

The Week That Was: 2016-03-19 (March 19, 2016)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *"One of the saddest lessons of history is this: If we've been bamboozled long enough, we tend to reject any evidence of the bamboozle. We're no longer interested in finding out the truth. The bamboozle has captured us. It's simply too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we've been taken. Once you give a charlatan power over you, you almost never get it back."* — Carl Sagan

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Number of the Week: \$500,000,000.00

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THIS WEEK:

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

Witch Hunt: The prospect of the Federal government investigating, and possibly prosecuting, those skeptical of claims that human emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) are the primary cause of recent global warming/climate change is again in the news. Last week, TWTW linked to articles stating that US Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch has referred the issue to the criminal investigative division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Twenty scientists, (the RICO 20) signed a letter to Attorney General Lynch, and others, suggesting that global warming skeptics be prosecuted under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), a law created to prosecute mobsters. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island was a leader of a group of politicians promoting the investigation. Earlier, Mr. Whitehouse claimed he advocated investigation, but not prosecution. Recently, he has been silent on this fine distinction.

On March 15, the *Wall Street Journal* had a solid editorial on this issue. Roy Spencer, the co-discoverer of the manner of using satellites to measure atmospheric temperatures, the finest global measurements available, wrote that he was identified as a possible target. Many of the RICO 20 actively promote human-caused dangerous global warming within the American Meteorological Society (AMS). The disposition of RICO-20 member Edward Maibach of George Mason University in Virginia by Chris Horner of the Competitive Enterprise Institute is revealing.

The *Wall Street Journal* editorial brings up that another member of the RICO-20, also a professor at George Mason University, may have inappropriately used federal funds while a full-time professor. But this issue is secondary to the primary issue of misuse of the racketeering law to suppress those who have raised legitimate questions about rigor of the climate science developed by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and incorporated the EPA's endangerment finding (EF) and used to justify the Administration's energy plan and the Paris Agreement advocated by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

To SEPP's knowledge, the AMS has not condemned the apparent abuse of power by the administration, nor has any major science society. The silence is illustrative of a major problem within these science societies. See Article # 1 and links under Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt.

Federal Funding: Given the possibility of FBI investigation of those skeptical of the claim that human emissions of CO₂ are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming, it is useful to review the federal funding of those supporting the claim.

At different times, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Congressional Research Service (CRS), and the White House have reported to Congress on the extent of such funding. After examining the reports, and removing double counting, SEPP calculated that from Fiscal Year (FY) 1993 to FY 2013 total US expenditures on climate change amount to more than \$165 Billion. More than \$35 Billion is identified in the reports as climate science. By way of comparison, the historian at NASA has calculated that in current dollars the Apollo program cost about \$130 Billion. The US has spent more on climate change than it spent to send men to the Moon.

In August 2013, the White House reported the FY 2013 expenditures were some \$22.5 Billion. Also, the link to the previously used CRS report no longer works, but a slightly updated one, September 13, 2013 was found. This contained an estimate for FY 2014. SEPP has not been able to find any comprehensive reports covering FY 2015 & FY 2016. However, the published budget of the USGCRP is about \$2.5 Billion per year for FY 2014, 2015, & 2016. Thus, one can say with confidence that US government published reports show that since FY 1993, the federal government has spent more than \$40 billion on what the government classifies as climate science.

The CRS report states: *“The President’s request for FY2014 contains \$11.6 billion for federal expenditures on programs. In the request, 23% would be for science, 68% for energy technology development and deployment, 8% for international assistance, and 1% for adapting to climate change. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) also reports that energy tax provisions that may reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would reduce tax revenues by \$9.8 billion.”*

Of the \$11.6 billion in actual expenditures the bulk goes for activities other than science, including subsidizing the UNFCCC and the IPCC. The tax provisions, largely in support of wind and solar, are considered a drain on government revenues.

The most critical number for global warming/climate change is the sensitivity of the Earth to a doubling of CO₂.

A 1979 report to the US National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, “Carbon Dioxide and Climate: A Scientific Assessment”, (Charney, et al. estimated that Climate Sensitivity of the earth to a doubling of CO₂ would range from 1.5°C to 4.5°C, about 3 to 8°F.

But understanding the impact of increasing atmospheric CO₂ has not advanced for 35 years, since the Charney report, in spite of five major reports by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) The latest IPCC report AR-5 still shows the same range of uncertainty. Clearly, there is something wrong with the assertion that CO₂ has a significant impact on temperatures or with the procedures used by the IPCC, or both.

SEPP believes that the problems are both in the assertion and in the procedures. Studies, that are largely ignored by the IPCC, estimate that the sensitivity of the planet to a doubling of CO₂ will be below 1.5°C, perhaps significantly below 1°C. These estimates do not justify alarm about global warming/climate change, or the continued massive expenditures on a problem that is not occurring. See *Defending the Orthodoxy – Federal Funding of Climate Science and*

http://www.atmos.ucla.edu/~brianpm/download/charney_report.pdf

Models v. Observations: The Charney report, as solid as it was for the time, has been superseded by observations. We now have over 35 years of solid temperature observations from satellites, calculated by three different entities, and backed-up by four separate datasets by weather balloon. They are not showing the increase in temperatures estimated in the Charney report and in the five assessment reports by the IPCC.

The Charney report was based on then-current climate models. As stated in the Chapter “Models and Their Validity”:

*“The independent studies of the CO₂/climate problem that we have examined range from calculations with simple radiative-convective models to zonally and vertically averaged heat-balance models with horizontally diffused heat exchange and snow-ice albedo feedbacks to full-fledged three-dimensional general circulations models (GCM’s) involving most of the relevant physical processes. **Our confidence in our conclusion that a doubling of CO₂ will eventually result in significant temperature increases and other climate changes is based on the fact that the results of the radiative-convective and heat-balance model studies can be understood in purely physical terms and are verified by the more complex GCM’s.** The last give more information on geographical variations in heating, precipitation, and snow and ice cover, but they agree reasonably well with the simpler models on the magnitudes of the overall heating effects.”*
(Boldface added) [Models verifying models?]

As stated in the February 28, 2016 TWTW, the brief filed by scientists on behalf of West Virginia, Texas, et al., contesting the Administration’s power plan, demonstrated that the models greatly overestimate atmospheric warming. Over 35 years of solid data is sufficient to show that there is something very wrong with the climate models.

Further, the Charney report states: “All the GCM’s predict larger surface ΔT at high latitudes.” (change in temperatures). The increase in temperatures is being observed in the Arctic, but not in the Antarctic. Again, something is wrong with the models. Why the IPCC, the USGCS, and other entities, considered scientific, have not adjusted their findings to actual observations is a mystery. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and

http://www.atmos.ucla.edu/~brianpm/download/charney_report.pdf

Canary Islands, Again: The March 5 and March 12 TWTW discussed the effort to make electricity generation on El Hierro of the Canary Islands 100% renewable. The hybrid system with a wind park of 11.5 MW capacity and pumped hydro storage of 11.2 MW capacity cost about 84 million euros. The system delivered 32% of the electricity needed in the first 8 months of operation. Additional comments by Roger Andrews show that 100% of renewable electricity is possible – if the island used geothermal generation. The island is on a volcano.

Iceland has already shown how electricity can be generated from geothermal sources. About 30% of the electricity consumed in Iceland comes from geothermal sources, with about 70% from hydro. Of course, someone may claim that the precautionary principle prevents this because using geothermal power may cool the earth faster. Why those in authority in El Hierro decided on wind power is only known to them. See link under Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy – Other.

Abrupt Climate Change: An interesting post on Watts Up With That asserted that climate variations over the past 5 million years show fractal patterns. Fractals are repeating patterns described in mathematics and can be found in nature. What made the post interesting for TWTW is that it brought up Dansgaard–Oeschger (D-O) events. A NOAA web site stated D-O events are periods of abrupt warming (5 to 7 deg. C) followed by more gradual cooling. They were found in Greenland ice cores. These are different from Heinrich events found by studies of sediments deposited by icebergs melting further south of Greenland.

At least, the entity of NOAA maintaining the web site recognizes that abrupt warming is within natural variation, not necessarily human-caused. The warming that brought the earth out of the Little Ice Age may be due to D-O events, not primarily due to human activity. See links under Changing Climate.

Number of the Week: \$500,000,000.00 (Five Hundred Million). Through the Department of State, the Obama Administration delivered Five Hundred Million dollars to the UN Green Climate Fund, even though the money and the Green Climate Fund were not approved by Congress. The money came from economic development funds. Donn Dears linked to a video of a part of a Senate Hearing with State Department Deputy Secretary Heather Higgenbottom answering questions by Senator Cory Gardner, of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, inquiring on what authority the State Department made this transfer: "... the lawyers said we could." The video gives insight as to the financial and ethical accountability in the current State Department. See After Paris!, Expanding the Orthodoxy and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTHe_rn0dEU&feature=youtu.be

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ARTICLES: The Articles section is now at the bottom of TWTW.

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

Record Low Solar Dynamo Asymmetry May Indicate Weak Upcoming Solar Cycle 25, New Solar Minimum

The Sun in February 2016

By Frank Bosse und Fritz Vahrenholt, Translated/edited by P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 16, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/03/16/record-low-solar-dynamo-asymmetry-may-be-indicate-weak-upcoming-solar-cycle-25-new-solar-minimum/#sthash.xYsT8Blv.dpbs>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt

What’s Next? Prosecuting String Theory Denialists?

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Mar 13, 2016

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2016/03/whats-next-prosecuting-string-theory-denialists/>

Deposition sheds troubling new light on the #RICO20/DOJ “potential investigation of climate deniers”

Guest essay by Chris Horner, WUWT, Mar 10, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/10/deposition-sheds-troubling-new-light-on-the-rico20doj-potential-investigation-of-climate-deniers/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

By Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, and S. Fred Singer, NIPCC, Nov 23, 2015

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge

<https://www.heartland.org/policy-documents/why-scientists-disagree-about-global-warming>

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, 2013

<https://www.heartland.org/media-library/pdfs/CCR-II/CCR-II-Full.pdf>

Summary: <http://www.nipccreport.org/reports/ccr2a/pdf/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf>

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

Idso, Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, 2014

<http://www.nipccreport.org/reports/ccr2b/pdf/Full-Report.pdf>

Summary: <https://www.heartland.org/media-library/pdfs/CCR-IIb/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

State of West Virginia, State of Texas, et al. v. EPA,

“Brief of Amici Curiae Scientists in Support of Petitioners Supporting Reversal”

<http://www.chamberlitigation.com/sites/default/files/cases/files/2015/09/01/2015-09-01%20Harold%20Doiron,%20et%20al.%20Amicus%20Curiae%20Brief%20in%20Support%20of%20Petitioners%20--%20States%20of%20West%20Virginia,%20Texas,%20et%20al.%20v.%20EPA%20%28ESPS%209.pdf>

The IPCC has been Deceiving the Public about the Carbon Cycle from the Start

Guest essay by Ari Halperin, WUWT, Mar 16, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/16/the-ipcc-has-been-deceiving-the-public-about-the-carbon-cycle-from-the-start/>

Trends in Extreme Weather Events since 1900 – An Enduring Conundrum for Wise Policy Advice

By MJ Kelly, Journal of Geography & Natural Disasters, Feb 17, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.omicsgroup.org/journals/trends-in-extreme-weather-events-since-1900--an-enduring-conundrum-for-wise-policy-advice-2167-0587-1000155.pdf>

Defending the Orthodoxy

World Economy Grows without Growth in Global Warming Pollution

Energy-sector emissions of CO₂ remains flat for second year in a row

By Umair Irfan, Scientific American, Mar 17, 2016 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/world-economy-grows-without-growth-in-global-warming-pollution/>

[SEPP Comment: What is global warming pollution?? The EIA announcement was limited to CO₂ emissions from the energy sector, not total CO₂ emissions.]

Defending the Orthodoxy – Federal Funding of Climate Science

Improvements Needed to Clarify National Priorities and Better Align Them with Federal Funding Decisions

By Staff Writers GAO, May 20, 2011
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-11-317>
Funding from FY 1993 to FY 2010 plus ARRA

Federal Climate Change Funding from FY 2008 to FY 2014
By Leggett, Lattanzio, and Bruner, CRS, Sept 13, 2013
<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43227.pdf>

Federal Climate Change Expenditures: Report to Congress
The White House, August 2013
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative_reports/fcce-report-to-congress.pdf

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Human Achievement Hour (Earth Hour made happy!)

By Robert Bradley, Master Resource, Mar 18, 2016
<https://www.masterresource.org/human-achievement-hour/human-achievement-hour-promoted/>

Many scientific “truths” are, in fact, false

By Olivia Goldhill, Quartz, Mar 13, 2016
<http://qz.com/638059/many-scientific-truths-are-in-fact-false/>

The Complacency Of Superabundance

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Mar 18, 2016
<http://drtimball.com/2016/the-complacency-of-superabundance/>

After Paris!

Tax Payer Dollars Given To Green Climate Fund

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Mar 18, 2016
<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/03/18/tax-payer-dollars-given-to-green-climate-fund/>

25 years later: When the world united against climate change

By Ed King, Climate Change News, Mar 10, 2016
<http://www.climatechangenews.com/2016/03/07/25-years-later-when-the-world-united-against-climate-change/>

Europe Struggling to Decide Whether Climate is Still a Priority

Guest essay by Eric Worrall, WUWT, Mar 17, 2016
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/17/europe-struggling-to-decide-whether-climate-is-still-a-priority/>

The Administration’s Plan – Push-Back

Obama’s Clean Power Plan Will Destroy Navajo Nation Jobs

By Chuck DeVore, Daily Signal, Mar 14, 2016
<http://dailysignal.com/2016/03/14/obamas-clean-power-plan-will-destroy-navajo-nation-jobs/>

Social Benefits of Carbon

Scientists Discover a Good Climate Surprise

By Staff Writers, The American Interest, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/03/17/scientists-discover-a-good-climate-surprise/>

Link to paper: Boreal and temperate trees show strong acclimation of respiration to warming
By Reich, et al. *Nature*, Mar 16, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nature17142.html>

“Plant respiration results in an annual flux of carbon dioxide (CO₂) to the atmosphere that is six times as large as that due to the emissions from fossil fuel burning, so changes in either will impact future climate.”

[*SEPP Comment: The entire issue that warming will significantly increase plant respiration (giving up of CO₂), thus increase total atmospheric CO₂ appeared to be dreamed up.*]

Seeking a Common Ground

You Ought to Have a Look: Carbon Taxes, Democracy’s Failure, and the “Astronomical” Warmth of February

By Patrick J. Michaels and Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, *Cato*, Mar 18, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/you-ought-have-look-carbon-taxes-democracys-failure-astronomical-warmth-february>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO₂ Science

CMIP5 Problems Modelling Extreme Precipitation Indices in China

Jiang, Z., Li, W., Xu, J. and Li, L. 2015. Extreme Precipitation Indices over China in CMIP5 Models. Part I: Model Evaluation. *Journal of Climate* 28: 8603-8619. Mar 18, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/mar/a14.php>

Problems with CMIP5 Models Predicting South African Rainfall

Dieppois, B., Rouault, M. and New, M. 2015. The impact of ENSO on Southern African rainfall in CMIP5 ocean atmosphere coupled climate models. *Climate Dynamics* 45: 2425-2442., Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/mar/a13.php>

Dying From Extremes of Heat and Cold in 66 Chinese Communities

Huang, Z., Lin, H., Liu, Y., Zhou, M., Liu, T., Xiao, J., Zeng, W., Li, X., Zhang, Y., Ebi, K.L., Tong, S., Ma, W. and Wang, L. 2015. Individual-level and community-level effect modifiers of the temperature-mortality relationship in 66 Chinese communities. *BMJ Open* 5: 10.1136/bmjopen-2015-009172. Mar 16, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/mar/a12.php>

Models v. Observations

Checking In With the Popular Climate Models

By Robert Murphy, Institute for Energy Research, Mar 9, 2016

<http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/analysis/checking-in-with-the-popular-climate-models/>

The recent *Cato* Working Paper from Michaels and Knappenberger shows that no matter *what* starting date we use—going back to 1951—we find that the computer models have consistently *over* projected warming. Indeed, their record is so bad that the popular climate models have at times been “rejected” by the actual observations in the statistical sense. The climate alarmists who claim that the popular computer models are in good shape either do not know what they’re talking about, or they are willfully misleading their readers

Measurement Issues -- General

Temperature records falling

By Frank Bosse and Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt, (Translated/edited by P Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, Mar 15, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/03/15/precursor-argo-measured-data-show-record-breaking-indo-pacific-subsurface-cooling-underway/#comments>

Follow-up: Cold water in vast Western Pacific, record water vapor, clouds, rain — super big El Nino things going on

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Mar 17, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/03/cold-water-in-vast-western-pacific-record-water-vapor-clouds-rain-super-big-el-nino-things-going-on/>

Link to earlier comments by Spencer: Record Rainy, Cloudy, Humid February over the Oceans

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Mar 2, 2016

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2016/03/record-rainy-cloudy-humid-february-over-the-oceans/>

Measurement Issues -- Surface

One graph proves that record high year of 2015 and record months of 2016 are not AGW driven

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 15, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/15/one-graph-proves-that-record-high-year-of-2015-and-record-months-of-2016-are-not-agw-driven/>

Lewis lands a blow

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Mar 14, 2016

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2016/3/14/lewis-lands-a-blow.html>

Link to post by Lewis: Marvel et al.: GISS did omit land use forcing

By Nic Lewis, Climate Audit, Mar 11, 2016

<http://climateaudit.org/2016/03/11/marvel-et-al-giss-did-omit-land-use-forcing/>

[SEPP Comment: Linked last week. As Montford states, Gavin Schmidt of NASA-GISS ignored four other problems with his paper that Lewis pointed out. "But hey, one out of five ain't bad."]

Is Global Warming Quickening?

By Euan Mearns, Energy Matters, Mar 16, 2016

<http://euanmearns.com/is-global-warming-quickening/#more-12930>

"I sense that since the Paris accord was struck that the warming propaganda has gone up a couple of gears. I have rarely listened to a TV broadcast on climate change that was so packed full of scaremongering hyperbole. It leaves me feeling rather uneasy.

The Arctic Sea ice is intact, there is absolutely nothing in the February temperatures that cannot be explained by the El Nino and / or by data that is continually adjusted and massaged in efforts to prove a theory."

Searching for Warming in USHCN Data

Guest essay by Leland Park, WUWT, Mar 16, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/16/searching-for-warming-in-ushcn-data/>

Measurement Issues -- Atmosphere

Satellite-based global temperatures, trending up

By Jennifer Marohasy, Her Blog, Mar 16, 2016

<http://jennifermarohasy.com/2016/03/satellite-based-global-temperatures-trending-up/>

Changing Weather

California Reservoirs Begin To Get Back To Normal

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Mar 18, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/03/18/california-reservoirs-begin-to-get-back-to-normal/>

Drenched by 'March Miracle,' Northern California reservoirs inch toward capacity

By Joseph Serna, LA Times, Mar 14, 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-northern-california-reservoir-levels-20160314-story.html>

[SEPP Comment: No longer permitting comments on natural climate variation, the LA Times is calling El Nino rains a miracle. In the link immediately above, Homewood gives actual measurements in all the California reservoirs, not just for northern California.]

In the 'warmest year ever', U.S. tornado deaths were near lowest ever

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 17, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/17/in-the-warmest-year-ever-u-s-tornado-deaths-are-near-lowest-ever/>

Changing Climate

Climate variations analyzed 5 million years back in time show repeating fractal patterns

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 16, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/16/climate-variations-analyzed-5-million-years-back-in-time-show-repeating-fractal-patterns/>

Link to paper: Contrasting scaling properties of interglacial and glacial climates

By Zhi-Gang Shao & Peter D. Ditlevsen, Nature Communications, Mar 16, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/ncomms/2016/160316/ncomms10951/full/ncomms10951.html>

Heinrich and Dansgaard-Oeschger events

Paleo Perspective...on Abrupt Climate Change

By Staff Writers, NOAA, Updated Aug 20, 2008

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/paleo/abrupt/data3.html>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Can Geology Tell Us What is Warming the Climate?

By Euan Mearns, Energy Matters, Mar 18, 2016

<http://euanmearns.com/can-geology-tell-us-what-is-warming-the-climate/#more-12967>

[SEPP Comment: Strongly question the calculation of climate sensitivity in the post for a doubling of atmospheric CO2 to be between 2.2–4.8°C. It may be confusing A) outgassing of CO2 from oceans (from warming driven by other causes) with B) causing the warming.]

Blame Methane Blasts for Sea Craters, But Not for the Bermuda Triangle

By Mindy Weisberger, Live Science, Mar 17, 2016 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://news.yahoo.com/blame-methane-blasts-sea-craters-not-bermuda-triangle-151219707.html>

Link to paper: High-resolution 3D seismic investigation of giant seafloor craters in the Barents Sea

By Waage, Bünz, and Andreassen, EGU, 2016

<http://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU2016/EGU2016-14375.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: The blow-outs caused by the release of gas after the pressure of Ice Age ice was removed.]

Changing Seas

Claimed 3.2 Millimeters Per Year Sea Level Rise Seriously Challenged By Recently Published Scientific Papers!

Challenged: 3.2 mm/year sea level rise since 1993

By guest author Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Mar 15, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/03/15/claimed-3-2-millimeters-per-year-sea-level-rise-seriously-challenged-by-recently-published-scientific-papers/#sthash.tAijQhxX.dpbs>

Acidic Waters

A Sixteen-Decade-Long Seawater pH Record from the South China Sea

Review of Wei, G., Wang, Z., Ke, T., Liu, Y., Deng, W., Chen, X., Xu, J., Zeng, T. and Xie, L. 2015. Decadal variability in seawater pH in the West Pacific: Evidence from coral $\delta^{11}\text{B}$ records. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Oceans* 120: 7166-7181.

By Craig Idso, Cato, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/sixteen-decade-long-seawater-ph-record-south-china-sea>

[SEPP Comment: Using model based reconstructions the researchers found a drop in pH, but real world data shows no statistically significant trend in pH over 159 years. Marine life survives large natural swings in pH over 1 to 3 year periods, yet some scientists claim small gradual swings will kill it?]

Lowering Standards

Attribution of Extreme Weather Events in the Context of Climate Change

By Committee on Extreme Weather Events and Climate Change Attribution, David Titley, Chair, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, National Academies Press, Pre-Publication

<http://www.nap.edu/read/21852/chapter/1>

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

Alarmism Cranked Up to Absurd Level

Guest Post by Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Mar 16, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/16/alarmism-cranked-up-to-absurd-level/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

'Loss of Place' is Legitimate, Fear of Frac Sand is Not

By Isaac Orr, Heartland Institute, Mar 15, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2016/03/15/loss_of_place_is_legitimate_fear_of_frac_sand_dust_is_not_109072.html

Quote of the Week – The Galileo Syndrome redux

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 15, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/15/quote-of-the-week-the-galileo-syndrome-redux/>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Days After \$500,000 [000] US Contribution, U.N. Green Climate Fund Increases Staff by 150%

By Patrick Goodenough, CNS News, Mar 14, 2016

<http://cnsnews.com/news/article/patrick-goodenough/days-after-500000-us-contribution-un-green-climate-fund-increases>

[SEPP Comment: The amount is \$500,000,000!]

Defense Department Redefines Climate Change

By Tatiana Schlossberg, NYT, Mar 18, 2016

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/18/science/global-warming-dictionary-definition-military-defense-department.html?_r=0

“Variations in average weather conditions that persist over multiple decades or longer.”

[SEPP Comment: And what are average weather conditions?]

Questioning European Green

Grand Debacle: Germany’s Renewable Energy Effort Turning Into A Colossal, Costly And Senseless Failure!

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 17, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/03/17/grand-debacle-germanys-renewable-energy-effort-turning-into-a-colossal-costly-and-senseless-failure/#sthash.5APNqNnz.dpbs>

Poland Hardens Opposition to Stricter European Climate Policies

By Ewa Krukowska and Marek Strzelecki, Bloomberg, Mar 15, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-15/poland-hardens-opposition-to-stricter-european-climate-policies>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Oil giant Venezula, Green giant Tasmania – both running out of electricity

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Mar 18, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/03/oil-giant-venezula-green-giant-tasmania-both-running-out-of-electricity/>

Funding Issues

The worst possible thing for discovery is to throw more government money at it

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Mar 19, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/03/the-worst-possible-thing-for-discovery-is-to-throw-more-government-money-at-it/#more-48120>

The Political Games Continue

Banning fossil fuel benefits

By Paul Driessen, ICECAP, Mar 17, 2016

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/in-the-news/banning_fossil_fuel_benefits1/

GOP: NASA cutting space budgets to study climate change

By John Siciliano, Washington Examiner, Mar 17, 2016 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/gop-nasa-cutting-space-budgets-to-study-climate-change/article/2586093>

“Beyond the study of climate change under the Earth observation program, NASA is requesting \$400 million to advance clean energy in the aviation industry...”

Justin Trudeau’s Policies And Prejudices Revive Western Separatism

By Tim Ball, A Different Mar 18, 2016

<http://drtimball.com/2016/justin-trudeaus-policies-and-prejudices-revive-western-separatism/>

Litigation Issues

Does Global Warming Cause Severe Cold Spells? Court Orders Release of Concealed Records

By Hans Bader, CEI, Mar 18, 2016

<https://cei.org/blog/does-global-warming-cause-severe-cold-spells-court-orders-release-concealed-records>

[SEPP Comment: Shifting claims by the White House on science advisor Holdren's "polar vortex."]

States again ask Supreme Court to stop EPA air pollution rule

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Mar 16, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/273577-states-ask-scotus-again-to-stop-epa-air-pollution-rule>

[SEPP Comment: Previously, the Supreme Court ruled the EPA did not properly account for the costs of the rules on mercury and air toxics standards and referred the case back to the Court of Appeals. The states argue that the EPA is enforcing the rule anyway.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Maine Solar Fight Reveals Subsidy Addiction

By Staff Writers, The American Interest, Mar 14, 2016

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/03/14/maine-solar-fight-reveals-subsidy-addiction>

“The industry seems to believe that solar is a complete non-starter unless utilities are forced to pay extremely unrealistic prices for solar energy produced by households. The trouble is that when these generous subsidy programs generate that kind of interest, the cost quickly rises to become overwhelming. Meanwhile, the original justification for these subsidies was that by stimulating greater consumer demand, there would be a massive increase in production leading to dramatic falls in production costs. Eventually the subsidy regime, the thinking went, could die away.”

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Opportunities Remain for OMB to Improve the Transparency of Rulemaking Processes

By Staff Writers, GAO, Mar 15, 2016

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-505T>

How Natural Variations Became Environmental Crises: The Numbers Racket

By Frank Schnell, ACSH, Feb 15, 2016

<http://acsh.org/news/2016/02/15/how-natural-variations-became-environmental-crises/>

“In EPA’s 1986 Risk Assessment Guidelines, the following, uncharacteristically honest, and seldom quoted (except by me) statement was made: “The *true* risk is unknown and may be as low as zero.” Obviously, if the “true” risk is unknown, then the “risk” that is supposedly *quantified* in EPA risk assessments is *not* the “true” risk.”

How EPA Abdicated Responsibility for Flint but Pursues CO2 Emission Reductions at All Costs

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Mar 18, 2016

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/2593>

[SEPP Comment: The retired EPA professional points out that the EPA avoided obligations to protect public health from lead in drinking water, but continues to campaign against CO2 emissions, for which it has no physical evidence as a threat to public health.]

Rep. Chaffetz Eviscerates EPA Head McCarthy Over Agency Inaction in Flint Water Crisis

By Jeff Dunetz, ICECAP, Mar 18, 2016

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

Energy Issues – Non-US

Global energy sector CO2 emissions flat in 2015: IEA

By Staff Writers, Reuters, Mar 16, 2016 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

<http://news.yahoo.com/global-energy-sector-co2-emissions-flat-2015-iea-120620264.html>

How Dead is Nuclear Energy?

By John Constable, GWPF, Mar 13, 2016

<http://www.thegwgf.com/how-dead-is-nuclear-energy/>

Energy Issues -- US

This Is the Year Shale Gas Knocks Out US Coal

By Tyler Hodge, The American Interest, Mar 16, 2016

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/03/16/this-is-the-year-that-shale-gas-knocks-out-us-coal/>

Link to report: Natural gas expected to surpass coal in mix of fuel used for U.S. power generation in 2016

By Staff Writers, EIA, Mar 16, 2016

<http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.cfm?id=25392>

[SEPP Comment: The headline is misleading.]

Washington's Control of Energy

Obama to Energy Producers: Drop Dead

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, Mar 15, 2016

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2016/03/obama-to-energy-producers-drop-dead.php>

Regulators seek new rules for natural gas pipelines

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Mar 17, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/273485-regulators-seek-new-rules-for-natural-gas-pipelines>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

The U.S. Is Exporting Its Oil Everywhere

By Javier Blas and Laura Hurst, Bloomberg, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-18/from-china-to-switzerland-u-s-crude-oil-exports-go-mainstream>

[SEPP Comment: If the US government will allow it.]

Return of King Coal?

Coal Battered, but Not Down

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Mar 15, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/03/15/coal-battered-but-not-down/>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Five Years Later, Cutting Through the Fukushima Myths

By Andrew Karam, Popular Mechanics, Mar 11, 2016

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/energy/a19871/fukushima-five-years-later/>

The Myth Of Expensive Nuclear Power

By Euan Mears, Oil Price.com, Mar 12, 2016

<http://oilprice.com/Alternative-Energy/Nuclear-Power/The-Myth-Of-Expensive-Nuclear-Power.html>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Smil on Oily Wind Turbines

By Robert Bradley Jr. Master Resource, Mar 17, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/smil-vaclav/smil-oily-wind-turbines/>

“For a 5-megawatt turbine, the steel alone averages 150 metric tons for the reinforced concrete foundations, 250 metric tons for the rotor hubs and nacelles (which house the gearbox and generator), and 500 metric tons for the towers.”

[SEPP Comment: What is green about manufacturing and installing wind turbines?]

The rise and fall of Spanish renewable energy giant Abengoa

By Daniel Bosque, Barcelona (AFP) March 16, 2016

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/The_rise_and_fall_of_Spanish_renewable_energy_giant_Aben_goa_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Its dependence on subsidies significantly contributed to the bankruptcy.]

EU Renewable Energy Stats

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Mar 18, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/03/18/eu-renewable-energy-stats/>

Re-thinking renewable energy predictions

By Staff Writers, Tancha, Japan (SPX), Mar 14, 2016

http://www.winddaily.com/reports/Re_thinking_renewable_energy_predictions_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Can global or regional patterns in wind be established?]

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

How to make El Hierro 100% renewable

By Roger Andrews, Energy Matters, Mar 14, 2016

<http://euanmearns.com/how-to-make-el-hierro-100-renewable/#more-12906>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Ethanol’s Lost Decades: Could We Have Had a Biofuel World?

By Marc Rauch, Master Resource, Mar 16, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/biofuels/ethanols-lost-decades/>

[SEPP Comment: Interesting argument: about 1900, alcohol was a preferred engine fuel to gasoline, but heavy US government taxes on alcohol since the 1860s gave kerosene, then gasoline, unfair advantages in the market. If one accepts the argument, then it can be used as an example on how taxes distort the market.]

Health, Energy, and Climate

Another Epic Greenfail

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, Mar 18, 2016

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2016/03/another-epic-greenfail.php>

[SEPP Comment: The health issues from using indoor cook stoves burning traditional fuels, biomass, etc. have been known for decades, and often ignored.]

The Right Targets for Global Health Investment

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/global-health-best-investments-by-bjorn-lomborg-2016-03>

Environmental Industry

DDT or DEET to Stop Zika? Not So Obvious

By Josh Bloom, ACSH, Mar 8, 2016

<http://acsh.org/news/2016/03/08/ddt-or-deet-to-stop-zika-the-answer-may-surprise-you/>

Other Scientific News

The dangers of powerful geomagnetic storms generated by solar activity

By Tomasz Nowakowski for Astro Watch, Los Angeles CA (SPX), Mar 15, 2016

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Should_We_Worry_About_Powerful_Geomagnetic_Storms_Caused_by_Solar_Activity_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

This shaken baby syndrome case is a dark day for science – and for justice

A leading doctor faces being struck off for challenging the theory about the infant condition. It's like Galileo all over again

By Clive Stafford Smith, Guardian, UK, Mar 14, 2016 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/14/shaken-baby-syndrome-science-doctor-challenging-theory-infant-waney-squier>

The case against mercantilism

Trade treaties are not essential for trade; the EU distorts the UK's trade

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/free-trade/>

[SEPP Comment: Mercantilism was a dominant economic theory embraced by European governments when Adam Smith wrote against it in 1776. Smith's views were later mislabeled as capitalism and often misunderstood.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Friday Funny – the SciFi terror of inadequate anomalies

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 18, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/03/18/friday-funny-the-scifi-terror-of-inadequate-anomalies/>

“... I've come to think that climate alarmists are little more than garden variety hypochondriacs. Almost anything weather or climate related seems to scare them.

“In a couple of months, El Niño and the temperature spike will be gone and then we won't see crazy pronunciations like this. Instead, we'll see a shift in dialog that this cooling is just 'weather, not climate'.

Salps move in for the krill

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Mar 19, 2016

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/5977>

“Human activity is driving changes in the world’s oceans at a rate not seen for several million years, a series of reports has concluded.

“Oscar Schofield, of Rutgers University in the US, said environmental change had been ‘profound’ in the West Antarctic Peninsula and was altering the food chain on which whales in this polar region depend.

“Blooms of phytoplankton, or microscopic plants, had decreased by 12 per cent in the past 30 years, and the size of the cells had also shrunk.

“This had allowed jellyfish-like creatures called salps, which find it easier to feed on the small cells, to start to replace shrimp-like krill, on which whales depend for food. [The Age \(Australia\), 18 Jun 2010](#)”

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ARTICLES:

Please note that articles not linked easily or summarized here are reproduced in the Articles Section of the full TWTW that can be found on the web site under the date of the TWTW.

1. Plenty of Political Climate Change

Sen. Whitehouse used to pretend he opposed jailing dissenters.

Editorial, WSJ, Mar 15, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/plenty-of-political-climate-change-1458083603>

SUMMARY: The editorial states:

“Sheldon Whitehouse took to the Senate floor last fall to assail our coverage of his climate agenda. We had criticized his plan to use the RICO law, created to prosecute mobsters, against people who disagree with him about global warming. We also criticized George Mason University’s Jagadish Shukla, who wrote to Attorney General Loretta Lynch and other federal officials urging them to follow the Senator’s advice. New developments aren’t helping the credibility of Messrs. Shukla and Whitehouse.

“In October Mr. Whitehouse denied that the RICO litigation threat—with its potential for treble damages—was intended to shut down scientific debate. The Rhode Island Democrat claimed he wants civil rather than criminal prosecutions of climate dissenters. As if bringing financial ruin on defendants accused of independent thought isn’t bad enough.

“But now it looks like the campaign to silence climate dissidents could move beyond a potential civil case—and we’re not hearing a peep from Mr. Whitehouse. Attorney General Lynch told the Senate last week that her department had referred a request to prosecute climate dissent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Specifically, it was referred to the FBI’s criminal investigative division. A Justice official says on background that this is ‘not an indication or recommendation of whether a matter merits investigation, but is simply a referral to an appropriate investigative authority at the Department.’

“Even as Sen. Whitehouse questioned Ms. Lynch on this very matter at the hearing, he uttered no criticism. His spokesman says the Senator still doesn’t favor criminal investigations and that Mr. Whitehouse thought the FBI referral “appeared unusual for the pursuit of a civil investigation.” But if Justice does throw people in jail for scientific skepticism, the message seems to be: Don’t count on Mr. Whitehouse to defend your liberty.

“While the FBI ponders whether to slap the cuffs on people who don’t believe in U.N. climate models, scientists who agree with Mr. Whitehouse are thriving beyond the dreams of most academic researchers.

“Check out Mr. Shukla, who egged on Ms. Lynch in the pursuit of climate skeptics. We noted recently the House Science Committee report that the George Mason professor had appeared to violate university policy in raking in more than \$511,000 in combined compensation in 2014 from the school and his tax-exempt outfit, the Institute of Global Environment and Society. His wife collected another \$166,000 that year to serve as the IGES business manager, and their daughter has been listed as an employee.

“We’ve reviewed a 2012 memo from Mr. Shukla’s lawyer to IGES trustees saying that in some cases he would be entitled to fly business class and to bring his wife on trips, and also to have a leased car with a monthly payment not to exceed \$600. IGES has been funded almost entirely by taxpayers. Many young scientists would be thrilled to win a federal grant even a fraction of the Shukla family haul. Mr. Shukla did not respond to requests for comment.

“We understand why Messrs. Whitehouse and Shukla want to use the power of government to stifle their scientific and political opponents. But it’s harder to understand why George Mason wants to be associated with this sort of taxpayer fleecing and the silencing of academic dissent.”

2. California Regulators Give Ivanpah Solar Plant More Time

Lifeline gives owners up to a year to work out problems

By Cassandra Sweet, WSJ, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/california-regulators-give-ivanpah-solar-plant-more-time-1458242826>

SUMMARY: According to the reporter:

“California regulators threw a lifeline Thursday to the struggling Ivanpah solar plant, which has failed to generate the electricity it is required to produce under contracts with PG&E Corp.

“The plant, located about 50 miles southwest of Las Vegas in California’s Mojave Desert, cost roughly \$2.2 billion and received about \$1.5 billion in federal loans, according to the Energy Department.

“The plant’s two units that serve PG&E are expected to generate 640,000 megawatt-hours a year, according to documents from the commission. The units generated 45% of that amount in 2014, and 68% in 2015, according to a Wall Street Journal analysis of federal and state documents.”

[SEPP Comment: No estimate of the cost to the consumer.]

3. Crude Mystery: Where Did 800,000 Barrels of Oil Go?

Tally of unaccounted for oil hit highest level in 17 years in 2015; Oil data is ‘an imperfect science’

By Georgi Kantchev, WSJ, Mar 17, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/crude-mystery-where-did-800-000-barrels-of-oil-go-1458207004>

SUMMARY: According to the reporter:

“There is mystery at the heart of the oversupplied global oil market: missing barrels of crude.

“Last year, there were 800,000 barrels of oil a day unaccounted for by the International Energy Agency, the energy monitor that puts together data on crude supply and demand. Where these barrels ended up, or if they even existed, is key to an oil market that remains under pressure from the glut in crude.

“Some analysts say the barrels may be in China. Others believe the barrels were created by flawed accounting and they don’t actually exist. If they don’t exist then the oversupply that has driven crude prices to decade lows could be much smaller than estimated and prices could rebound faster.

“While the IEA estimates supply and demand from global data, its numbers on where the oversupply is being stockpiled come only from members of the OECD. That means that some of those barrels might be found in non-OECD countries like China.

“Some analysts disagree. The missing barrels have become such a large proportion of the oversupply that this would imply that stockpiles are building up in non-OECD countries at a much faster pace than those in the organization, something that they question. Analysts also point out that collecting data on oil is hard.

“Demand data is derived from models rather than from real measured consumption and is often substantially revised, investment bank DNB Markets said in a research note. More than half of global oil demand also now comes from non-OECD nations where statistical gathering isn’t as well developed, the bank said.”

[SEPP Comment: During the OPEC oil embargo against the US in the 1970s, the US oil imports actually increased. Companies were buying oil to be shipped to one country, then having it diverted to the US. Some members of the US Congress actually called for the prosecution of the executives of these oil companies because the procedure avoided the politically contrived idea that the price of oil should depend on the year the well was drilled and similar political restrictions.]

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