

The Week That Was: 2013-10-26 (October 26, 2013)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *Our imagination is stretched to the utmost, not, as in fiction, to imagine things which are not really there, but just to comprehend those things which are there.* – Richard Feynman, *The Character of Physical Law* (1965)

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Number of the Week: \$1 Billion per day

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THIS WEEK:

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

THIS WEEK

NIPCC Review: Four of the authors on the latest report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), Craig Idso, Robert Carter, Fred Singer, and Willie Soon, have written a review of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). They find that the IPCC has retreated on at least 11 alarmist claims in prior reports. They also find the new SPM has at least 13 misleading or false statements, and that another 11 statements are phrased to mislead the readers or misrepresent important aspects of the science.

Among the retreats was that IPCC recognizes:

- Surface warming essentially stopped about 1998 even though there has been 7% increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) since then.
- Continents experienced a Medieval Warm Period and a Little Ice Age, which, of course, contradicts Mr. Mann's notorious hockey-stick.
- Antarctic sea ice expanded between 1979 and 2012, which is inconsistent with the claimed global warming.
- The models failed to forecast the observed failure of the globe to warm. The latest estimated range for a warming from a doubling of CO₂ is 1.5°C to 4.5°C (about 3 to 7°F), which is the same as the estimate made by the National Academy of Sciences 34 years ago.

The last retreat is particularly significant. According to government reports, since 1993 the US spent at least \$150 Billion on climate change activities, at least \$35 Billion on what was categorized as climate science; yet, there has been no improvement in the scientific knowledge of the influence of atmospheric CO₂ on temperatures. This failure to advance scientific knowledge supports Richard Lindzen's contention that the entire program is not designed to answer critical questions.

Among the 13 misleading or untrue statements uncovered by the NIPCC team are:

- "Probabilistic estimates of quantified measures of uncertainty in a finding are based on statistical analysis of observations or model results, or both, and expert judgment."
- "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s many of the observed changes are unprecedented."

- “The reduced trend in radiative forcing (1998-2012) is primarily due to volcanic eruptions.” The NIPCC team asserts there were no globally significant volcanic eruptions during the period.
- “The net radiative feedback due to all cloud types combined is likely positive. Uncertainty in the sign and magnitude of the cloud feedback is due primarily to continuing uncertainty in the impact of warming on low clouds.” The statement is inconsistent on its face.
- “The underlying assumption is that the models contain a perfect representation of the physics of the climate system and so can account accurately for all different forcings.” This is a false assumption because our knowledge is much less than complete.

The 11 instances of deceptive language include:

- “Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth’s surface than any preceding decade since 1850.”
- “In the Northern Hemisphere, 1983-2012 was likely the warmest 30-year period of the last 1400 years.”
- “The ocean has absorbed about 30% of the emitted anthropogenic carbon dioxide, causing ocean acidification.”

For further NIPCC comments and rebuttals to IPCC statements see link under NIPCC Reports. For Richard Lindzen’s critique of the climate establishment see link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Reliable Models: Given the enormous sums the US government has spent on climate studies, in what may be considered a strange announcement, MSN News reports that the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a division of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) have announced a program to develop climate models that will substantively contribute to the advancement of reliable regional and decadal climate predictions. Could it be that NSF and USDA recognize that global climate models cannot be used for predictions or is it an expansion of the failing programs? Please see links under Model Issues.

95% Certainty: Given the failure of nature to obey human global climate models, the IPCC’s claim of 95% certainty that most of the warming since the 1950s was due to human greenhouse gas emissions is without merit. In an amusing post, Roy Spencer and John Christy plot the results from **90 (ninety)** global climate models (CMIP5) and compare the results with observed average temperature from both surface and satellite measurements. They find that 95% (actually, 96.7%) of the models overestimate the temperature trends. Spencer suggests that the IPCC actually meant to say was that it is 95% sure its climate models are warming too much. Please see link under Models v. Observations.

\$3.2 Trillion: Craig Idso has estimated the social (monetary) benefits of enhanced atmospheric carbon dioxide. He estimates that between 1961 and 2011, the total monetary benefits come to \$3.2 Trillion, with over \$140 billion in 2011 alone. As atmospheric CO2 increases, these benefits increase.

Matt Ridley discusses a new book by Bjørn Lomborg, **How Much have Global Problems Cost the World?: A Scorecard from 1900 to 2050**, with emphasis on a chapter by Dutch economist Richard Tol, who estimates that global warming benefited humanity and will continue to benefit humanity until about 2080.

These and other estimates contradict the positions of US government agencies on the Social Costs of Carbon. Please see links under Social Benefits of Carbon.

Arctic and Antarctic Sea Ice. The Arctic melting season is over and it disappointed many alarmists. Arctic sea ice failed to melt as much as it has in the past few years, disrupting the trend and falsifying the predictions that the Arctic will be free of ice by 2013. Contradicting alarmists, polar bear expert Susan Crockford points out that the extent of the late season ice is not particularly important for polar bears. Spring ice is more important, when the bears are heavily feeding and are on the ice hunting seals.

It is unclear if the freezing season is over in the Antarctic. However, the extent of the Antarctic sea ice is the greatest since satellite measurements and according to scientists at the Alfred Wegener Institute, the volume of Antarctic ice is the greatest measured. These findings contradict claims by warming alarmists. See links under Changing Cryosphere.

Fires: Much is being made of the fire season in Australia with claims that the extensive fires are the result of global warming/climate change. David Evans points out that the fires are more due to excessive fuel loads than changes in climate. Long before Europeans came, aborigines cleared major parts of southeast Australia by burning. By stopping burning, modern-day Europeans have allowed the fuel loads to become extremely high. The Indians of North America also used burning to modify the landscape. The Australian fires are an example of environmentalism run amuck. See links under Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague?

Adaptation: A major cyclone, Phailin, hit eastern coastal states of India. The estimated wind speeds are in excess of 200 kilometers (130 miles) per hour and the storm surge to be 3.5 meters (11 feet). Yet, only 25 deaths were reported, rather than ten thousand or more, which was traditional for such storms. The big difference was massive, timely evacuation of those living along the coast, which is what the US failed to do with Katrina. The actions in preparing for Phailin illustrates the importance of adaption. See links under Changing Weather.

Additions and Corrections: The last TWTW and last week’s brief update each contained a typo. Reader Paul Kenyon corrected the spelling of climate scientist Hans von Storch and Randy Randal corrected the spelling CEI attorney Sam Kazman. As always, TWTW appreciates such corrections.

Number of the Week: About \$1 Billion per day. The Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) estimates that the world is spending about \$359 Billion fighting global warming in 2013 or about \$1 Billion per day. CPI states that it: “is a team of analysts and advisors that works to improve the most important energy and land use policies around the world, with a particular focus on finance.” CPI refers to expenditures as investments to fight global warming/climate change.

The IPCC is called the premiere scientific organization on climate change and it does not understand the natural causes. One must wonder about the anticipated rate of return on climate investments.

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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. A Carbon Reckoning

The Supreme Court will hear a crucial case about EPA overreach.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 16, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304106704579137431281832884?mod=I>
[TP opinion 2](#)

2. Mississippi Plant Shows the Cost of 'Clean Coal'

By Rebecca Smith and Cameron McWhirter, WSJ, Oct 13, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304795804579099220332096960>

3. The New Dark Continent

Wind and solar mandates are breaking Europe's electric utilities.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 16, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304561004579135342499141958>

4. The Irrational Fear of GM Food

Billions of people have eaten genetically modified food over the past two decades. Not one problem has been found.

By Marc Van Montagu, WSJ, Oct 22, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303680404579141741399966328?mod=I>
[TP opinion 0](#)

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

NIPCC Report:

Scientific Critique of IPCC's 2013 'Summary for Policymakers'

Craig Idso, Robert M. Carter, S. Fred Singer, Willie Soon, NIPCC, Oct 16, 2013

http://heartland.org/sites/default/files/critique_of_ipcc_spm.pdf

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

AGU summarily rejects minority report without due process

Further Discussion on the Narrow Process of the AGU Review of Climate Change

By Roger Pielke Sr, WUWT, Oct 14, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/14/agu-summarily-rejects-minority-report-without-even-reading-it/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Climate Science: Is it Currently Designed to Answer Questions?

By Richard Lindzen, Sep 29, 2013

<http://globalresearch.ca/climate-science-is-it-currently-designed-to-answer-questions/16330>

IPCC In A Stew: How They Cooked Their Latest Climate Books

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 13, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/10/13/ipcc-in-a-stew-how-they-cooked-their-latest-climate-books/>

Lack of Data For All Phases of Water Guarantees Failed IPCC Projections

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Oct 22, 2013

<http://drtimball.com/2013/lack-of-data-for-all-phases-of-water-guarantees-failed-ipcc-projections/>

The True Global Warming Crisis: The Fibs Underlying The Theory

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 15, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/10/15/the-true-global-warming-crisis-is-the-fibs-underlying-the-theory/>

Another Reason Why IPCC Predictions (Projections) Fail. AR5 Continues to Let The End Justify the Unscrupulous Means

Noble cause corruption in the process.

By Tim Ball, WUWT, Oct 14, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/14/another-reason-why-ipcc-predictions-projections-fail-ar5-continues-to-let-the-end-justify-the-unscrupulous-means/>

From Science... To Art... To Hypotheticals

The new RCPs are not projections, probabilities, prophecies or pathways – they might possibly be potentialities.

By Barry Brill, WUWT, Oct 20, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/20/from-scienceto-artto-hypotheticals/>

IPCC exaggerates risks: Opposing view

By Joe Bast, USA Today, Oct 14, 2013 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/10/14/ipcc-climate-change-heartland-institute-editorials-debates/2983941/>

Scientific Forecasts, Not Scenarios, For Climate Policy—Guest Post by J. Scott Armstrong

By J. Scott Armstrong, William Briggs Blog, Oct 25, 2013

<http://wmbiggs.com/blog/?p=9681>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Claim: '[in]ability to adapt to changes in climate patterns' is causing losses in third world countries

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 25, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/25/claim-inability-to-adapt-to-changes-in-climate-patterns-is-causing-losses-in-third-world-countries/>

Link to special issue: Loss and damage from climate change

By Kees van der Geest and Koko Warner, editors, International Journal of Global warming, No date [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.inderscience.com/info/inarticleto.php?jcode=ijgw&year=2013&vol=5&issue=4>

Claim: 'climate change' caused more deaths in Stockholm – but it may be due to flawed methodology

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 24, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/24/claim-climate-change-caused-more-deaths-in-stockholm/>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Climate Alarmists Seek Shelter From Public Storm

By Dennis Mitchell and David Legates, IBD, Oct 16, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials-viewpoint/101613-675380-data-show-no-warming-in-last-16-years.htm?p=full>

Computer Games and Global Warming

By Norman Rogers, American Thinker, Oct 17, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/10/computer_games_and_global_warming.html

Age of Climate Alarmism Is Coming to an End

By Jim Lakely, Washington Examiner, Oct 20, 2013

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/2013/10/20/age_of_climate_alarmism_is_coming_to_an_end_318221.html

Those chiefly incurious chief scientists

By John Happs, Quadrant, Oct 20, 2013

<http://quadrant.org.au/opinion/doomed-planet/2013/10/chiefly-incurious-chief-scientists/>

[SEPP Comment: A review of past errors and deceptions by the IPCC, of which the chief scientists were blissfully unaware or ignored.]

The UN IPCC's Climate Modeling Procedures Need Serious Remodeling

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 22, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/10/22/the-un-ipccs-climate-modeling-procedures-need-serious-remodeling/>

Would you go ahead with an international flight operated by an obscure airline if you overheard two of the ground crew discussing how the pilot had skipped 80 percent of the pre-flight safety checklist?

Link to paper: Validity of climate change forecasting for public policy decision making

By Green, Armstrong, and Soon, International Journal of Forecasting, 2009

<http://www.kestengreen.com/gas-2009-validity.pdf>

Getting very close to meeting Santer's 17 year warming test

RSS: no global warming for 16 years 11 months

By Christopher Monckton, WUWT, Oct 23, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/23/getting-very-close-to-meeting-santer-s-17-year-warming-test/>

Increasing Clouds and Thunderstorms For Climate Alarmists

By Paul Driessen and Madhav Khandekar, Townhall. Oct 20, 2013

<http://townhall.com/columnists/pauldriessen/2013/10/20/increasing-clouds-and-thunderstorms-for-climate-alarmists-n1728001>

New UN Climate Report Ignores Reality

By Tom Harris and Jay Lehr, Canada Free Press, Oct 25, 2013

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/58823>

Spinning the climate model-observations comparison. Part III

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 13, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/13/spinning-the-climate-model-observations-comparison-part-iii/>

JC summary: Sure makes the Mora et al 'we are toast by 2047' argument, based on climate model projections, look pretty far off the mark.

The IPCC Report as Ink Blot Test

By Donna Laframboise, NFC, Oct 15, 2013

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2013/10/15/the-ipcc-report-as-ink-blot-test/>
[SEPP Comment: An amusing take on the UN's subprime effort.]

Social Benefits of Carbon

The Positive Externalities of Carbon Dioxide: Estimating the Monetary Benefits of Rising Atmospheric CO₂ Concentrations on Global Food Production

By Craig Idso, CO₂ Science, Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.co2science.org/education/reports/co2benefits/MonetaryBenefitsofRisingCO2onGlobalFoodProduction.pdf>

The net benefits of climate change till 2080

Few people know that warming is doing more good than harm

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Oct 18, 2013

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/the-probable-net-benefits-of-climate-change-till-2080.aspx>

Why climate change is good for the world

Don't panic! The scientific consensus is that warmer temperatures do more good than harm

By Matt Ridley, Spectator, Oct 19, 2013

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/9057151/carry-on-warming/>

A response to my critics on global warming

By Matt Ridley, Spectator, Oct 25, 2013

<http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/2013/10/matt-ridley-a-response-to-my-critics-on-global-warming/>

Greening of the Earth in Europe

By Staff Writers, SPPI & CO₂ Science, Oct 16, 2013

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

Greening the Globe with CO₂

By Viv Forbes, Carbon Sense, Oct 22, 2013

<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/greening-the-globe.pdf>

Seeking a Common Ground

A Better World Is Here

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Oct 16, 2013

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/on-the-declining-costs-of-global-problems-by-bjorn-lomborg>

Bjorn Lomborg: Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life

Ignore the doomsters: on nearly every measure our planet is getting fairer, healthier and safer

By Bjorn Lomborg, The Times, Via GWPF, Oct 19, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/bjorn-lomborg-bright-side-life/>

Global warming: a trojan horse of modernity?

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 15, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/15/global-warming-a-trojan-horse-of-modernity/>
[SEPP Comment: Opening a philosophical discussion.]

Hubert Lamb and the assimilation of legendary ancient Russian winters

By Bernie Lewin, Enthusiasm, Scepticism and Science, Sep 22, 2013

<http://enthusiasmscepticismscience.wordpress.com/2013/09/22/hubert-lamb-and-the-assimilation-of-legendary-ancient-russian-winters/#more-1295>

[SEPP Comment: A second in a series exploring how certain graphs on about global warming and cooling over the past 1000 years came about as depicted in the IPCC reports.]

Lowering Standards

Fake Paper Exposes Failed Peer Review

The widespread acceptance of an atrocious manuscript, fabricated by an investigative journalist, reveals the near absence of quality at some journals.

By Kerry Grens, The Scientist, Oct 6, 2013 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/37798/title/Fake-Paper-Exposes-Failed-Peer-Review/>

Questioning European Green

Ruinous Green Energy Policy Threatens Millions of Families

By Benny Peiser, Mail, UK, Via GWPF, Oct 13, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/benny-peiser-ruinous-green-energy-policy-threatens-millions-families/>

[SEPP Comment: The economic disasters of the 1970s, created by terrible public policy, are set to replay by terrible public policy.]

Facing facts on renewable energy

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Oct 18, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/facing-facts-renewable-energy>

Europe threatened by power outages this winter

Renewable energy is blamed for jeopardising Europe's energy security this winter, a new study has found. EurActiv France reports.

By Staff Writers, EurActiv, Oct 14, 2013

<http://www.euractiv.com/sustainability/power-outages-threaten-europe-news-531032>

German Cities Face Ruin as Green Energy Transition Causes Havoc

By Staff Writer, Rheinische Post, Trans. Philipp Mueller, Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/german-cities-face-ruin-green-energy-transition-havoc/>

Germany's Green Energies Lead To Skyrocketing Electricity Prices – Feed-In Rates Increase More Than 10-Fold!

Always more expensive, never cheaper– renewable energy feed-in tariffs to climb to 6.24 cents in 2014

By Rudolf Kipp, Science Skeptical, Trans. P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 18, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/18/germanys-green-energies-lead-to-skyrocketing-electricity-prices-feed-in-rates-increase-more-than-10-fold/>

Spain's Green Dreams Blow Up

By David Paulin, American Thinker, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2013/10/spains_green_dreams_blow_up.html

British Poles Running Back Green Policies

By Walter Russell Mead, Via Meadia, Oct 23, 2013

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2013/10/23/british-pols-running-back-green-policies/>

Baling out? Probably not

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Oct 12, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/10/12/baling-out-probably-not.html>

[SEPP Comment: Analyzing the reality of shifting political statements.]

Anger over German stance on auto CO2 emissions

By Staff Writers, Berlin (AFP), Oct 15, 2013

[http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Anger over German stance on auto CO2 emissions 999.html](http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Anger%20over%20German%20stance%20on%20auto%20CO2%20emissions%20999.html)

Report: Green energy investment drops as ‘political will’ on climate falters

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Oct 14, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/328323-report-green-energy-investment-drops-as-political-will-on-climate-falters>

Link to report: World Clean Energy Investment Heads for Second Successive Annual Fall

By Staff Writers, Bloomberg, Oct 14, 2013

<http://about.bnef.com/press-releases/world-clean-energy-investment-heads-for-second-successive-annual-fall/>

Watershed...Leading German Business Weekly Declares IPCC Science A Failure: “Time For A New Climate Policy”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 20, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/20/watershed-leading-german-business-weekly-declares-ipcc-science-a-failure-time-for-a-new-climate-policy/>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Coal will surpass oil as the key fuel for the global economy by 2020 despite government efforts to reduce carbon emissions

Economic growth in China and India are driving global demand for coal

Coal is plentiful and more affordable for both China and India

Coal demand in the U.S., Europe and rest of Asia will remain steady

By Helen Collis, Mail, UK, Oct 14, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2458631/Coal-surpass-oil-key-fuel-global-economy-2020-despite-government-efforts-reduce-carbon-emissions.html>

Green Jobs

Another Green Flop, Cameron’s Green Jobs Promise Goes Up In Smoke

By Johathan Leake, Sunday Times, Via GWPF, Oct 20, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/green-flop-cameras-green-jobs-promise-smoke/>

Funding Issues

How To Waste A Billion: Use It To Fight Global Warming

Editorial, IBD, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/102313-676388-world-spends-billion-a-day-to-fight-climate-change.htm>

Global climate investment flatlines

By Staff Writer, EurActiv, Oct 22, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.euractiv.com/development-policy/global-climate-investment-flatli-news-531212>

Link to report: Global Landscape of Climate Finance 2013

By Buchner, et al, Climate Policy Initiative, Oct 2013

<http://climatepolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/The-Global-Landscape-of-Climate-Finance-2013.pdf>

Green Climate Fund meets amid cash problems

By Staff Writer, EurActiv, Oct 11, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

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

State Department official: Time to face ‘hard reality’ on climate aid

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Oct 22, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/329799-state-department-official-time-to-face-hard-reality-on-limited-climate-aid>

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

ABC plan to stop bushfires with windmills and buckets of your cash

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Oct 22, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/10/abc-plan-to-stop-bushfires-with-windmills-and-buckets-of-your-cash/#more-31262>

Fuel Loads Not Climate Change Are Making Bushfires More Severe

By Jo Nova and David Evans, Her Blog, Oct 23, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/10/man-made-climate-change-and-bushfires-in-southeast-australia/>

Australia, U.N. spar over wildfires and climate change

By Alister Doyle, Reuters, Oct 23, 2013

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/23/us-climate-australia-wildfires-idUSBRE99M0U920131023>

Unprecedented (?) Arctic warming

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Oct 25, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/25/unprecedented-arctic-warming/#more-13509>

[SEPP Comment: Problems with extrapolation from one small set of data.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Los Angeles Times endorses censorship with ban on letters from climate skeptics

By Professor J. Scott Armstrong, Fox News, Oct 18, 2013

<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2013/10/18/los-angeles-times-endorses-censorship-with-ban-on-letters-from-climate-skeptics/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Go Personal.

Misinformation, disinformation and conflict

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Oct 25, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/25/misinformation-disinformation-and-conflict/>

The ongoing attack on global warming skeptics

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Oct 23, 2013

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2013/oct/23/ongoing-attack-global-warming-skeptics/>

Alarmists losing so badly they are scared of letters to editors

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Oct 17, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/10/alarmists-losing-so-badly-they-are-scared-of-letters-to-editors/>

Al Gore says climate change deniers are ‘just nuts’

By Eric Dolan, Raw Story, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2013/10/23/al-gore-says-climate-change-deniers-are-just-nuts/>

Models v. Observations

Maybe That IPCC 95% Certainty Was Correct After All

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Oct 14, 2013

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2013/10/maybe-that-ippcc-95-certainty-was-correct-after-all/>

Model Issues:

Feds Will Spend \$18M to Develop ‘Reliable’ Climate Change Predictions

By Barbara Hollingsworth, CNS News, Oct 18, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/barbara-hollingsworth/feds-will-spend-18m-develop-reliable-climate-change-predictions>

Link to program solicitation: Decadal and Regional Climate Prediction using Earth System Models (EaSM)

NSF & USDA, Sep 23, 2013

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/climatechange.cfm?pg=2>

Changing Weather

New study shows Pacific Decadal Oscillation and sea surface temperature drive US tornado strength

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 17, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/17/new-study-shows-pacific-decadal-oscillation-sst-cycles-drive-us-tornado-strength/>

[SEPP Comment: This association has been asserted by Joe D’Aleo and Joe Bastardi for a number of years.]

Five dead as Cyclone Phailin hits India

By Staff Writers, RTE News, Oct 14, 2013

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/1012/479951-india-cyclone-phailin/>

Wind speeds reached at least 220km/h, and were expected to cause a 3.4m surge in sea levels when the storm hit the coast, the India Meteorological Department said
The US Navy's weather service said wind at sea was gusting at 314km/h.

2013 – a year with minimal extreme weather events in the US

By Paul Dorian, SI Weather, Oct 18, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://thesiweather.com/2013/10/18/1100-am-2013-a-year-with-minimal-extreme-weather-events-in-the-us/>

Atlantic hurricane season quietest in 45 years

By Tom Brown, Reuters, Oct 24, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://news.msn.com/science-technology/atlantic-hurricane-season-quietest-in-45-years>

Changing Climate

AMO & PDO Cycles

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Oct 21, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2013/10/21/amo-pdo-cycles/>

New paper finds natural North Atlantic Oscillation controls Northern Hemisphere temperatures 15-20 years in advance

By Staff Writer, Hockey Schtick, Oct 12, 2013

<http://hockeyschtick.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/new-paper-finds-natural-ocean.html>

Link to paper: NAO implicated as a predictor of Northern Hemisphere mean temperature multidecadal variability

By Jianping Li, Cheng Sun, Fei-Fei Jin, Geophysical Research Letters, Oct 11, 2013

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2013GL057877/abstract>

New study finds the natural Pacific Decadal Oscillation controls tornado activity, not CO2

By Staff Writer, The Hockey Schtick, Oct 17, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://hockeyschtick.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/new-study-finds-natural-pacific-decadal.html>

Chylek et al 2013 shows a linkage between US Southwest climate and AMO/PDO cycles

By Anthony Watts WUWT, Oct 13, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/13/chylek-et-al-2013-shows-a-linkage-between-us-southwest-climate-and-amopdo-cycles/>

Link to paper: Imprint of the Atlantic multi-decadal oscillation and Pacific decadal oscillation on southwestern US climate: past, present, and future

By Chylek et al. Springer, Sep 5, 2013

http://wattsupwiththat.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/chylek-et-all-climdyn_us_sw.pdf

New paper finds the natural Pacific Decadal Oscillation controls North American temperatures via changes in cloud cover

By Staff Writer, The Hockey Schtick, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://hockeyschtick.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/new-paper-finds-natural-pacific-decadal.html>

Link to paper: Simulation of the PDO effect on the North America summer climate with emphasis on Mexico

By Mendoza et al, Atmospheric Research, Oct 19, 2013

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169809513002834>

New paper finds summer temperatures in the year 2000 were about the same as during Medieval & Roman warm periods

By Staff Writer, The Hockey Schtick, Oct 22, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://hockeyschtick.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/new-paper-finds-summer-temperatures-in.html>

Link to paper: Testing long-term summer temperature reconstruction based on maximum density chronologies obtained by reanalysis of tree-ring datasets from northernmost Sweden and Finland

By V. V. Matskovsky and S. Helama, Climate of the Past, Oct 23, 2013

<http://www.clim-past-discuss.net/9/5659/2013/cpd-9-5659-2013.html>

[SEPP Comment: The summers in Sweden and Finland today are no warmer today than in past warm periods, and may be cooler. This finding is important because most of the late 20th century warming occurred in the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere, including Sweden and Finland.]

Changing Seas

Caribbean Water

By Rud Istvan, Climate Etc. Oct 19, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/19/caribbean-water/>

[SEPP Comment: Salt water intrusion from ground water depletion are not a significant problem in mountainous islands.]

Who's afraid of sea-level rise?

By Bryce Wilkinson, National Business Review, Oct 11, 2013 [H/t Barry Brill]

<http://nzinitiative.org.nz/Media/Opinion+and+commentary/Whos+afraid+of+sea-level+rise.html>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Fears Of Polar Icecaps Melting Are Overblown, Study Says [NIPCC Report]

By Isaac Orr, IBD, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials-perspective/102313-676310-arctic-ice-isnot-set-to-disappear.htm?p=full>

A new record: the most sea ice in Antarctica in 30 years by extent and by volume

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 24, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/24/a-new-record-the-most-sea-ice-in-antarctica-in-30-years-by-extent-and-by-volume/>

Antarctic Ice Sets New All Time Record In October

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Oct 19, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2013/10/19/antarctic-ice-sets-new-all-time-record-in-october/>

Spiegel Surprised By “Amazingly Robust”, Record Antarctic Sea Ice – NASA’s Walt Meier Bewildered, Can Only Speculate

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Oct 22, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/10/22/spiegel-surprised-by-amazingly-robust-record-antarctic-sea-ice-nasas-walt-meier-bewildered-can-only-speculate/#more-29221>

Media Advisory: Arctic sea ice reaches lowest extent for 2013

Press Release, NSIDC, Sep 20, 2013

http://nsidc.org/news/press/2013_arcticseaiceminimum_PR.html

September sea ice ballyhoo and why it doesn't matter to polar bears

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Oct 20, 2013

<http://polarbearscience.com/2013/10/20/september-sea-ice-ballyhoo-and-why-it-doesnt-matter-to-polar-bears/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

CMIP5 Backward Projections of Temperature and Precipitation

Reference: Kumar, S., Merwade, V., Kinter III, J.L. and Niyogi, D. 2013. Evaluation of temperature and precipitation trends and long-term persistence in CMIP5 twentieth-century climate simulations. *Journal of Climate* 26: 4168-4185.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/15oct2013a2.html>

Clearly, the best climate models of the present day are still not up to doing what we really need them to do to be of much service. In fact, they could potentially be leading us in a direction we may soon find to actually be detrimental to the well-being of the biosphere, including ourselves.

Declining Diurnal Temperature Range Increases Human Longevity

Reference: Yang, J., Liu, H.-Z., Ou, C.-Q., Lin, G.-Z., Zhou, Q., Shen, G.-C., Chen, P.-Y. and Guo, Y. 2013. Global climate change: Impact of diurnal temperature range on mortality in Guangzhou, China. *Environmental Pollution* 175: 131-136.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/15oct2013a4.html>

Larval & Post-Larval Responses of Pacific Oysters to Elevated CO₂

Reference: Ginger, K.W.K., Vera, C.B.S., Dineshram, R., Dennis, C.K.S., Adela, L.J., Yu, Z. and Thiyagarajan, V. 2013. Larval and post-larval stages of Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) are resistant to elevated CO₂. *PLoS ONE* 8: e64147.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/22oct2013a1.html>

(1) "mean survival and growth rates were not affected by pH," that (2) "the metabolic, feeding and metamorphosis rates of pediveliger larvae were similar, between pH 8.1 and 7.7," that (3) "the pediveligers at pH 7.4 showed reduced weight-specific metabolic and filtration rates, yet were able to sustain a more rapid post-settlement growth rate," and that (4) "no evidence suggested that low pH treatments resulted in alterations to the shell ultra-structures or elemental compositions (i.e., Mg/Ca and Sr/Ca ratios)."

A 1500-Year History of Northern Hemisphere Monsoon Activity

Reference: Asmerom, Y., Polyak, V.J., Rasmussen, J.B.T., Burns, S.J. and Lachniet, M. 2013. Multidecadal to multicentury scale collapses of Northern Hemisphere monsoons over the past millennium. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA* 110: 9651-9656.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/oct/22oct2013a4.html>

Litigation Issues

Supreme Court to Review EPA Greenhouse Rule: What If Petitioners Win — or Lose?

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Oct 16, 2013

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2013/10/16/supreme-court-to-review-epa-greenhouse-rule-what-if-petitioners-win-or-lose/>

Supreme Court Misses Chance To Get CO₂ Science Right

Editorial, IBD, Oct 16, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/101613-675442-supreme-court-will-review-epa-carbon-rules.htm>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Google's Green Energy Brag: \$375 Million from Taxpayers (or more)

By Glenn Schleede, Master Resource, Oct 22, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/10/google-green-play-375-million-dollars/#more-28123>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

EPA to “listen” to (then presumably ignore) the public on power plant CO2 emissions

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 22, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/22/epa-to-listen-then-presumably-ignore-the-public-on-power-plant-co2-emissions/>

Cities and dates for EPA hearings on new power plant rules.

EPA's Gina McCarthy wants to be potentate of private property in America

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Oct 20, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/examiner-editorial-epas-gina-mccarthy-wants-to-be-potentate-of-private-property-in-america/article/2537436?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest%20Reoccurring%20-%2010/21/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest

Energy Issues – Non-US

Offshore white elephants

Britain leads the world in offshore wind -- because nobody else is so foolish

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Oct 18, 2013

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/offshore-white-elephants.aspx>

[SEPP Comment: One nation must take the lead in international stupidity.]

Energy Issues -- US

America's Energy Future: Greater Independence

By H. Sterling Burnett, Jewish Policy Center, Fall 2013

<http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/4661/energy-independence>

EPA, EIA: Power Plant Carbon Emissions Saw Drastic Drop in 2012 (UPDATED)

By Gail Reitenbach, Power News, Oct 22, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/eia-u-s-energy-related-co2-emissions-dropped-3-8-in-2012/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2771072&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

Green Pick Pockets

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Oct 25, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/10/25/green-pick-pockets/>

Study: Wind Power Costs Taxpayers Billions of Dollars

By Katie Pavilich, Townhall, Oct 15, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://townhall.com/tipsheet/katiepavilich/2013/10/15/study-wind-power-costs-taxpayers-billions-of-dollars-n1724189>

Link to study: Assessing Wind Power Cost Estimates

By Michael Giberson, Center for Energy Commerce, Oct 2013

<http://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Giberson-study-Final.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: Estimates of cost beyond the developer cost to include grid reliability issues.]

U.S. carbon dioxide emissions fall in 2012

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Oct 21, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/329699-doe-carbon-dioxide-emissions-declined-in-2012>

Link to report: U.S. Energy-Related Carbon Dioxide Emissions, 2012
By Staff Writers, EIA, Oct 21, 2013
<http://www.eia.gov/environment/emissions/carbon/>

Washington's Control of Energy

Who is Heather Zichal?

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Oct 14, 2013
<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2013/10/who-is-heather-zichal.html>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Thanks to Natural Gas and Climate Change, U.S. Carbon Dioxide Emissions Continue Downward Trend

By Patrick J. Michaels and Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, CATO, Oct 23, 2013
<http://www.cato.org/blog/thanks-natural-gas-climate-change-us-carbon-dioxide-emissions-continue-downward-trend>

Can a few anti-frackers hold back the tide of progress?

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Oct 24, 2013
<http://acsh.org/2013/10/can-anti-frackers-hold-back-tide-progress/>

Green California Gives Its OK To Fracking As Safe

Editorial, IBD, Oct 21, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]
<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/102113-675997-california-governor-signs-bill-allowing-fracking.htm>

Return of King Coal?

Big(ger) coal

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Oct 15, 2013
<http://judithcurry.com/2013/10/15/bigger-coal/>

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Report: Pipelines pose fewer risks than trains or trucks in carrying oil

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Oct 17, 2013
<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/329217-report-pipelines-pose-less-risks-than-trains-or-trucks>

Link to the report: Intermodal Safety in the Transport of Oil
By Diana Furchtgott-Roth and Kenneth P. Green, Fraser Institute, Oct 2013
<http://www.fraserinstitute.org/uploadedFiles/fraser-ca/Content/research-news/research/publications/intermodal-safety-in-the-transport-of-oil.pdf>

Deepwater Horizon -- The Government's Involvement

By Bruce Thompson, American Thinker, Oct 17, 2013
http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/10/deepwater_horizon_-_the_governments_involvement.html

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Don't fear the radiation!

By Staff Writer, ACSH, Oct 22, 2013
<http://acsh.org/2013/10/dont-fear-radiation/>

Fear vs. Radiation: The Mismatch

By David Ropeik, Op-Ed, NYT, Oct 21, 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/22/opinion/fear-vs-radiation-the-mismatch.html?_r=1&

Nuclear rebirth? [In UK]

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Oct 25, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/nuclear-rebirth>

The first thing to note is that the [2020s] strike price is currently lower than the 2014 prices for onshore wind (£100 per MWh), offshore wind (£155/MWh), biomass (£105/MWh) or solar (£125/MWh), although higher than the expected £55/MWh for electricity generated from coal or gas.

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Big Wind’s Dirty Little Secret: Toxic Lakes and Radioactive Waste

By Travis Fisher and Alex Fitzsimmons, IER, Oct 23, 2013 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/58783>

[SEPP Comment: The hidden side of green, not so clean, energy.]

Chambers of Commerce Falsely Promote Windpower (might be repeated in your local)

By Glenn Schleede, Master Resource, Oct 15, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/10/misleading-claims-wind-local-chambers/#more-28061>

A Conservative, Biblical Case for Windpower? (a red-state, Tea Party strategy at work)

By Robert Bradley, Master Resource, Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/10/red-state-wind-strategy/#more-28134>

[SEPP Comment: Regardless of the political position of the advocate, the arguments for wind power remain weak.]

\$0.11/kWh: Why Wind Is More Expensive than Advertised

By Michael Giberson, Master Resource, Oct 18, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/10/11-cents-kwh-wind/#more-28090>

The Great American Wind Power Fraud

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Oct 21, 2013

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2013/10/the-great-american-wind-power-fraud.html>

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

Get Rid of Ethanol Exchanges Too

By Marita Noon, Townhall, Oct 13, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/maritanoon/2013/10/13/get-rid-of-ethanol-exchanges-too-n1722671>

Latest on Algae

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Oct 22, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/10/22/latest-on-algae/>

Carbon Schemes

Carbon capture and storage: The Edsel of energy policies

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Oct 15, 2013

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2013/oct/15/carbon-capture-and-storage-edsel-energy-policies/>

[SEPP Comment: CCS makes no financial sense!]

California Dreaming

California approves energy storage goal

By Staff Writers, Sacramento (UPI), Oct 18, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/California_approves_energy_storage_goal_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Typical California regulators: when in doubt, regulate. Do not be concerned with messy facts such as the technology has not been developed and the costs may be staggering.]

Health, Energy, and Climate

The New York Times takes your breath away

By Staff Writer, ACSH, Oct 16, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/10/the-new-york-times-takes-your-breath-away/>

Environmental Industry

Junk Science Attacks On Important Products And Technologies Diminish Us All

By Henry Miller, Forbes, Oct 23, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/henrymiller/2013/10/23/junk-science-attacks-on-important-products-and-technologies-diminishes-us-all/>

Broken-Window Environmentalism

By Robert T. Smith, American Thinker, Oct 25, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/10/broken-window_environmentalism.html

Chevron's landmark lawsuit exposes 'greenmail'

By Phelim McAleer, New York Post, Oct 14, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://nypost.com/2013/10/14/chevrons-landmark-lawsuit-exposes-greenmail/>

Other Scientific News

Useless Peer Review?

A study shows that the methods by which scientists evaluate each other's work are error-prone and poor at measuring merit.

By Abby Olena, The Scientist, Oct 15, 2013 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/37878/title/Useless-Peer-Review/>

How science goes wrong

Scientific research has changed the world. Now it needs to change itself

Editorial, The Economist, Oct 19, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21588069-scientific-research-has-changed-world-now-it-needs-change-itself-how-science-goes-wrong>

How climate change affects microbial life below the seafloor

The international drilling vessel JOIDES Resolution. Image courtesy IODP.org.

By Staff Writers, Bremen, Germany (SPX), Oct 25, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/How_climate_change_affects_microbial_life_below_the_seafloor_999.html

Trouble at the lab

Scientists like to think of science as self-correcting. To an alarming degree, it is not
Editorial, The Economist, Oct 19, 2013 [H/t Roger Cohen]

<http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21588057-scientists-think-science-self-correcting-alarming-degree-it-not-trouble?frsc=dgla>

[SEPP Comment: The vexing problem of false positives. Reporting of negative results would be of significant value, but usually not publishable.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

Korean Utility Plans First Underground Combined Cycle Power Plant

By Thomas Overton, Power News, Oct 21, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/korean-utility-plans-first-underground-combined-cycle-power-plant/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2771072&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Australia Antarctic mission focuses on penguin poo, warming

By Staff Writers, Sydney (AFP), Oct 15, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Australia_Antarctic_mission_focuses_on_penguin_poo_warming_999.html

Climate Crazyness of the Week: Plants blamed for us not roasting since 1950

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Oct 16, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/10/16/climate-crazyness-of-the-week-plants-blamed-for-us-not-roasting-since-1950/>

Study links warmer water temperatures to greater levels of mercury in fish

By Darryl Fears, Washington Post, Oct 13, 2013 [H/t Conrad Potemra]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/study-links-warmer-water-temperatures-to-greater-levels-of-mercury-in-fish/2013/10/13/c86d43c6-3113-11e3-9c68-1cf643210300_story.html

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ARTICLES:

1. A Carbon Reckoning

The Supreme Court will hear a crucial case about EPA overreach.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 16, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304106704579137431281832884?mod=I TP_opinion_2

The Obama Administration's Environmental Protection Agency has spent the last few years stretching its legal authority, and now it will have to defend its actions before the Supreme Court. On Tuesday, the Justices agreed to review how far the agency can go in regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.

In *Utility Air Regulatory Group v. EPA*, the Court consolidated six cert petitions and will consider a single legal question: Does the EPA's authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from "mobile sources" like cars also apply to emissions from "stationary sources" like power plants? To put it another way: Can the EPA make up the rules as it goes along?

This story started in 2004, when environmentalists sued to force the EPA to regulate CO₂, even though the Clean Air Act never defined it as a pollutant. The Justices nonetheless ruled 5-4 (*Massachusetts v. EPA*, 2007) that the agency could do so for mobile sources such as cars under Title II of the Act. Gentleman, start your regulatory engines.

The Obama EPA immediately began to stretch that logic to apply to power plants and other stationary sources with a series of 2009 rulemakings. Those sources are covered under a separate provision of the Clean Air Act's Title 1, which includes complex federal permitting.

When Congress wrote the Clean Air Act, it created numerical thresholds specifying that the government could only start regulating after a plant was shown to be putting out more than 100 tons a year of a pollutant. Congress had in mind traditional pollutants like sulfur dioxide or ozone, but in the case of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide 100 tons a year can be reached by 40 lawyers breathing. (OK, maybe a few more.)

By the EPA's own estimates, applying that 100-ton threshold to greenhouse gases would require some six million buildings to get environmental permits, including such grand polluters as churches and farms. Recognizing that such a rule would create "absurd results" like shuttering the entire economy, the EPA rewrote Congress's numbers and adjusted the threshold to 75,000 tons from 100 tons. EPA's clear political purpose was to escape a large political backlash to its new rules by unilaterally limiting their reach.

The EPA says that its rewrite is no big deal, and that plaintiffs should have no standing to sue since the agency was doing everyone a favor by lifting the thresholds. But regulatory agencies don't have the power to rewrite laws on their own without the authority granted by Congress. All the more so when that rewrite is intended to limit political accountability for a rule that could cost the economy \$300 billion to \$400 billion a year.

Parties to the suit include a handful of states that have been at the forefront of fighting the Obama Administration's regulatory overreach. Texas and 11 other states have taken a stand together, while Alaska joined a brief with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. State attorneys general have challenged the Administration's agenda on everything from ObamaCare to the plan to get rid of the Yucca Mountain waste depository. We're glad to see the Court stepping into the melee.

2. Mississippi Plant Shows the Cost of 'Clean Coal'

By Rebecca Smith and Cameron McWhirter, WSJ, Oct 13, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304795804579099220332096960>

DE KALB, Miss.—For decades, the federal government has touted a bright future for nonpolluting power plants fueled by coal. But in this rural corner of eastern Mississippi, the reality of so-called clean coal isn't pretty.

Mississippi Power Co.'s Kemper County plant here, meant to showcase technology for generating clean electricity from low-quality coal, ranks as one of the most-expensive U.S. fossil-fuel projects ever—at \$4.7 billion and rising. Mississippi Power's 186,000 customers, who live in one of the poorest regions of the country, are reeling at double-digit rate increases. And even Mississippi Power's parent, Atlanta-based Southern Co. SO +0.02% , has said Kemper shouldn't be used as a nationwide model.

Meanwhile, the plant hasn't generated a single kilowatt for customers, and it's anyone's guess how well the complex operation will work. The company this month said it would forfeit \$133 million in federal tax credits because it won't finish the project by its May deadline.

One of just three clean-coal plants moving ahead in the U.S., Kemper has been such a calamity for Southern that the power industry and Wall Street analysts say other utilities aren't likely to take on similar projects, even though the federal government plans to offer financial incentives.

Southern recently took \$990 million in charges for cost overruns approaching \$2 billion. The company's stock has been battered in the past year, and the company's market value has dropped \$6.4 billion since April, to \$35.8 billion. Mississippi Power's credit rating has dropped to three notches above junk.

Kemper "is scaring people away," says Michael Haggarty, an analyst for Moody's Investors Service in New York.

And clean coal's costs have looked even worse recently in comparison with a new inexpensive alternative: plants fueled by the natural gas unleashed by a U.S. drilling boom. Southern last year decided against purchasing a 10-year-old gas-fired plant in Jackson, Miss., that would have generated about as much electricity as Kemper. Another company bought it for \$206 million, billions less than Kemper will cost.

Rising on what was once farmland here, the 582-megawatt Kemper plant is designed to convert a low grade of coal, lignite, into clean-burning syngas, which is similar to natural gas. As part of that process, the plant will strip out and capture 65% of the carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, that would have been released into the atmosphere by burning coal. Turning coal to gas before burning it, or gasification, has proved necessary for capturing CO₂ because efforts to cull it from plants that burn coal haven't been practical.

Keeping CO₂ out of the atmosphere is a goal of the Obama administration's since greenhouse gases have been implicated in climate change. The government last month set limits on CO₂ emissions from new power plants and cited Kemper as evidence that power plants could meet the new standards.

"We're confident plants of the future will be built with this technology," says Janet McCabe, acting assistant administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. The administration's pollution limits, she says, are "practical and achievable."

Southern's view is more nuanced.

Ed Holland, chief executive of Mississippi Power, says the federal plan to limit greenhouse-gas emissions "bodes well for this technology." While expensive, he says, it is "one of the few alternatives available allowing us to continue to use coal."

But Southern last month said Kemper "cannot be consistently replicated on a national level" and therefore "should not serve as a primary basis for new emissions standards."

Federal officials say it isn't unusual for new technology to be expensive at first and that clean coal's costs should come down over time.

Through various subsidies, the federal government had committed nearly \$700 million for the Mississippi Power plant, though part of that was the \$133 million that the utility will forfeit because of delays. For decades, under Democratic and Republican administrations, the department has poured billions of dollars into clean-coal research and development, sometimes working with Southern's "test kitchen" for new technology near Wilsonville, Ala.

Demonstration projects haven't gone smoothly. The Department of Energy spent several hundred million dollars on two early clean-coal projects in the 1990s that had a series of technical problems.

Southern proposed building a clean-coal plant in Florida in 2005 but canceled the project in 2007 after state officials expressed antioal sentiments.

Mississippi officials welcomed Kemper two years later, however. Republican Haley Barbour, governor at the time, was happy to see Mississippi Power use large deposits of lignite that had "virtually no value," he says today. He still supports the project, and his lobbying firm does work for Southern. "This is cutting-edge technology," he says.

The Mississippi Public Service Commission approved Kemper, fearing that the price of the natural gas that powers many plants in the state would increase, says Leonard Bentz, who was a commissioner until August.

Mississippi Power told the commission in 2009 that natural gas could hit \$20 per million British thermal units and would drop no lower than \$7.38 between 2014 and 2054. The forecast was filed confidentially, so wasn't subject to public review. The Journal obtained a redacted copy from the utility after filing a request under public-records law.

Its forecast was made even after energy companies had discovered a way to pull gas from previously inaccessible shale-rock formations. The resulting glut means that natural-gas prices haven't topped \$6 per million BTUs since January 2009. Today, they are around \$3.75.

Jeff Burlison, vice president of system planning for Southern, says the projections look flawed today because the industry was "in transition from conventional gas to shale gas" in 2009.

The company in June 2010 won state approval to go ahead with the project and by that December had broken ground on a 3,000-acre tract.

Kemper's cost, previously projected at around \$2.9 billion, soon began to soar. Southern recently estimated the price tag at \$4.7 billion. The utility says it underestimated labor costs and the amount of steel pipe, concrete and other materials it would need for so big a plant.

Because the state Legislature allowed Southern to charge customers for the plant's costs before it began generating power, customer rates began to rise, jumping 15% this year. A 3% increase is scheduled for next year, though the company is seeking 7%.

Criticism has been growing from environmental groups, tea-party activists and some business leaders, who fear that rising electricity rates will make Mississippi less competitive.

The state chapter of the Sierra Club, which has been trying to block the plant, says public opinion is shifting in the club's favor. "When it first came out, it was the greatest thing since sliced bread," says Louie Miller, state director of the environmental group. "Now everyone has turned against it."

Regulators and Southern agreed in January to cap costs that customers would cover at \$2.88 billion, far below the \$4.7 billion projected cost. But Southern recently won approval from the Legislature to sell up to \$1 billion in bonds to help cover about half the difference; customers will repay the bonds through a surcharge on bills.

"Cost overruns are not something we wanted, but we believe we've done right by customers" by splitting the cost between customers and shareholders, says company spokeswoman Christy Ihrig.

Customers are not pleased.

In Meridian, just south of Kemper County, Neubern Atkinson says his Lucas Road Art and Jewelry gallery hasn't recovered from the recession. "I'm already on a shoestring budget in this economy," the 66-year-old says, "and this may be the deciding factor in me staying open."

Mississippians who still favor the plant mostly live in and around De Kalb, which has welcomed construction workers to its rental houses and grocery stores. At the project site, cranes are in almost continuous operation. Six days a week, the sounds of welding, hammering and truck engines resound across the low hills.

Faye Wilson, executive director of the Kemper County Chamber of Commerce, says the income will "benefit the county for years to come."

Some locals have another reason to remain enthusiastic: They don't have to pay for the plant. Many Kemper County residents get power from the federal Tennessee Valley Authority, which charges some of the lowest electricity rates in the country.

3. The New Dark Continent

Wind and solar mandates are breaking Europe's electric utilities.

Editorial, WSJ, Oct 16, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304561004579135342499141958>

Before the Obama Administration marches America to renewable-energy nirvana, it may want to inspect what success looks like in Europe. The Continent is much closer than the U.S. to realizing its dream of replacing carbon energy sources with wind and solar, and the dream is starting to look like a nightmare.

Last week the CEOs of Europe's 10 largest utilities finally cried uncle and called for a halt to wind and solar subsidies. Short of that, they want subsidies of their own. They want to be paid, in essence, not to produce power.

The root cause of all this is the Continent's so-called feed-in tariffs for renewable energy, which began in Germany in 1990. A feed-in tariff is a form of mandate that gives solar and wind installations a guaranteed price, usually well above the market price, and ensures that any energy

they produce gets priority on the electrical grid. When solar and wind plants are producing, their energy must be taken first, ahead of other kinds of power.

By requiring utilities to take this power—and requiring consumers to pay for it—Germany has increased renewables to 25% of its overall capacity. Berlin wants to push that to 35% in 2020 and 80% by 2050. Not every country in Europe has been as ambitious as Germany, but the European Union's renewables target across the entire Continent is also 20% by 2020.

These wind and solar subsidies have increased Europe's energy costs by 17% for consumers and 21% for industry in the last four years. But more ominous is the havoc the mandates are creating for utilities. Old-fashioned power plants, especially coal and nuclear, have traditionally provided what is called "base load" power. These plants produce the power to run refrigerators and street lights and the rest of the 24/7 needs of a modern economy. This was the power that consumers used first—until Europe went mad for renewables.

The trouble is, no one knows how much power renewables can provide at any particular moment. Imagine having a car that runs on gasoline, with a solar array on the roof. But instead of using the solar power when you needed it, the car was required to add this solar power to the engine's output whenever it was available.

So you're driving down the highway at 60 miles per hour, but then the sun comes out and suddenly you're doing 80 unless you take your foot off the gas. Now imagine trying to run a whole economy on that sort of power, except it takes hours or days to adjust the throttle every time the weather changes.

The utilities have seen their once-predictable power needs replaced with demand that is every bit as unpredictable as the weather. When conditions are poor, they need to step up generation to keep the lights on. But because of the priority given to renewables, they have to be mindful of the possibility of being pre-empted. They still have high fixed costs and capital needs, but thanks to the renewables' privileged position, demand for what they produce waxes and wanes with the wind.

All of this is a drag on growth and has taken 55% off the market capitalization of utilities in the Europe in the past five years, according to The Economist. The utility executives who issued their demarche last week may be content to stay in business as wards of the state, standing by—at taxpayer expense—to pick up the slack when wind and solar fall short.

But consumers and taxpayers deserve better. Ending the feed-in tariffs and the forced purchase of renewable power would reduce energy prices and might even help European industry get back on its feet. It would be a pro-growth reform that wouldn't cost national treasuries a cent.

4. The Irrational Fear of GM Food

Billions of people have eaten genetically modified food over the past two decades. Not one problem has been found.

By Marc Van Montagu, WSJ, Oct 22, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303680404579141741399966328?mod=I TP_opinion_0

Farmers can now produce more crops in an environmentally sustainable way at a lower cost thanks to the efforts of hundreds of scientists over the past half-century. Seeds are developed in a laboratory and then field tested to enhance nutritional value or resistance to drought, disease and herbicides. Genetically modified crops are now planted on nearly a quarter of the world's farm land by some 17.3 million farmers. More than 90% of those farmers are smallholders who harvest a few acres in developing countries.

Society, the economy and the environment have benefited enormously from GM crops. India has flipped from cotton importer to exporter because of insect-resistant cotton. Herbicide-tolerant GM crops have stimulated no-tillage farming, reducing soil erosion and greenhouse gas emissions. Insect-resistant GM crops have cut insecticide sprayings by more than 25%—and as much as sevenfold in some parts of India. In developing countries, GM crops have helped ensure food security and bolster incomes for farmers, allowing parents to focus more resources on other priorities, such as educating their children.

Such remarkable achievements are only the beginning. Dozens of better GM crops are in the pipeline from companies, universities and public agencies around the world. Crops in development include virus-resistant cassava, a starchy root otherwise known as tapioca; nutritionally enriched rice that can help prevent blindness and early death among children; nitrogen-efficient crops that reduce fertilizer runoff; and many more.

These crops will continue to reduce hunger by bringing more bountiful and nutritious harvests. They will also help the environment by mitigating the impact of agriculture by conserving our precious, finite supply of fresh water; freeing up land for other uses, like carbon-absorbing forests; preserving topsoil; and reducing the use of insecticides and herbicides, thereby enhancing biodiversity.

These advancements are particularly timely given the environmental and demographic state of the 21st century. Between now and 2050, global population will rise by about one-third, to 9.6 billion from 7.2 billion, reducing arable land per capita. Almost all of that population growth will occur in the developing world, where about 870 million people are already suffering from hunger and malnutrition, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. And 100% of it will happen during a period of greater climate volatility, which may place dramatic new stresses on agriculture.

The question of how to nourish two billion more people in a changing climate will prove one of the greatest challenges in human history. To meet it, we should embrace an agricultural approach that combines the best features of traditional farming with the latest technology.

Biotechnology offers an unparalleled safety record and demonstrated commercial success. Remarkably, however, biotechnology might not reach its full potential. In part, that's because outspoken opponents of GM crops in the U.S. have spearheaded a "labeling" movement that would distinguish modified food from other food on grocery store shelves. Never mind that 60%-70% of processed food on the market contains genetically modified ingredients. In much of Europe, farmers are barred from growing genetically modified crops. Even in Africa, anti-biotechnology sentiment has blocked its application. In Zambia, for example, the government refused donations of GM corn in 2002, even as its people starved.

Opponents of GM crops have been extremely effective at spreading misinformation. GM crops don't, as one discredited study claimed recently, cause cancer or other diseases. GM cotton isn't responsible for suicides among Indian farmers—a 2008 study by an alliance of 64 governments and nongovernmental organizations debunked that myth completely. And GM crops don't harm bees or monarch butterflies.

In fact, people have consumed billions of meals containing GM foods in the 17 years since they were first commercialized, and not one problem has been documented. This comes as no surprise. Every respected scientific organization that has studied GM crops—the American Medical Association, the National Academy of Sciences and the World Health Organization, among others—has found GM crops both safe for humans and positive for the environment.

As a plant scientist, neither I nor my fellow 2013 World Food Prize laureates, Dr. Mary-Dell Chilton and Dr. Robert T. Fraley, anticipated the resistance to genetic modification and biotechnology. After all, nearly everything humans have eaten though the millennia has been genetically altered by human intervention. Mankind has been breeding crops—and thereby genetically altering them—since the dawn of agriculture. Today's techniques for modifying plants are simply new, high-precision methods for doing the same.

Resistance to biotechnology seems all the more unbelievable considering that much of it comes from the same thoughtful people who tend to dismiss climate-change skeptics as "anti-science." It seems to me that much of the resistance to GM foods isn't based on science, but may be ideological and political, based on fears of "corporate profiteering" and "Western colonialism."

To note one irony: The extreme opposition to genetic modification has led to hyper-regulation of GM crops, which has raised the cost of bringing them to market. Now only multinational companies and large research entities can afford to comply with the rules. Smaller enterprises in developing countries are ultimately hurt much more than large conglomerates.

Anyone who cares about alleviating hunger and protecting the environment should work quickly to remove the bias against GM crops. A good first step is for educated, scientifically literate people to avoid being taken in by the myths about genetically modified food. These innovations have too much potential to empower individuals and feed the world to be thwarted by falsehoods and fear-mongering.

Dr. Van Montagu is founder and chairman of the Institute of Plant Biotechnology Outreach at Ghent University in Belgium. He is the co-recipient of the 2013 World Food Prize, along with Dr. Mary-Dell Chilton of Syngenta Biotechnology and Dr. Robert T. Fraley of Monsanto.

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