonating a CIA officer. How he bilked the EPA for years, including under the current Administrator, is fascinating reading.

Beale's dishonesty should not be ascribed to EPA employees in general. However, the agency has developed a cult-like mission of regulation, without ever questioning the scientific basis for said regulations. This started under the first Administrator, William Ruckelshaus, who banned DDT on the claim it causes cancer in humans without adequate scientific evidence. It is doubtful that Beale's conduct will serve to improve the attitudes at the EPA. See Article # 3 and links under EPA and other Regulators on the March

Stiff Upper Lip: Last week TWTW commented that the UK Climate Change Committee insists that the UK continue its disastrous energy policy, which is driving up costs to those who can

afford it the least. Writing in the *Mail*, David Rose reports that four of the nine-person Climate Change Committee, official watchdog that dictates green energy policy, are, or were until recently, being paid by firms that benefit from committee decisions. It is easier to keep a stiff upper lip when being well-paid. See link under Questioning European Green.

Science and Religion: As discussed in last week's TWTW, it has become fashionable among some politicians and climate alarmists to question the religious attitudes of skeptics. SEPP Board Member and Ph.D. in physics from MIT, Tom Sheahen writes why he finds nothing incompatible between religion and science. See Article # 1.

Additions and Corrections: Reader Richard Karpinski pointed out missing critical word: "In general, the models over-estimated the observed temperatures **trends** by 2 to 5 times." Dennis Ambler brought up the work he did on the CFC story which was published by SPPI. It can be found at:

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/images/stories/papers/originals/another_day_another_dollar_cfc_s_and_the_un.pdf

TWTW always appreciates additions and corrections. Thank you.

Number of the Week: 80%. In its early release summary of the Annual Energy Outlook 2014, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports that fossil fuels will continue to provide 80%, or more, of US primary energy consumption to 2040. Renewables (except biofuels) will provide an estimated 10% in 2040, up from 8% now. The wind, solar, etc. industries are not happy with the report. It is refreshing to read a report that is not overly influenced by the administration and political trends. EIA apparently realizes that unreliable, expensive electricity is abhorrent to consumers.

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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. Faith within Science

By Thomas P. Sheahen, American Thinker, Dec 16, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/12/faith_within_science.html

2. Hunger Games and Climate Games

By Charles Battig, Virginia Free Citizen, Dec 15, 2013

<http://virginiafreecitizen.com/2013/12/15/hunger-games-climate-games/>

3. John Beale's EPA

An amazing fraud by an architect of government climate policies.

Editorial, WSJ, Dec 19, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303773704579266022892025230?mod=djemEditorialPage_h

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

Redditt went and Diddit: Critics blast Reddit over climate-change skeptic ban

By Adam Shaw, ICECAP, Dec 19, 2013

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/political-climate/redditt_went_and_diddit_critics_blast_reddit_over_climate_change_skeptic_ba/

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Claim: Solar, AMO, & PDO cycles combined reproduce the global climate of the past

By H. Luedecke and C.O.Weiss, WUWT, Dec 17, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/17/solar-amo-pdo-cycles-combined-reproduce-the-global-climate-of-the-past/>

Celebrated Physicist Calls IPCC Summary ‘Deeply Unscientific’

By Donna Laframboise NFC, Dec 20, 2013

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2013/12/20/celebrated-physicist-calls-ipcc-summary-deeply-unscientific/>

Whither went the warmer weather?

17 years, 3 months with no global warming

By Christopher Monckton, WUWT, Dec 16, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/16/whither-went-the-warmer-weather/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

2014 Is Key to Fighting Climate Change

By Ned Helme, Real Clear Energy, Dec 16, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2013/12/16/2014_is_key_to_fighting_climate_change.htm
↓

Last-minute deals kept alive the hope that a global effort could prevent what the New York Times called “a ruinous rise in temperatures” caused by air pollution.

[SEPP Comment: Every year since 2009 has been called a key year for this declining effort.]

Decarbonizing our future

No question carbon released in the burning of fossil fuels is contributing to climate change. Sid Morrison and K.C. Golden, who disagree on energy strategy, agree on this: we must decarbonize our energy system.

By Sid Morrison and K.C. Golden, Seattle Times, Dec 15, 2013 [H/t Tom Haywood.]

http://seattletimes.com/html/opinion/2022458489_guestkcgoldensidmorrisonclimatechange16xml.html

[SEPP Comment: Claiming that increase CO2 concentration is disrupting our climate is simple physics is false on its face.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Unveil the Truth About Global Warming | Commentary

By H. Leighton Steward, Roll Call, Dec 19, 2013

http://www.rollcall.com/news/unveil_the_truth_about_global_warming_commentary-229764-1.html?pos=oopih

Al Gore, Soothsayer

Editorial, Washington Times, Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/dec/16/editorial-al-gore-soothsayer/>

10 Headlines Show Why Global Warming Alarm Is Bunk

Editorial, IBD, Dec 17, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/121713-683293-kerry-obsessed-with-nonexistent-global-warming.htm?p=full>

A Visit From 'Saint Joe'

By Joe Bastardi, ICECAP, Dec 18, 2013

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/a_visit_from_saint_joe1/

[SEPP Comment: A needed bit of humor.]

AGW Science's Constant Appeals To Authority Only Confirm Its Total Fallacy On Consensus

By Ed Caryl, No Tricks Zone, Dec 18, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/18/climate-sciences-constant-appeals-to-authority-only-confirm-its-total-fallacy/>

Climate Scientist Blasts “Ruthless”, Dangerous And “Dictatorial” German Climate Science That Bullies And Silences Dissent

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Dec 17, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/17/climate-scientist-blasts-ruthless-dangerous-and-dictatorial-german-climate-science-bullies-and-silences-dissent/>

Global Warming Gone AWOL

By Jeffrey Folks, American Thinker, Dec 20, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/12/global_warming_gone_awol.html

IPCC Called a ‘Global Thinker of 2013’

By Donna Laframboise, NFC, Dec 14, 2013

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2013/12/14/ipcc-called-a-global-thinker-of-2013/>

Luke Warming: Pan European Networks Interview With Benny Peiser

Pan European Networks speaks to the director of the Global Warming Policy Foundation about the findings and implications of the IPCC's 2013 Report

Transcript by Staff Writer, GWPF, Dec 15, 2013

<http://www.thegwgf.org/luke-warming-pan-european-networks-interview-benny-peiser/>

Lack of science literacy helps global warmists spread their gospel

By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Dec 19, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/lack-of-science-literacy-helps-global-warmists-spread-their-gospel/article/2541007?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest%20Reoccurring%20-%202012/20/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest

Social Benefits of Carbon

Can Migrating Plants Move Fast Enough to Avoid Projected Extinctions from Global Warming?

By Staff Writers, SPPI & CO2 Science, Dec 18, 2013

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

“... if the Earth did warm by a significant amount, for whatever reason, the best thing that could possibly happen to the planet would be for the air's CO₂ concentration to rise concurrently, or shortly thereafter; because there would then be either little need for the vegetation of the planet to migrate to cooler regions, or the required rate of migration and/or distance of travel would be much reduced from what overly-simplistic coupled climate-biology models have suggested.”

Problems in the Orthodoxy

UK's Cameron to EU: Don't stifle fracking with new laws

By Staff Writers, Reuters, Dec 17, 2013 [H/t Carbon Brief]

http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/17/britain-fracking-cameron-idUSL6N0JW2NU20131217?utm_source=Weekly+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=c01680c943-Carbon+Brief+Weekly+18+7+137+18+2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3ff5ea836a-c01680c943-215218249

72% of Britons say living standards more important than climate change

By Charlotte Malone, Blue and Green, Dec 18, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://blueandgreentomorrow.com/2013/12/18/72-of-britons-say-living-standards-more-important-than-climate-change/>

U.K. Parliament: Seeking a Common Ground

UK Parliament: IPCC 5th Assessment Review

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 18, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/18/uk-parliament-ipcc-5th-assessment-review/>

Link to submissions: IPCC 5th Assessment Review

Commons Energy and Climate Change Committee,

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/energy-and-climate-change-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/the-ipcc/?type=Written#pnlPublicationFilter>

Written evidence submitted by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (IPC0042) To Committee on Energy and Climate Change

By Idso, Carter, Singer, and Soon, NIPCC, Dec 17, 2013

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidenceHtml/4288>

Written evidence submitted by Professor Richard Lindzen (IPC0047) To Committee on Energy and Climate Change

By Richard Lindzen, Dec 17, 2013

[http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/energy-and-climate-change/Professor-Richard-Lindzen-\(IPC0047\).pdf](http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/energy-and-climate-change/Professor-Richard-Lindzen-(IPC0047).pdf)

Written evidence submitted by Nicholas Lewis (IPC0017) To Committee on Energy and Climate Change

By Nicholas Lewis, Dec 17, 2013

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidenceHtml/3989>

Seeking a Common Ground

Looking back...and forward

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Dec 20, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/looking-backand-forward>

The blogosphere and thought leaders

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 17, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/17/the-blogosphere-and-thought-leaders/>

Masters(?) of many trades

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 15, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/15/masters-of-many-trades/>

Lowering Standards

A discrepancy

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 19, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/19/a-discrepancy.html>

[SEPP Comment: The Royal Meteorological Society covering up the divergence between model projections and observations.]

Agency: 'Radical action' needed on climate

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 16, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193255-iea-says-coal-is-here-to-stay-but-change-is-needed>

[SEPP Comment: The IEA is clearly a politicized entity.]

The foolishness of the overqualified

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 17, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/17/the-foolishness-of-the-overqualified.html>

[SEPP Comment: The Royal Society of Arts supporting a report that: "The whole thing is intellectually vapid and so far removed from the reality of the climate debate as to suggest the author simply had nothing better to do with his time."]

Lowering Standards – A PNAS Special Edition

Recognizing the elephant in the room: Future climate impacts across sectors

By Staff Writers, Potsdam, Germany (SPX), Dec 19, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Recognizing_the_elephant_in_the_room_Future_climate_impacts_across_sectors_999.html

The elephant, the blind, and the intersectoral intercomparison of climate impacts

By: Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Katja Frieler, and Pavel Kabat, PNAS, No Date

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/12/13/1321791111>

Water scarcity escalating due to climate change, report says

By Rebecca Shabad, The Hill, Dec 17, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193350-water-scarcity-escalating-due-to-climate-change-report-says>

Link to report: Multimodel assessment of water scarcity under climate change

By Schewe, et al, PNAS, Dec 12, 2013

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/12/12/1222460110.full.pdf+html>

Assessing the impact of climate change on a global scale

By Staff Writers, Nottingham UK (SPX), Dec 19, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Assessing_the_impact_of_climate_change_on_a_global_scale_999.html

Apparently, 4 degrees spells climate doom

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 16, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/16/apparently-4-degrees-spells-climate-doom/>

[SEPP Comment: In a warmer world, carbon sinks will disappear. Such as those that created coal?]

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Climate Change: Federal Efforts Underway to Assess Water Infrastructure Vulnerabilities and Address Adaptation Challenges

By Staff Writers, GAO, Nov 14, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-23>

Questioning European Green

The fat-cat ecocrats exposed: Web of 'green' politicians, tycoons and power brokers who help each other benefit from billions raised on your bills

Four of nine-person Climate Change Committee, official watchdog that dictates green energy policy, are, or were until recently, being paid by firms that benefit from committee decisions

By David Rose, Mail, UK, Dec 14, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2523726/Web-green-politicians-tycoons-power-brokers-help-benefit-billions-raised-bills.html#ixzz2nV84KSiQ>

Davey's reckless gamble

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 20, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/20/daveys-reckless-gamble.html>

Eating or heating: the stark choice for many Brits as energy prices soar

In the UK thousands are struggling with rising energy costs. After last winter's record number of deaths from cold weather, pressure is mounting on the government to force energy companies to help the most vulnerable.

By Lars Bevanger, Deutsche Welle, DE, Dec 16, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dw.de/eating-or-heating-the-stark-choice-for-many-brits-as-energy-prices-soar/a-17298898>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

The great biofuels scandal

Biofuels are inefficient, cause hunger and air pollution, and cost taxpayers billions

By Bjørn Lomborg, The Telegraph, Dec 16, 2013 [H/t David Lessmann]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/energy/biofuels/10520736/The-great-biofuels-scandal.html>

US: Science and journalism take a vacation

By Paul Driessen, Hacer, Dec 18, 2013

<http://www.hacer.org/usa/?p=3433>

Decarbonization Updates

By Roger Pielke Jr, His Blog, Dec 16, 2013

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2013/12/decarbonization-updates.html>

[SEPP Comment: Analysis of U.K. Japan, and Australia of the difference between what politicians promised and what will likely to be achieved.]

Environmental concern disappears with economic instability

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 19, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/19/environmental-concern-disappears-with-economic-stability/>

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

Climate change will endanger caribou habitat

By Staff Writers, Calgary, Canada (SPX), Dec 19, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Climate_change_will_endanger_caribou_habitat_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Settlement and hunting, not climate change, drove the caribou out of the US.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

World experiences hottest November in 134 years: US

By Staff Writers, Space Daily, Dec 17, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/World_experiences_hottest_November_in_134_years_US_999.html

Claim: November 2013 is the ‘warmest ever’ – but will the real November 2013 temperature please stand up?

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 19, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/19/claim-november-2013-is-the-warmest-ever-but-will-the-real-november-2013-temperature-please-stand-up/>

November 2013 Russian “Hotspot” – Alarmists Are Overlooking Something

By Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Dec 20, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/20/november-2013-russian-hotspot-alarmists-are-overlooking-something/>

Climate alarmists' search for proof going cold

Even China's coal-burning is offered to explain lack of global warming.

By Mark Landsbaum, Orange County Register, Dec 13, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/warming-593355-global-temperature.html>

Models v. Observations

Causation And Correlation

By Matt Briggs, His Blog, Dec 18, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=10601>

Models Issues

Defining reality

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 16, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/16/defining-reality.html>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately below.]

A model world

In economics, climate science and public health, computer models help us decide how to act. But can we trust them?

By Jon Turney, Aeon, Dec 16, 2013

<http://aeon.co/magazine/world-views/should-we-trust-scientific-models-to-tell-us-what-to-do/>
[SEPP Comment: Even though models may describe some phenomena well, without predictive value, models remain an artifact with little policy value.]

How far should we trust models?

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 16, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/16/how-far-should-we-trust-models/>

[SEPP Comment: Commentary on the link immediately above.]

Climate-Model Misgivings

By Ian Roulstone, and John Northbury, Project Syndicate, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/ian-roulstone-and-john-norbury-describes-improvements-in-the-accuracy-of-climate-predictions>

We may not be inclined to trust politicians, but we do need to take the output of these well-honed algorithms seriously. Unlike many of us, our climate models are increasingly able to learn from their mistakes.

[SEPP Comment: What are the important climate predictions that have been confirmed, as claimed in the article?]

Measurement Issues

University of Alabama, Huntsville, Global Temperature Report

By John Christy, et al, November 2013

<http://nsstc.uah.edu/climate/index.html>

[SEPP Comment: No unusual November warming here.]

Changing Weather

The only difference between a hurricane, a cyclone, and a typhoon is the location where the storm occurs

By Staff Writers, NOAA, Accessed Dec 20, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/cyclone.html>

At AGU 2013: Are tornadoes getting stronger? No.

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 15, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/15/at-agu-2013-are-tornadoes-getting-stronger-no/>

Holy Land hit by heaviest snowfall in decades

By Staff Writers, Jerusalem (AFP), Dec 14, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Holy_Land_hit_by_heaviest_snowfall_in_decades_999.html

US snowpack in December is largest in a decade

By Douglas Main, NBC News, Dec 17, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://www.nbcnews.com/science/us-snowpack-december-largest-decade-2D11764485>

Tropics Go Wintery! ... Northern Thailand Declared Cold Disaster Zone ... Snow In Vietnam ... In Turkey “Animals Literally Freeze Where They Stand”!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Dec 19, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/19/tropics-go-wintery-northern-thailand-declared-cold-disaster-zone-in-turkey-animals-literally-freeze-where-they-stand-middle-east-shivers/>

[SEPP Comment: Headlines are usually exaggerations.]

Post-Sandy, Long Island barrier systems appear surprisingly sound

By Staff Writers, Austin TX (SPX), Dec 16, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Post_Sandy_Long_Island_barrier_systems_appear_surprisingly_sound_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The Long Island barrier islands were built by storms far more severe than Sandy.]

Changing Climate

‘Little Ice Ages’ Caused Suffering in Spain—as They Always Do

By: Dennis T. Avery, Center for Global Food Issues, Dec 18, 2013

<http://www.cgfi.org/2013/12/little-ice-ages-caused-suffering-in-spain-as-they-always-do-by-dennis-t-avery/>

German Scientists Show Natural Climate Cycles Dominated Over Last 7000 Years...Blaming Man Is “Witch-Hunting

New study from the Geosciences Center Potsdam: There have been 18 flooding phases in upper Austria over the last 7000 years

By Sebastian Lüning and Fritz Vahrenholt, Translated by P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Dec 21, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/21/german-scientists-show-natural-climate-cycles-dominated-over-last-7000-years-blaming-man-is-witch-hunting/>

Study: Earth was warmer in Roman, Medieval times

By Michael Astatz, Daily Caller, Dec 13, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/12/13/study-earth-was-warmer-in-roman-medieval-times/>

Changing Seas

Quelling The Rising Tide Of Sea Level Alarmism

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/12/16/quelling-the-rising-tide-of-sea-level-alarmism/>

If Manmade Greenhouse Gases Are Responsible for the Warming of the Global Oceans...

By Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Dec 19, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/19/if-manmade-greenhouse-gases-are-responsible-for-the-warming-of-the-global-oceans/>

[SEPP Comment: We should find it in the top layer of the oceans.]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Alpine glacier, unchanged for thousands of years, now melting

By Staff Writers, San Francisco CA (SPX), Dec 16, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Alpine_glacier_unchanged_for_thousands_of_years_now_melting_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Just like Oetzi, the Iceman, how did it get there?]

Good news for Arctic, as sea ice volume up by half

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Dec 16, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Good_news_for_Arctic_as_sea_ice_volume_up_by_half_999.html

Nature proves Al Gore wrong again

Gore's "ice free Arctic" prediction from five years ago, falsified by nature itself

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 16, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/16/nature-proves-al-gore-wrong-again/>

Changing Earth

Rising mountains dried out Central Asia

By Ker Than for Stanford News, Stanford CA (SPX), Dec 16, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Rising_mountains_dried_out_Central_Asia_999.html

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

On the Origin of Extreme Climatic Events

Reference: Kumar, A., Chen, M., Hoerling, M. and Eischeid, J. 2013. Do extreme climate events require extreme forcings? *Geophysical Research Letters* 40: 3440-3445.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/17dec2013a2.html>

[SEPP Comment: *The May-July 2012 drought in the Great Plains was within natural variability.*]

Atmospheric Blocking in the Northern Hemisphere

Reference: Masato, G., Hoskins, B.J. and Woollings, T. 2013. Winter and summer Northern Hemisphere blocking in CMIP5 models. *Journal of Climate* 26: 7044-7059.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/17dec2013a3.html>

[SEPP Comment: *Models do not match historic observations.*]

The Broad View of Holocene Climate from the Swedish Scande

Reference: Kullman, L. 2013. Ecological tree line history and palaeoclimate - review of mega-fossil evidence from the Swedish Scandes. *Boreas* 42: 555-567.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/18dec2013a1.html>

[SEPP Comment: *Warmer during the Roman Warm Period and the Medieval Warm Period.*]

Modeling the Tibetan Plateau Summer Monsoon

Reference: Duan, A., Hu, J. and Xiao, Z. 2013. The Tibetan Plateau summer monsoon in the CMIP5 simulations. *Journal of Climate* 26: 7747-7766.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/18dec2013a2.html>

Litigation Issues

'MASSIVE SEIZURE OF POWER': Climate scientists, economists challenge EPA

By Michael Bastasch, Daily Caller, Dec 18, 2013

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/12/18/massive-seizure-of-power-climate-scientists-economists-challenge-epa/#ixzz2nyUgnBkH>

Supreme Court Global Warming Case: What Legislative History Reveals about Congressional Intent

By Marlo Lewis, Master Resource, Dec 19, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/12/supreme-court-global-warming-case-what-legislative-history-reveals-about-congressional-intent/>

EPA, Climatology And The Courts: The Issue is Corrupted, Not Poor Science.

By Tim Ball, WUWT, Dec 19, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/19/epa-climatology-and-the-courts-the-issue-is-corrupted-not-poor-science/>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Remind me again why the West needs a carbon tax?

Man-made CO2 emissions 1965 -2012

By Ed Hoskins, WUWT, Dec 15, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/15/remind-me-again-why-the-west-needs-a-carbon-tax/>

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to many politicians in Europe and Washington, the political leaders of many developing countries are not lemmings, ready to follow the west over the cliff.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

National Renewable Electricity Standard: Why raise electricity prices?

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Dec 18, 2013

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2013/dec/18/national-renewable-electricity-standard-why-raise-/>

Regulators pose threat to EU green energy and industry

By Barbara Lewis, Reuters, Dec 16, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/12/16/stateaid-idUKL6N0JT0FE20131216>

Commission expected to announce formal probe on Wednesday

* Some say investigation alone will shatter confidence

* Carbon targets seen as too weak to encourage investment

[SEPP Comment: A look into Germany's alternative energy subsidies.]

Ugh: Senate Democrats pushing for an eleventh-hour extension of wind's all-important tax credit

By Erika Johnsen, Hot Air, Dec 18, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://hotair.com/archives/2013/12/18/ugh-senate-democrats-pushing-for-an-eleventh-hour-extension-of-winds-all-important-tax-credit/>

Dems call for extension of clean-energy tax incentives

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 16, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193290-dems-call-for-extension-of-clean-energy-tax-incentives>

[SEPP Comment: Apparently the wind advocates on the Hill do not believe the press releases by the wind industry on how well it is doing.]

EPA admits the ethanol mandate has become unrealistic

By Michael Bastasch, Daily Caller, Dec 12, 2013

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/12/12/epa-admits-the-ethanol-mandate-has-become-unrealistic/>

Government urged to cut cash to green energy in order to reduce bills

Thinktank says renewable energy subsidies should be cut if technologies fail to come down in cost under strict time limits

By Staff Writers, Guardian, UK, Dec 15, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/dec/16/government-cut-cash-green-energy-reduce-bills>

Lobbying, Cronyism and Section 1705 Loan Guarantees

Why the Department of Energy should stop guaranteeing loans for green energy projects

By Victor Nava and Julian Morris, Reason Foundation, Dec 3, 2013

<http://reason.org/studies/show/federal-loans-lobbying-cronyism>

Link to paper, Stimulating Green Electric Dreams

By Victor Nava and Julian Morris, Reason Foundation, Dec 3, 2013

http://reason.org/files/green_electric_dreams.pdf

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Climate change expert's fraud was 'crime of massive proportion,' say feds

By Michael Isikoff, NBC News, Dec 16, 2013

<http://investigations.nbcnews.com/news/2013/12/16/21911592-climate-change-experts-fraud-was-crime-of-massive-proportion-say-feds?lite>

EPA's fake spy sent to prison for 32 months

By Julian Hattem, The Hill, Dec 18, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193525-epas-fake-spy-sent-to-prison>

EPA unveils carbon capture regulations

By Ben Goad, The Hill, Dec 19, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energy-environment/193684-epa-unveils-carbon-capture-regulations>

Link to regulations: Hazardous Waste Management System: Conditional Exclusion for Carbon Dioxide Streams in Geologic Sequestration Activities Rulemaking

By Staff Writers, EPA, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.epa.gov/wastes/nonhaz/industrial/geo-sequester/>

[SEPP Comment: 75 Days for public comment.]

EPA Power Plant Regulations: A Backdoor Energy Tax

By Nicolas Loris, Kevin Dayaratna and David W. Kreutzer, Heritage Foundation, Dec 5, 2013

http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/12/epa-power-plant-regulations-a-backdoor-energy-tax?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=&utm_content=&utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Morning%2BBell

[SEPP Comment: Contains a state by state breakdown of coal resources, enough for 500 plus years at current rates of consumption.]

The Power-Mad EPA

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Dec 16, 2013

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2013/12/the-power-mad-epa.html>

Energy Issues – Non-US

Global energy demand to increase 35 percent: ExxonMobil

By Staff Writers, Irving, Texas (UPI), Dec 13, 2013

[http://www.energy-](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Global_energy_demand_to_increase_35_percent_ExxonMobil_999.html)

[daily.com/reports/Global_energy_demand_to_increase_35_percent_ExxonMobil_999.html](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Global_energy_demand_to_increase_35_percent_ExxonMobil_999.html)

Australia 'To Be An Energy Superpower' By Mid 2017

Morgan Stanley report predicts that gas exports will help country eliminate its current account deficit for the first time in four decades

By Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, The Daily Telegraph, Via GWPF, Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/australia-to-energy-superpower-mid-2017/>

Australian coal projects at risk of being 'stranded'

By Staff Writers, Brisbane, Australia (UPI), Dec 16, 2013

[http://www.energy-](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Australian_coal_projects_at_risk_of_being_stranded_999.html)

[daily.com/reports/Australian_coal_projects_at_risk_of_being_stranded_999.html](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Australian_coal_projects_at_risk_of_being_stranded_999.html)

Energy Issues -- US

EIA: Natural Gas to Overtake Coal by 2035

By Tomas Overton, Power, Dec 16, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/eia-projects-natural-gas-to-overtake-coal-by-2035/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2804252&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

Link to early release: AEO 2014 Early Release Overview

By Staff Writers, EIA, Dec 16, 2013

[http://www.eia.gov/forecasts/aeo/er/pdf/0383er\(2014\).pdf](http://www.eia.gov/forecasts/aeo/er/pdf/0383er(2014).pdf)

Fossil fuels will continue to supply > 80% of US energy through 2040, while renewables will play only a minor role

By Mark Perry, AEIdeas, Dec 16, 2013 [H/t George Nicholas]

<http://www.aei-ideas.org/2013/12/fossil-fuels-will-continue-to-supply-80-of-us-energy-through-2040-while-renewables-will-play-only-a-minor-role/>

US Annual Energy Outlook Continues To Low-Ball Renewable Energy Forecasts

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Dec 17, 2013

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/US_Annual_Energy_Outlook_Continues_To_Low_Ball_Renewable_Energy_Forecasts_999.html

Becoming Saudi America Isn't The Answer To Our Energy Problems

By Ken Backwell and James Conway, IBD, Dec 16, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials-on-the-right/121613-683103-becoming-saudi-america-isnt-the-answer-to-our-energy-problems.htm?p=full>

[SEPP Comment: Is the solution to changing oil prices an oil industry with both production and consumption controlled by an authoritarian state?]

Oil Trains Raise Concerns in Small Town, Cities

By Matthew Brown and Josh Funk, AP, Dec 19, 2013

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_OIL_TRAINS_FIRST_RESPONDERS?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

Washington's Control of Energy

Oil shipments to begin in Keystone XL's southern leg

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 17, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193409-oil-shipments-to-begin-in-keystone-xls-southern-leg>

[SEPP Comment: If it were not for Washington, the northern leg would be nearing completion.]

Feds not getting fair share of oil and gas dollars, report finds

By Zack Colman, Washington Examiner, Dec 17, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/feds-not-getting-fair-share-of-oil-and-gas-dollars-report-finds/article/2540865?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today%20Reoccurring%20-%2012/18/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today

GAO: Outdated Interior regs costing taxpayers

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 17, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193362-lacking-interior-system-muddles-taxpayer-returns-on-petroleum-royalties>

Interior Dept. Nominee Helped Steer Millions to Environmentalist Groups

Could potentially obstruct energy projects in new role

By Lachlan Markay, Washington Free Beacon, Dec 19, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://freebeacon.com/interior-dept-nominee-helped-steer-millions-to-environmentalist-groups/>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Fracking, the Larger Picture

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Dec 20, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/12/20/fracking-the-larger-picture/>

EU plan for fracking law threatens UK's shale gas boom

Owen Paterson plots fightback against European Commission over dinner in Brussels to win support for Britain's fracking industry on eve of new shale gas drilling round

By Tim Ross, The Telegraph, UK, Dec 15, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10518120/New-EU-fracking-law-plan-threatens-Britains-shale-gas-boom.html>

It Shale Be Done: Green Light For Fracking

THE government is to open up thousands of square miles to drilling for shale gas reserves, potentially leading to hundreds of rigs dotting the countryside.

By Jack Grimston and Danny Fortson, Sunday Times, UK, Via GWPF, Dec 15, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/shale-done-green-light-fracking/>

Return of King Coal?

Coal Must Embrace All-Out Battle with Eco-Bullies

Meekly accepting blame for climate change dooms the industry and the greater economy.

By Tim Ball and Tom Harris, PJ Media, Dec 18, 2013

<http://pjmedia.com/blog/coal-must-embrace-all-out-battle-with-eco-bullies/?singlepage=true>

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Nuclear Energy and Fears

NuScale SMR wins second DoE funding round

By Staff Writer, WNN, Dec 13, 2013

<http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NN-NuScale-SMR-wins-second-DoE-funding-round-1312137.html>

[SEPP Comment: Funding for small modular reactors (SMR).]

TEPCO to decommission surviving Fukushima reactors

By Staff Writers, Tokyo (AFP), Dec 18, 2013

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/TEPCO_to_decommission_surviving_Fukushima_reactors_999.html

USEC to Restructure, Seek Bankruptcy to Stimulate American Centrifuge Project

By Sonal Patel, Power, Dec 18, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/usec-to-restructure-seek-bankruptcy-to-stimulate-american-centrifuge-project/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2804252&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Wind Power Unclothed: ‘Economics in One Lesson’ Applied (Hazlitt in 1946 versus AWEA today)

By Travis Fisher, Master Resource, Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/12/wind-hazlitt-2/#more-28948>

[SEPP Comment: The special pleadings that applied in 1946 apply to the wind industry today.]

Wind Power Rivals Coal With \$1 Billion Order From Buffett

By Ehren Goossens, Bloomberg, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-12-17/wind-power-rivals-coal-with-1-billion-order-from-buffett.html>

Wind is the cheapest source of power in Iowa, and the deal indicates that turbines are becoming profitable without subsidies, according to Tom Kiernan, chief executive officer of the American Wind Energy Association trade group.

“If Congress were to remove all the subsidies from every energy source, the wind industry can compete on its own,” Kiernan said

[SEPP Comment: Further reason to stop tax credits for wind farms.]

More Wind Turbine Problems

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Dec 17, 2013

<http://ddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/12/17/more-wind-turbine-problems/>

Scottish Power becomes third firm to scrap UK offshore wind farm

By Karolin Schaps, Reuters, Dec 13, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/12/13/us-britain-scottishpower-wind-idUKBRE9BC0IZ20131213>

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

Algae to crude oil: Million-year natural process takes minutes in the lab

By Staff Writers, Richland WA (SPX), Dec 19, 2013

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/Algae_to_crude_oil_Million_year_natural_process_takes_minutes_in_the_lab_999.html

[SEPP Comment: At what cost?]

California Dreaming

California Energy Update: Part III

By Wayne Lusvardi, Master Resource, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/12/california-energy-update-iii/>

Environmental Industry

The Endangered Species Act & Counterfactual Arguments

By Matt Briggs, His Blog, Dec 20, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=10637>

The Endocrine-Disruptors Scare

More junk science takes aim at another American industry — agriculture.

By James Delingpole, National Review, Dec 19, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/366686/endocrine-disruptors-scare-james-delingpole>

Other Scientific News

Pollen has bigger influences on optical properties of the atmosphere than previously known

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 18, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/18/pollen-has-bigger-influences-on-optical-properties-of-the-atmosphere-than-previously-known/>

A Matter Of Gravity: Russia And Asia Pursue High Frontier As America Drifts Lost In Space

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/12/17/a-matter-of-gravity-russia-and-asia-pursue-high-frontier-as-america-drifts-lost-in-space/>

Behold the 'Plastisphere'

Colonies of microbes flourish on tiny bits in the ocean

By Lonny Lippsett, Oceanus, Dec 17, 2013

<http://www.who.edu/oceanus/feature/behold-the-plastisphere>

[SEPP Comment: The Woods Hole Center for Oceans and Human Health reports how life finds a way in the strangest of places.]

Change in Pacific nitrogen content tied to climate change

By Anne M Stark for LLNL News, Livermore CA (SPX), Dec 17, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Change_in_Pacific_nitrogen_content_tied_to_climate_change_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

The “Wager of the Decade” and Its Unfortunate Legacy

By Bill Gates, Gates Notes, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t Tom Sheahan]

http://www.thegatesnotes.com/Books/Personal/The-Bet?WT.mc_id=12_13_2013_TheBet_tw&WT.tsrc=Twitter

Climate Change Could Boost British Wine Industry

By Staff Writer, Environmental Leader, Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.environmentalleader.com/2013/12/16/climate-change-could-boost-british-wine-industry/>

[SEPP Comment: A return to the good-old-days of the Medieval Warm Period when Britain was self-sufficient in wine production – without the use of frost resistant hybrids, or Canadian root stock to prevent the vines roots from freezing. The discussion about declines in production elsewhere is non-science.]

Saving the Great Plains water supply

By Staff Writers, East Lansing MI (SPX), Dec 17, 2013

http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/Saving_the_Great_Plains_water_supply_999.html

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

How Offal! Global Warming Threatens the World's Haggis Supply!

By Patrick J. Michaels and Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, CATO, Dec 19, 2013

<http://www.cato.org/blog/how-offal-global-warming-threatens-worlds-haggis-supply>

Climate craziness of the week: Yes, we have no bananas, thanks to climate change

Going Bananas: Another Climate Change Hustle

By Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger and Patrick J. Michaels, WUWT, Dec 18, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/18/climate-craziness-of-the-week-yes-we-have-no-bananas-thanks-to-climate-change/>

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ARTICLES:

1. Faith within Science

By Thomas P. Sheahen, American Thinker, Dec 16, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/12/faith_within_science.html

For quite some time, science has been presented to the public in a distorted way. Reports of statements by scientists are often stated as absolutely certain truths, never mentioning any doubts or questions. Seldom do reporters inquire about how they became so certain, why they have such high confidence.

That image simply isn't true. A major disconnect exists between what really happens and reported science. Real science is always subject to revision, never "absolutely final." In everyday conversation, a person might say "I'm absolutely certain about that" but among responsible scientists, even the strongest affirmations always begin with "To the best of our scientific knowledge at this time ..."

Maybe, given the history of corrections in science (which come slowly), it might be wiser to show a little humility and allow for the possibility of a revision.

The 20th century gives a perfect example of how that process works, in the way Quantum Mechanics superseded Classical Mechanics. What we term Classical Mechanics was basically invented by Isaac Newton in the late 1600s, and refined by many other scientists over the next two centuries. By the end of the 19th century, it appeared to nearly everyone that Classical Mechanics was absolutely true.

Philosophers were making much of the concept of determinism that necessarily followed from the physics-principle that if you knew the exact position and momentum of all bodies at any one time, you could predict everything that would happen in the future. Among other things, this determinism implied that there are no real choices open to humans, no such thing as free will. It seemed to be necessary to choose either religion or science, but not both.

Imagine the difficulty of being a clergyman in those days, trying to convince your congregation that it's important to choose between good and evil, when the accepted "sure thing" science of the

day said that everything that happens is determined by position and momentum of particles, and humans are merely subject to blind molecular forces.

That philosophy of determinism also gave credibility to things like Social Darwinism and theories of racial superiority, which had very ugly consequences.

Then along came Quantum Mechanics circa 1925, which replaced Isaac Newton's equations with a more fundamental understanding of how atoms behave. Classical Mechanics was shown to be just a limiting special case of reality, applicable to big objects. Baseballs and trains still move as usual, but atoms behave quite differently from what had been believed. Philosophically, a very significant correction was forced upon Classical Mechanics: It is impossible to know both the position and the momentum of a particle exactly. That change completely undermined the philosophy of determinism.

As word got around that determinism was out, a lot of spokesmen for morality breathed a sigh of relief. From a religious point of view, it turned out that God created a pretty flexible universe after all.

Physicists, chemists, biologists and others immediately started using Quantum Mechanics to explore new ideas and invent new devices. An important change came over science, in that we must trust the testimony of others in order to grasp the experimental basis for the theory. Centuries ago, you could repeat for yourself all the original experiments of Faraday or Galileo, etc.; but no more - many quantum experiments are too complicated. You wind up believing what others state they observed. In that way, faith enters the realm of science. Today it's routine practice to read a technical journal and believe what another scientist says is valid. The progress of science has become an interlocking system of faith in other human beings.

One of the foremost physicists of the 20th century, Richard P. Feynman, famously said "Nobody understands Quantum Mechanics." That statement is very likely correct. One counter-quip is "shut up and calculate," meaning that Quantum Mechanics gives correct numerical answers, even if its philosophical interpretation is unclear. The accomplishments of Quantum Mechanics include transistors, lasers, satellite communications, cell phones and countless aspects of everyday life that we take for granted.

Is Quantum Mechanics the final word? No. Over the decades as new sub-atomic particles were discovered, it has been further corrected and advanced to become Quantum Electrodynamics, then Quantum Chromodynamics. In striving to assemble one theory that covers everything from quarks to galaxies, we have composed the Standard Model, which is certainly very comprehensive, but doesn't quite enable Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity to fit together.

Currently there is great attention given to a branch of theoretical physics called String Theory, which uses very elegant mathematics to form a picture of fundamental particles. Here the component of faith is even stronger: to get anywhere, you must believe that mathematical symmetry principles are the basis for all reality. String Theory does not make any predictions that can be tested experimentally; that shifts the balance even further away from the customary practice of physics, where experiments take precedence over hypotheses and theoretical models. For that reason, a finite fraction of physicists completely reject String Theory.

There are many other possibilities for corrections in the future. It is generally believed by cosmologists that most of the universe is composed of dark matter and dark energy, which are inaccessible to our observations. Dark matter is quite plausible: starting from our belief in the law of Conservation of Angular Momentum, we see that galaxies are rotating so fast they would fly apart, unless there is additional unseen (dark) matter present to hold them together. That is a reasonable conclusion.

On the other hand, dark energy is a bigger stretch! The universe seems to be expanding faster than it should, based on observations from spacecraft of the last two decades. To account for that, dark energy is postulated, along with a possible "fifth force" that drives the expansion of space. Again, we're dealing with something that cannot be seen; it is only faith in equations that justify the presumption that dark energy exists.

In the years ahead, further spacecraft will investigate the far reaches of the universe, and the hypothesis of dark energy may be revised. It's important to keep in mind that those investigations will be guided by theory that rests upon a large dose of faith. Scientists who understand the limits of their own profession are comfortable with this reality, and won't commit themselves to believing that any scientific theory is absolutely true and final.

Classical Mechanics is a very good theory ... for the range it covers. Likewise, Quantum Mechanics is very good in its applicable range. Will it too be superseded one day? Perhaps. The fact that I'm unable to imagine how doesn't make it impossible. It's a safe bet to anticipate future corrections.

There is a further lesson here. Knowing that faith and belief are significant components of science, it is reasonable to discern a similar role for faith and belief in other aspects of our lives. There is no exclusive single path to knowledge, nor does science have some exalted status with other pathways of learning relegated to second-class status. The human mind is very resourceful, combining different inputs to advance in understanding. Prudent scientists are humble enough to respect that.

In today's world, there are plentiful challenges to religious faith, and some of them lay claim to the "mantle of science." Ignoring the observational evidence from the universe we inhabit, some popularizers of science have invented speculations that the universe created itself, or that there are an infinite number of unobservable universes, etc. Those speculations are entertaining parlor games, not to be confused with rational science. None of these need be taken seriously.

What is worthy of serious attention is that the universe greatly exceeds human comprehension. The elegance and mathematical beauty of the laws that govern it virtually shout "intelligence!" at everyone who thinks about it. The most reasonable and responsible conclusion to draw is that the universe was created by that supreme intelligence. It's a fairly short step from there to the inference that God cares about the universe and the rational beings who inhabit it.

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2. Hunger Games and Climate Games

By Charles Battig, Virginia Free Citizen, Dec 15, 2013

<http://virginiafreecitizen.com/2013/12/15/hunger-games-climate-games/>

The school lunch program is a resounding success here in Albemarle County, Virginia. School kids are awash in food; no child is left behind in the new standards-of-lunch excesses.

As reported in Charlottesville-Tomorrow, December 5, 2013:

“Albemarle County Public Schools is conserving energy and teaching students green lessons while doing so. At its annual conference in Williamsburg, the Virginia School Boards Association honored Albemarle with the top environmental prize in the “Green Schools Challenge,” which encourages divisions to implement practices and policies to reduce their carbon footprints.”

“Nowhere are the efficiencies more apparent than at Henley Middle School’s Renewable Energy Resource Center, which features solar photovoltaic panels, a solar thermal system that heats water, and a wind turbine. The Center, which was funded in large part by a grant from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, has produced 120,000 kilowatt hours of electricity and prevented 88 tons of carbon dioxide emissions since 2012.”

The article concludes with:

“In addition to harnessing the wind and sun, Crozet and Meriwether Lewis elementary schools, and Jack Jouett and Sutherland middle schools have developed composting programs. These schools kept more than 126 tons of food from landfills and reduced their carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 900 metric tons.”

The standards of environmentalism see success through a different set of creeds than do ordinary folks. What was the taxpayer cost for the Henley Middle School Renewable Energy Resource Center? A savings of 120,000 kilowatt hours of electricity over two years represents an approximate saving of \$6,000 per year. The human body produces approximately 2.3 pounds (1.0 kg) of carbon dioxide per day per person just in its basic biological metabolic processes. Over 365 days, the averaged production of carbon dioxide by these bodily processes adds up to about 840 pounds, or 0.4 ton per person. The 88 tons of carbon dioxide prevented over two years by this project is therefore the approximate amount of carbon dioxide generated by 110 adults breathing over the two years.

Wow, that is a science lesson; was that what the students were taught? What were the students told would be the impact on the climate, or of any other environmental system, of their saving these 88 tons of carbon dioxide? The impact on global temperature would be unmeasurable... a grain of sand on the world of beaches.

Were they told that carbon dioxide is absolutely necessary to plant physiology and our survival? Their carbon dioxide saving deprived some plants of this atmospheric plant food.

The children are being indoctrinated in a scientifically meaningless ritual of minding their tiny carbon footprints. It does establish the State as the source of authority at a young age.

Rather than the sensible question as to why schools were generating 126 tons of food waste and at what taxpayer cost, school kids are being taught “green lessons.” Waste-not, want-not is replaced with composting programs and environmentally meaningless carbon footprint reductions. (See Virginia Tech Report)

Carbon dioxide reduction bragging rights become the reward. They are now praised for seeing their food waste become high-priced compost, rather than seeking solutions to reduce the initial food becoming waste.

This all brings to mind the recent movie hit *The Hunger Games* and its sequels. The recent *Hunger Games: Catching Fire* is a box-office hit with audiences young and old. The story's theme dramatizes an inspirational saga of individual courage in the face of centralized authoritarianism, and cult-media exploitation of a subjugated populous. Why do the movies and the original books of the trilogy find such an enthusiastic audience with the youth? The central theme of the story must resonate with the youthful quest for adventure, and an idealistic yearning for a super-hero to follow.

The youth of today are awash in multi-media driven news and news masquerading as entertainment. They can recognize the hypocrisy in the real world around them which abounds in movie-personality worship, sport-event analogues of the ancient Roman Coliseum arena, and central-government propaganda masquerading as fact. At their youthful age they can already sense the underlying shallowness in a life dominated by these substitutes for inner virtue, self-sacrifice, and un-politicized learning. A victorious warrior comes forth and challenges the system, and survives...that image is part of our cultural heritage spanning Homer's *Odyssey*, David and Goliath, Washington at Valley Forge, our "Greatest Generation" of WWII, and many others.

It is somewhat ironic that District 12 in the "*Hunger Games*" book is set in the coal-rich region that "was formerly known as Appalachia" where today hunger is no game, and a place not so far away from present-day Albemarle County. Rather than our schools so boastfully wasting food and redeeming themselves by making compost out of it, why not garner some real honor and send it, or its dollar equivalent, to current-day Appalachia?

The fictional country "Panem" of *Hunger Games* is mirrored by a governmental educational system in which our school children are indoctrinated with "green environmentalism" and a morbid preoccupation with meaningless carbon dioxide emissions. They are taught that in order for them and the environment to survive, they must monitor the carbon footprints of themselves and family, and perhaps that of their neighbors as well. Neither harmful climate change nor global temperature extremes have been factually linked to man-made carbon dioxide, even after Federal Government expenditures of over \$100 billion. During their lifetimes, none of these children have experienced increased global temperature, which has remained flat for seventeen years, yet they are being taught mandated ritualistic behavior to solve a non-problem.

It is not surprising to see these innocent participants in the "climate games" cheer on a mythical hero in *The Hunger Games*. Let a new hero step forward.

Dr. Charles Battig, is a retired physician and electrical engineer. In the 1960s he served as "principal scientist in bio-medical monitoring systems" at North American Aviation Los Angeles in support of the Apollo Moon Mission. Later he served in the U.S. Public Health Service at NIH, Bethesda MD, in the biomedical engineering branch. Following teaching appointments in anesthesiology at UCLA and Mt. Sinai, NYC, he entered the private practice of anesthesiology until retirement.

3. John Beale's EPA

An amazing fraud by an architect of government climate policies.

Editorial, WSJ, Dec 19, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303773704579266022892025230?mod=djemEditorialPage_h

Last month we told you about John Beale, the Environmental Protection Agency employee who bilked taxpayers out of almost \$900,000 by pretending to be a secret agent. Telling EPA colleagues that he was a CIA operative, Beale was paid for long absences while on imaginary missions for "Langley." Now there is a disturbing new question about John Beale that goes to the heart of the EPA's mission. What was he doing when he actually showed up for work?

In September, Beale pleaded guilty to theft of government property and agreed to pay \$886,186 in restitution and to forfeit another \$507,207. On Wednesday he was sentenced to 32 months in federal prison.

The Beale affair is a classic story of government waste, fraud and mismanagement. But it is much more than that, because Beale was no low-level bureaucrat, unknown to senior officials and operating in the depths of the agency. He was among the EPA's most senior, most highly paid officials, one entrusted with formulating the agency's most controversial policies. Thus the consequences of his EPA tenure go far beyond the specific fraud for which he will now go to prison.

From 1989 until 2013, Beale was employed in the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), which develops policies and regulations related to air pollution and climate change. It is the most powerful office within one of Washington's most powerful agencies, given the costs it can impose on American business and consumers. And for much of his time Beale was senior policy adviser. According to his plea agreement, his specific duties included assisting the head of OAR "in planning, policy implementation, direction, and control of EPA programs."

From 2009 until 2013, the head of OAR was Gina McCarthy, who is currently the EPA Administrator. So not only was Beale within view of senior managers as he pulled off his astounding fraud, he was directly managed by the woman who now runs the place. And if there was any doubt about how influential John Beale was in formulating key EPA policies, it seems to have been put to rest by the trade publication E&E News. Via a Freedom of Information Act request, E&E News obtained a collection of agency emails related to Beale.

At 10:44 a.m. EST on December 3, 2010, Ms. McCarthy wrote to her staff at OAR and reported: "I am pleased to let you know that John Beale will be resuming his role as the Immediate Office's lead for all of OAR's international work." She added: "Most of you know John well as he has been a very large presence in much of OAR's work for over 20 years. In addition to lead roles in the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, the early implementation of the Act, the development and negotiation of the National Low Emission Vehicle Program, and the 1997 [National Ambient Air Quality Standards] review, John served as OAR's lead for international work from 1990 thru [sic] 2005. Beginning in 1999, John managed OAR's work on climate change as well as all other international work."

Ms. McCarthy further gushed that "I am very excited to finally get the opportunity to work closely with him. In addition to the international work John will continue to work on various special projects for me."

There's more. In an odd conclusion to that December 2010 staff bulletin, Ms. McCarthy wrote that Beale "is supposed to be sitting in [office] 5426B of Ariel Rios North, but good luck finding him. We are keeping him well hidden so he won't get scooped away from OAR anytime soon." Few CEOs in private business could keep their jobs after lauding and entrusting with key responsibilities the perpetrator of a fraud against the company.

Beale's attorney John Kern says his client "has come to recognize that, beyond the motive of greed, his theft and deception were animated by a highly self-destructive and dysfunctional need to engage in excessively reckless, risky behavior." Mr. Kern adds that Beale was motivated "to manipulate those around him through the fabrication of grandiose narratives" because of "his insecurities."

Are we now supposed to believe that in contrast to his other lies, the work Beale chose to perform at EPA is the product of careful and honest analysis? What Congress needs to examine is whether the policies that the head of EPA says were shaped to a large degree by Beale were also based on fraud. Oh, and what Gina McCarthy knew or suspected, and why she so admired a fraudster.

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