

The Week That Was: 2016-08-06 (August 6, 2016)

Brought to You by SEPP (www.SEPP.org)

The Science and Environmental Policy Project

#####

Quote of the Week: *'...Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific technological elite.'* President Dwight Eisenhower, Final address to the nation upon his leaving office. [H/t Fran Manns]

#####

Number of the Week: From over \$80 in 2013 to \$40 in 2016

#####

THIS WEEK:

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

Atmospheric Temperatures: Something unexpected happened in July. The rapid decline in atmospheric temperatures observed for the past few months stopped; in fact, they slightly increased. What will happen for the remainder of the year and in 2017 is yet to be seen. Will a La Niña develop, resulting in a further decline, as in 1998 following a strong El Niño, or will the temperatures remain roughly stable, at a higher level than before the 2015 El Niño? We don't know, nor is there an established basis for such predictions. In spite of the US government spending over \$40 billion since 1993 on what it calls climate science, precious little has gone into understanding the natural causes of climate change, one of which is the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO), which describes El Niño/La Niña events.

Based on research in China, and elsewhere, ENSO events may have been occurring for thousands of years, prior to human use of fossil fuels. Additional research indicates that variations in monsoons, which may be influenced by ENSO events have been occurring for hundreds of thousands of years, long before humanity existed.

This type of climate change is largely ignored in the summaries of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its followers such as the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), Supposedly, the mission of the USGCRP, with an annual budget of about \$2.5 Billion, is to "assist the Nation and the world to understand, assess, predict, and respond to human-induced and natural processes of global change."

The July global temperature report by the Earth Systems Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) illustrates several important points concerning climate science.

1. Even the atmospheric measurements are influenced by natural events on earth, thus making a clear signal of the influence of carbon dioxide (CO₂) very difficult to extract. It is virtually impossible to extract such a signal from the far more messy surface data, which are not comprehensive and contaminated by many more human and natural influences.
2. The UAH team advances scientific understanding by promptly, and scrupulously, reporting their findings and publicly posting them for open review.
3. Even short-term forecasts of global temperatures are difficult. The IPCC notion of using global climate models, which have not been validated, to make long term forecasts is

absurd. To paraphrase an old saying in the stock market: Nature will do whatever she must to make a fool out of you.

Note: The UAH team should not be confused with the Earth Systems Science Center at Penn State University directed by Michael Mann, who has been shown to distort data or exclude it.

See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Changing Climate and

<http://www.globalchange.gov/about>

Lowering Standards – State of Climate Science: The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI, formerly NCDC, in Asheville, NC) released the assessment “State of the Climate in 2015” which is published as a supplement to the “Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society.” The report follows the usual pattern of the IPCC and USGCRP reports of emphasizing alarm about increasing atmospheric CO₂ and changing climate, without establishing any physical evidence that CO₂ is the primary cause of global warming, now called climate change. Of course, the press releases emphasized surface temperatures, because 2015 was not the hottest year in the atmospheric record. Yet, the effect of CO₂ takes place in the atmosphere.

Perhaps the editors of the reports should read a few papers on the history of climate change prior to artificial cut-off times such as 1950 or the industrial revolution.

The report contains the usual claims of more extreme weather in some parts of the globe, but this is always happening in some parts of the globe, and even the IPCC states climate change is over periods of 30 years or more.

But, what was particularly interesting, was an article in the Times of India, based on an AFP release that stated:

“Global heat, greenhouse gases and sea levels all climbed to record highs last year, making 2015 the worst in modern times across a range of key environmental indicators, international scientists said Tuesday. [Boldface added.]

“A dire picture of the Earth's health is painted in the State of the Climate report, a peer-reviewed 300-page tome that comes out once a year and is compiled by 450 scientists from around the world.

“The record heat that the planet experienced last year was driven partially by global warming, and was exacerbated by the ocean heating trend known as El Nino, it said.

“El Nino, which just ended in July, was one of the strongest the Earth has seen "since at least 1950," said the report, led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Centers for Environmental Information.”

What made the assertion about sea level rise very interesting is that the dateline location for the report is Miami. Of course, there is an issue with sea level rise in Miami. However, inland from Miami are numerous quarries mining limestone and other sedimentary rocks such as Coquina, which is composed of fragments of the shells of mollusks, trilobites, brachiopods, or other invertebrates found in the oceans.

The web site of the Florida Geological Survey states that: *“Florida ranks second nationally in production and fourth in consumption of crushed stone (limestone and dolostone [dolomite]). Most of the stone that is mined in Florida is used for road construction.*

“Limestone of high purity can undergo calcination (heating) and, together with other ingredients, be used to manufacture portland and masonry cement. Florida ranks in the top five states in production and consumption of portland cement and is first in the production and consumption of masonry cement.

“The earliest mining in Florida was carried out by Native Americans, who quarried the mineral chert from limestone for use in points and tools...In the 1500’s, Spanish settlers and soldiers quarried coquina limestone near St. Augustine to form building blocks for their forts and homes.

“Limestone has been used in Florida as a building material and source of lime and cement since Spanish times. High-purity limestone has been quarried near Ocala, Marion County, since the turn of the century. Limestone is still an important industry in Florida, supplying raw materials for cement and roadbase.”

Apparently no one bothered to ask those presenting the “State of the Climate” how did rock made of marine sediments occur above sea level to be easily mined before European settlements in tectonically stable Florida? Of course, during the last interglacial, large parts of Florida were below sea levels. But, discussing sea level variation before human CO2 emissions would be contrary to the narrative these organizations are trying to establish. See links under Lowering Standards and <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/geology/geologictopics/minerals.htm>

Truncated History: One of the most disturbing practices of the climate establishment is truncating, cutting short, the historical record. Usually, there is some conceivable excuse for truncating the record or ignoring major data sources. Often, the excuse does not hold up to examination. For example, some climate scientists argue they MAY ignore atmospheric data because people live on the surface.

Weather occurs in the atmosphere. Ignoring atmospheric data for the influence of CO2 on temperatures is similar to claiming one can forecast the weather by looking at the footwear people are wearing on the city street.

The IPCC, and other organizations, place artificial constraints on how far back in history their analysis goes. Often it is 1950, or the onset major use of fossil fuels with industrialization, about 1850. An argument can be made that it was about this time that some in the Western nations had fairly widespread use of accurate instruments to measure temperatures. But that is no reason to ignore excellent proxy evidence, such as the fossil record. Would objective scientists accept an argument from creationists that primates are not the product of evolution because we have no evidence of their evolution prior to the use accurate instruments to measure their lives? See links under Changing Climate.

Greenhouse Effect or Atmospheric Pressure? In July, there was a controversy reported in TWTW, generally settled, regarding the statement that atmospheric pressure on Venus (over 90 atmospheres) contributes to temperatures greatly higher on Venus than on Earth. Conversely, over

the years, a number of comments have appeared on various web sites claiming there is no greenhouse effect on earth, and what is being measured is heating due to atmospheric pressure.

Recently, Spencer addressed this assertion quite well stating the greenhouse effect is not a warming per se, but a reduction in the rate of cooling. Further, Spencer states that weather would not exist without a greenhouse effect. See the link under Defending the Orthodoxy.

More Misuse of NEPA: The 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to study the potential environmental impact of any major project undertaken by the federal government, including building dams and bridges, roads, sewer systems, power plants, and even granting permits to drill for oil and gas on public lands. Environmental groups used NEPA to prevent the construction of a barrier/gate system by the Corps of Engineers along Interstate 10, designed to stop a hurricane storm surge from flooding Lake Pontchartrain, thereby overwhelming the levees and other means for protecting New Orleans from flooding. Although it is impossible to precisely determine, it is likely that the damage and deaths in New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina would have been substantially less had the barrier/gate system been built.

The Executive Office of the President (Obama) has issued guidance to all federal departments and agencies for considering greenhouse gas emissions and effects of climate change in NEPA reviews. The Council of Environmental Quality issued the guidance, stating that greenhouse gas emissions will be the proxy for climate change impacts of a proposed action. The Guidance states:

“This approach, together with providing a qualitative summary discussion of the impacts of GHG emissions based on authoritative reports such as the USGCRP’s National Climate Assessments and the Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States, a Scientific Assessment of the USGCRP, allows an agency to present the environmental and public health impacts of a proposed action in clear terms and with sufficient information to make a reasoned choice between no action and other alternatives and appropriate mitigation measures, and to ensure the professional and scientific integrity of the NEPA review.”

The USGCRP amplifies the weaknesses of the IPCC’s approach to global warming/climate change by attempting to use global climate models, which have not been validated, to estimate local and regional impacts. As shown in the written testimony by John Christy, generally the global climate models greatly overestimate temperatures in the atmosphere, where the greenhouse effect takes place. Thus, they likely greatly overestimate the greenhouse effect. Assessing economic projects on such a faulty basis is absurd. It is a continuation of the circular reasoning used in the IPCC and USGCRP reports. In practice, the exercise will require every government agency to conform to the poor scientific effort produced by the USGCRP. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and The Administration’s Plan

Additions and Corrections: Retired professor Peter Friedman corrected loose language used in the July 30 TWTW. He wrote:

“You discussed a "100 megawatt battery" in TWTW. A MW is of course a unit of power and without a time to go with it, it does not provide an energy storage capacity. In the case of batteries, both the power and total storage are important. A search indicated a great confusion in the media. Scientific America states that the project is "capable of holding and delivering over 100 megawatts of power an hour for four hours." This was picked up by other sources. A megawatt is a rate, so a "megawatt per hour" would define transient rate, which is important in

grid management, but not related. A press release from the vendor AES clarified that the unit "can deliver 400 MWh of energy." This means that the unit can deliver 400MWh of energy at a power of 100MW. The capacity is that of a new battery and it will decrease with usage. "

Thankfully, Marlo Lewis of CEI pointed out that the statement "For the past several centuries, general sea levels have been rising by about 18 cm (7 inches) per century" in the July 30 TWTW may be in error. It may not apply for the 18th and 19th centuries. A correct statement should have been: For the past several **millennia**, general sea levels have been rising by about 18 cm (7 inches) per century. There is significant evidence that that rate of rise may have slowed during the Little Ice Age. TWTW deeply appreciates the additions and corrections offered by its readers.

Number of the Week: From over \$80 in 2013 to \$40 in 2016. When the oil from shale revolution began in the US, no one was sure of the life of the wells and their costs. The oil companies involved were not the majors with deep pockets. Now, the consulting firm of Rystad Energy has estimated that the wellhead breakeven prices for new wells in shale has declined from over \$80 per barrel in 2013 to \$40 barrel in 2016 (or below). The formations include the Permian (TX, NM) Niobrara (Colorado, Wyoming) Eagle Ford (TX) and Bakken (ND). The reduction in costs indicates the power of learning from using high-tech equipment.

The claims by the outgoing CEO of Pioneer Natural Resources that, in the Permian, it can compete with Saudi Arabia may be more puffery than fact, such as the puffery used by wind promoters. But the general trend is real, and foretell of difficult times for the petro-states and major oil companies. Now, the only thing that may stop the shale revolution in the US is Washington. Why do so many politicians appear to be eager to protect petro-states and Big Oil by stopping hydraulic fracturing by independent oil companies? See Article # 1 and Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

#####

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Gergis and Law Dome

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Aug 3, 2016

<https://climateaudit.org/2016/08/03/gergis-and-law-dome/>

[SEPP Comment: Don't like the data, just ignore it.]

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

A threat from University College, London over a climate skeptic conference.

Guest opinion by Christopher Monckton of Brenchley, WUWT, Aug 1, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/08/01/a-threat-from-university-college-london-over-a-climate-skeptic-conference/>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt

U.S. States Signed Pact to Keep Exxon Climate Probe Confidential

The oil company was investigated over allegedly misleading the public about climate change

By Terry Wade, Reuters, Via Scientific American, Aug 4, 2016

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/u-s-states-signed-pact-to-keep-exxon-climate-probe-confidential/?WT.mc_id=SA_TW_ENGYSUS_NEWS

[SEPP Comment: More correctly stated: the attorneys general (AGs) of 15 states signed an agreement to keep secret their efforts to deprive Exxon and many public interest groups of their right to know about secret investigations, and the efforts of these AGs to deprive members of these groups of their civil rights, including freedom of speech.]

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

Prepared Testimony to House Committee on Science, Space & Technology

By John Christy, UAH, Feb 2, 2016

<https://science.house.gov/sites/republicans.science.house.gov/files/documents/HHRG-114-SY-WState-JChristy-20160202.pdf>

UAH Global Temperature Update for July, 2016: +0.39 deg. C

July Temperature Recovers Slightly from Previous Free-Fall

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2016/08/uah-global-temperature-update-for-july-2016-0-39-deg-c/>

July 2016 Report

Global Temperature Report, Earth Systems Science Center, University of Alabama in Huntsville, July 2016

<http://www.nsstc.uah.edu/climate/>

German Scientists Say It's "Game Over" For "Potsdam Climate Alarm Factory"

Game over: Dutch scientists refute Rahmstorf's Gulf Stream alarm story

By Dr. Sebastian Lüning and Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt (German text translated/edited by P Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, Aug 5, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/08/05/german-scientists-say-its-again-game-over-for-potsdam-climate-alarm-factory/#sthash.yA6jhmMy.dpbs>

Defending the Orthodoxy

The Warm Earth: Greenhouse Effect, or Atmospheric Pressure?

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, July 30, 2016

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2016/07/the-warm-earth-greenhouse-effect-or-atmospheric-pressure/>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

A Warm Period by Any Other Name – The Climatic Optimum

Hypsithermal, Altithermal, Holocene Optimum, Holocene Thermal Maximum, Holocene Megathermal, Anthropogene;

Guest opinion: Dr. Tim Ball, WUWT, July 31, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/07/31/a-warm-period-by-any-other-name-the-climatic-optimum/>

White House Turns Up Heat on Climate Alarm

By Larry Bell, Newsmax, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.newsmax.com/LarryBell/foia-cei/2016/08/01/id/741495/>

“According to surface measurements, the 2015 El Nino year record amounted to only 29 hundredths of one degree warmer than global mean temperatures over the past 100 plus years...”

Non-Existent Relationship ...CO2-Temperature Correlation Only 15% Of Last 165 Years

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Aug 4, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/08/04/non-existent-relationship-co2-temperature-correlation-only-15-of-last-165-years/#sthash.vqknPHNn.dpbs>

Climate Realist Malcolm Roberts voted in as a Queensland Senator

By Geoff Brown, Australian Climate Skeptics, Aug 4, 2016

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2016/08/climate-realist-malcolm-roberts-voted.html>

There are no experts on the future

The track record of forecasters, except through extrapolation, is poor

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, July 31, 2016

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/experts-and-the-future/>

“So trust experts, yes, but never about the future. The inventor, James Lovelock, aged 96, put it rather well in an interview with the Bournemouth Echo at the weekend: ‘I think anyone that tries to predict more than five to ten years ahead is a bit of an idiot, so many things can change unexpectedly.’”

USGS report on history of walrus haulouts leaves out correlation with population size

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Aug 2, 2016

<https://polarbearscience.com/2016/08/02/usgs-report-on-history-of-walrus-haulouts-leaves-out-correlation-with-population-size/>

[SEPP Comment: Another “made-up” fear.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy -- Statistics

Preface to Uncertainty: The Soul of Modeling, Probability & Statistics

By William Briggs, His Blog, Aug 5, 2016

<http://wmbriggs.com/post/19441/>

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to what is implied, hypothesis testing is vital to science. The dismissal of hypothesis testing may apply to Bayesian statistics, but not to hypothesis testing as traditionally performed.]

After Paris!

Global climate pact expected to take force this year

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Aug 5, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/290548-global-climate-pact-expected-to-take-force-this-year>

[SEPP Comment: According to a report from the government of the Marshall Islands!]

Poland Shuns Wind, Doubles Down on Coal-Reliant Future

By Sonal Patel, Power Mag, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.powermag.com/poland-shuns-wind-doubles-coal-reliant-future/>

Paris agreement struggles — only 0.04% of global CO2 emissions “ratified” (1% of man-made CO2)

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Aug 2, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/08/paris-agreement-failing-only-0-04-of-global-co2-emissions-ratified-1-of-man-made-co2/>

After Brexit!

Climate Exit – Clexit

Summary Statement by Viv Forbes, Founding Secretary of Clexit

Press release, Australian Climate Skeptics, Aug 2, 2016

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2016/08/climate-exit-clexit.html>

More on Clexit

By Viv Forbes, Australian Climate Sceptics, Aug 3, 2016

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2016/08/more-on-clexit.html>

Globalization and its New Discontents

By Joseph E. Stiglitz, recipient of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 2001 and the John Bates Clark Medal in 1979, is University Professor at Columbia University, Project Syndicate, Aug 5, 2016

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/globalization-new-discontents-by-joseph-e--stiglitz-2016-08>

[SEPP Comment: There is a major distinction between globalization, meaning reduction in national economic regulations and barriers, and globalization meaning expanding international economic regulations barriers. Even though it is up to the individual countries to comply, the Paris Agreement is an example of the latter.]

The Administration’s Plan

Obama tells federal agencies to get serious about climate change

By Katie Herzog, Grist, Aug 3, 2016

<http://grist.org/climate-energy/obama-tells-federal-agencies-to-get-serious-about-climate-change/>

Link to final guidance: Memorandum for Heads of Federal Departments and Agencies

By Christina Goldfuss, Council on Environmental Quality, Aug 1, 2016

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/nepa_final_ghg_guidance.pdf

The Administration’s Plan – Push-Back

Clean Power Plan: All pain, no gain for West Virginia

By Garrett Ballengee and Michael Reed, contributors, The Hill, Aug 3, 2016

<http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/289694-clean-power-plan-all-pain-no-gain-for-west-virginia>

Thirteen states sue over EPA methane rule

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Aug 2, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/290159-thirteen-states-sue-over-epa-methane-rule>

Oil groups warn against new EPA methane push

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Aug 3, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/290322-oil-groups-warn-against-new-epa-methane-push>

Seeking a Common Ground

The National Weather Service Moves to a New Global Model: Will It Do it Right?

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, July 31, 2016

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2016/07/the-national-weather-service-moves-to.html>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO2 Science

Antarctic Sea Ice Increase A Thorn in the Side of Global Warmers

Turner, J., Hosking, J.S., Marshall, G.J., Phillips, T. and Bracegirdle, T.J. 2016. Antarctic sea ice increase consistent with intrinsic variability of the Amundsen Sea Low. *Climate Dynamics* **46**: 2391-2402. Aug 5, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/aug/a3.php>

CMIP5 Simulations of 1850-2005 South Asian Summer Monsoons

Prasanna, V. 2016. Assessment of South Asian Summer Monsoon Simulation in CMIP5-Coupled Climate Models During the Historical Period (1850-2005). *Pure and Applied Geophysics* **173**:1379-1402. Aug 2, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/aug/a2.php>

CMIP5 Projections of Australian Summer Monsoon Onset and Retreat

Zhang, H., Dong, G., Moise, A., Colman, R., Hanson, L. and Ye, H. 2016. Uncertainty in CMIP5 model-projected changes in the onset/retreat of the Australian summer monsoon. *Climate Dynamics* **46**: 2371-2389. Aug 2, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/aug/a1.php>

Model Issues

The art and science of climate model tuning

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Aug 1, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/08/01/the-art-and-science-of-climate-model-tuning/#more-21921>

Link to paper: The art and science of climate model tuning

Frederic Hourdin, et al. AMS, July 29, 2016

<http://journals.ametsoc.org/doi/abs/10.1175/BAMS-D-15-00135.1>

Measurement Issues -- Atmosphere

Assessing atmospheric temperature data sets for climate studies

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Aug 1, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/08/01/assessing-atmospheric-temperature-data-sets-for-climate-studies/#more-21925>

Changing Weather

Are Hot Days Becoming More Frequent In England?

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Aug 5, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/08/05/are-hot-days-more-frequent-in-england/>

Link to UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2017

By Staff Writers, Committee on Climate Change, 2017\

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017/synthesis-report/>

[SEPP Comment: Homewood tests the report's claim: The average number of hot days per year has been increasing since the 1960s. And the claim fails.]

State of emergency declared in Howard County; 2 dead

More than 6 inches of rain cause flooding in Ellicott City

By Greg Ng, Wbalrtv.com, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.wbalrtv.com/weather/several-inches-of-rain-cause-flooding-in-ellicott-city/40965238>

NASA analyses Maryland storm system that caused flooding

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 2, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/08/02/nasa-analyses-maryland-storm-system-that-caused-flooding/>

Changing Climate

640,000 Years Of Climate Change

By Doug Hoffman, The Resilient Earth, Aug 3, 2016

<http://theresilientearth.com/?q=content/640000-years-climate-change>

Link to paper: The Asian monsoon over the past 640,000 years and ice age terminations

By Hai Cheng, et al. Nature, June 29, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v534/n7609/full/nature18591.html>

The quantitative reconstruction of temperature and precipitation in the Guanzhong Basin of the southern Loess Plateau between 6200 BP and 5600 BP

By Nan Sun, The Holocene, Aug 2016

<http://hol.sagepub.com/content/26/8/1200.abstract?rss=1>

“Comparing the climate between the mid-Holocene and present in the Xi’an area, the MAT [mean annual temperature] was about 1.1°C higher than today and the AP [annual precipitation] was about 278 mm higher than today.”

The role of El Niño in the global energy redistribution: a case study in the mid-Holocene

By Saint-Lu, M., Braconnot, P., Leloup, J. et al. *Climate Dynamics*, July 29, 2016

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs00382-016-3266-5>

Changing Seas

All Natural... Four New Scientific Publications Show No Detectable Sea Level Rise Signal!

4 New Papers: Anthropogenic Signal Not Detectable in Sea Level Rise

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Aug 1, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/08/01/all-natural-four-new-scientific-publications-show-no-detectable-sea-level-rise-signal/#sthash.rJUbgVvr.dpbs>

Ocean Observatories System Is Up and Running

WHOI plays major role in creating 'transformative' national research effort

By Véronique LaCapra, Oceanus, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.whoi.edu/oceanus/feature/ocean-observatories-system-is-up-and-running>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Antarctic sea ice may be a source of mercury in southern ocean fish and birds

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 1, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/08/01/antarctic-sea-ice-may-be-a-source-of-mercury-in-southern-ocean-fish-and-birds/>

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Foodgrain output up despite scant rainfall in 2015-16

By Vishwa Mohanl, Times of India, Aug 3, 2016

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Foodgrain-output-up-despite-scant-rainfall-in-2015-16/articleshow/53516088.cms>

Un-Science or Non-Science?

Claim: Climate model determines future at-risk electrical grid failure areas

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, July 30, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/07/30/claim-climate-model-determines-future-at-risk-electrical-grid-failure-areas/>

Lowering Standards

State of the Climate

Jessica Blunden and Derek Arndt, Editors, AMS, August, 2015

http://ametsoc.net/sotc/Chapter_00.pdf

Global heat, sea level hit record highs in 2015

By Staff Writers, Times of India, AFP, Aug 2, 2016

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tech/tech-news/Global-heat-sea-level-hit-record-highs-in-2015/articleshow/53509560.cms>

“And global sea levels swelled to their highest point ever, about 70 millimeters (about 2.75 inches) higher than the 1993 average.

“Sea level is creeping up gradually around the globe, averaging about 3.3 millimeters per year, said the report.”

[SEPP Comment: Inconsistent with other studies of 1.2 mm per year. See link under changing seas.]

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

Claim: global warming -driven extreme weather will increasingly disrupt striped bass fishing holes

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 2, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/08/02/claim-global-warming-driven-extreme-weather-will-increasingly-disrupt-striped-bass-fishing-holes/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

The Future of Solar-Plus-Storage in Germany

“The future of Germany’s energy storage market is bright, and the solar market will surely benefit as storage prices decline.”

By Mohit Anand and Brett Simon, Green Tech Media, Aug 2, 2016

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/the-future-of-solar-plus-storage-in-germany>

[SEPP Comment: Two fantasies in one article: Solar is viable in cloudy, high latitude Germany and storage is convenient and affordable.]

Questioning European Green

Germans Hesitate on Coal Phase-Out Target in Merkel Policy Paper

By Brian Parkin, Bloomberg, Aug 2, 2016

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-02/germans-hesitate-on-coal-phase-out-target-in-merkel-policy-paper>

“Merkel ‘presses all the right climate buttons at international meetings but it’s more and more just lip service,’ said the opposition Green Party’s energy spokesman Oliver Krischer on Monday. ‘The chancellery’s clearly worried about the elections.’”

The Political Games Continue

The Lunacy of Pledging to Eliminate Fossil Fuel Use since Wind and Solar Are Not the Answer to Much of Anything

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Aug 5, 2016

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/2814>

“Given all this, one would expect that electricity prices would vary significantly with the extent of use of wind and solar. In fact, a simple comparison of electricity prices in Western European countries, where wind and solar are used to greatly varying degrees, suggests that the Obama Administration’s ‘Clean Power Plan’ is likely to raise prices by a factor of between three and four.”

Hillary Believes in Science — Which Isn’t Saying Much

Science is more limited than you might have thought

By William Briggs, The Stream, July 30, 2016

<https://stream.org/hillary-believes-science-isnt-saying-much/>

Litigation Issues

Court sides with greens on EPA boiler rule

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, July 29, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/289814-court-sides-with-greens-on-epa-boiler-rule>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Opening The Floodgates On Clean Energy Deployment In The U.S.

By Elias Hinckley, Energy Collective, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.theenergycollective.com/eliashinckley/2383798/opening-the-floodgates-on-clean-energy-deployment-in-the-u-s>

“The biggest constraint to renewable energy growth in the US is the availability of tax equity to support project investment. There is not nearly as much tax equity investment as is needed to support financing and building all of the renewable energy projects in development — as a result the pace of project financing and construction is being severely constrained.”

[SEPP Comment: Gibberish for: “We need more subsidies!”]

New York approves renewable energy standard

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Aug 1, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/290017-new-york-approves-renewable-energy-standard>

“New York officials approved a clean energy standard on Monday that requires half of the state’s electricity to come from renewable sources by 2030.

“The initiative, passed by the Public Service Commission, also includes a nuclear power incentive under which utilities will pay nearly \$1 billion over two years to subsidize three of the state’s nuclear power plants.”

[SEPP Comment: The Democratic party platform says 50% from renewables in a decade. Is New York bucking the trend?]

Wind Energy Now A Competitive, Bipartisan Option

Wind energy is booming in 'red' states.

By Michael Goggin, Wind Energy Association, Via Yale Climate Connections, July 29, 2016

<http://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2016/07/wind-energy-now-competitive-bipartisan/>

“Now that wind is competitive on price alone it is doing quite well in the free market.”

[SEPP Comment: Industries relying on subsidies and mandates are not free market industries.]

Energy Issues – Non-US

Deceitful Studies

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Aug 5, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/08/05/deceitful-studies/>

Do We Focus Too Much on Electricity?

By David Hone, Energy Collective, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.theenergycollective.com/davidhone/2384160/do-we-focus-too-much-on-electricity>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Texas shale oil has fought Saudi Arabia to a standstill

By Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, Telegraph, UK, July 31, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2016/07/31/texas-shale-oil-has-fought-saudi-arabia-to-a-standstill/>

Pioneer says some U.S. fracking costs competitive with Saudis

By Terry Wade, Reuters, July 28, 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pioneer-natl-rsc-fracking-idUSKCN10828Q>

“Its newest wells are using up to 1,700 pounds per foot of sand, up to 50 barrels per foot of fluid, and frack points as often as every 15 feet with wells that are now nearly 10,000 feet long.”

Methane Hydrates Have a Bright Future

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Aug 3, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/08/03/methane-hydrates-have-a-bright-future/>

U.S. Shale Revolution Is Shaking Up Global LNG Market

By Staff Writers, Bloomberg, Via GWPF, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.thegwgf.com/u-s-shale-revolution-is-shaking-up-global-lng-market/>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

The answer is nuclear

By Martin Livermore, The Scientific Alliance, July 29, 2016

<http://scientific-alliance.org/node/1011>

[SEPP Comment: As compared with renewables, this analysis makes “Hinkley C look like a bargain.”]

Decarbonisation yes, but not at any price

Hinkley Point C and British renewables are too expensive

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/hinkley-renewables-and-the-social-cost-of-carbon/>

Saved in the 'Nick' of time from the world's most expensive power station?

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, July 30, 2016

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/30/saved-in-the-nick-of-time-from-the-worlds-most-expensive-power-s/>

“We can credit the decision to put on hold our agreement for EDF to build the most expensive power station in the world at Hinkley Point to Theresa May’s joint chief of staff, Nick Timothy: the man who, having back in April described the Climate Change Act as “a monstrous act of self-harm”, was also behind the abolition of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (Decc).”

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Energy & Environmental Newsletter: August 1, 2016

By John Droz, Jr., Master Resource Aug 1, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/energy-environmental-newsletter-august-1-2016/>

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

Europe backing 'limitless' energy project in France

By Daniel J. Graeber, Brussels (UPI), Jul 27, 2016

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Europe_backing_limitless_energy_project_in_France_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Will sea life clog tide power as they have clogged other forms of sea power?]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Cramer: Face It, Tesla's a Cult

By Jim Cramer, Real Money, Aug 5, 2016

<http://realmoney.thestreet.com/articles/08/05/2016/cramer-face-it-teslas-cult>

Other Scientific News

The Gray, Gray World of Wolves

Guest Essay by Kip Hansen, WUWT, July 30, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/07/30/the-gray-gray-world-of-wolves/>

[SEPP Comment: Too often the endangered species act has been used to declare hybrids as a separate species. In this instance, Eastern Wolf and Red Wolf are hybrids of Grey Wolves and Coyotes.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

Why This Recovery Is So Lousy

Don't believe the line that slow growth is inevitable after financial crises. Bad policies yield bad results.

By Phil Gramm and Michael Solon, WSJ, Aug 3, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/why-this-recovery-is-so-lousy-1470266675>

“Every 10 years between 1870 and 2007, incomes for each man, woman and child in America rose on average by 21.6%” (simple growth of per capita income of 2.2% per year)

#####

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Scientists Trace Heat Wave To Massive Star At Center Of Solar System

By Staff Writers, The Onion, Science, Aug 8, 2011

<http://www.theonion.com/article/scientists-trace-heat-wave-to-massive-star-at-cent-21088>

Researchers may have finally found an antidote to biased thinking about science

By Chris Mooney, The Washington Post, Aug 3, 2016

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/08/03/researchers-may-have-finally-found-an-antidote-to-biased-thinking-about-science/?utm_term=.b3c2241cf943

We're going to need more psychologists!

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Aug 1, 2016

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/6623>

“Climate change will have significant negative impacts on Americans’ health and psychological well-being, due to an increase in the frequency and severity of climate-related natural disasters and other climate-related changes in the environment and weather.

Likely effects, which will increase as climate change’s physical impacts accelerate, include stress, anxiety, depression and a loss of community identity, says a new report from the American Psychological Association and ecoAmerica.

Climate change is also likely to result in an increase in post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions because of the rise in the number and severity of natural disasters, according to the report. Climate change could also lead to increased feelings of loss and helplessness if individuals and communities are forced to relocate.

“The striking thing is how these effects will permeate so many aspects of our daily lives,” said Norman B. Anderson, PhD, CEO of the American Psychological Association.”

From News-medical, 10 Jun 2014

#####

ARTICLES:

1. Low Crude Prices Hammer Big Oil Companies

Exxon, Chevron results highlight challenge of operating as crude prices near lows

By Bradley Olson and Selina Williams, WSJ, July 29, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/low-crude-prices-hammer-big-oil-companies-1469806903>

SUMMARY: The impact of low oil prices is hitting the profits of big oil and their spending plans. The authors state:

“The world’s biggest oil companies posted losses or steep declines in profit for the second quarter, and now face a daunting remainder of the year as crude prices retreat to about \$41 a barrel.

“Exxon Mobil Corp. on Friday reported its quarterly profit fell 60% to the lowest level since 1999, while Chevron Corp. disclosed its biggest quarterly loss since 2001. The results capped a bad week for big Western oil companies: BP PLC and Royal Dutch Shell PLC earlier posted earnings that disappointed investors.

“Exxon, Shell, Chevron, BP and French oil major Total SA in all have cut spending by about \$50 billion since 2013 and slashed tens of thousands of jobs; but the cutting hasn’t been nearly enough to protect profits after oil prices began plunging.

“In the latest quarter, Exxon’s profit fell to \$1.7 billion and Chevron reported a loss of \$1.5 billion. Shell’s profit fell 93% from a year earlier to \$239 million, and BP reported a \$2.25 billion loss, its third straight.

“Many oil and gas companies have promised to “live within cash flow” by next year, assuring investors that they will be able to generate enough money to pay for new projects and dividends without additional borrowing.

“Total said it would need oil prices at \$60 a barrel to reach that mark, while BP Chief Executive Bob Dudley said the company could deliver in 2017 if oil prices are between \$50 and \$55 a barrel.

“So far this year, oil has sold for an average of about \$40 a barrel.”

2. Coal Glut, Environmental Pushback Derail West Coast Port Plans

Once promising, exports to Asia have been undermined by oversupply, demise of port projects
By Timothy Puko and Erica E. Phillips, WSJ Aug 1, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/coal-glut-environmental-pushback-derail-west-coast-port-plans-1470070765>

The authors write:

“Western coal producers once saw exports to Asia as their future. For many, that dream is fading.

A global glut has flooded overseas markets that were once expected to buy coal produced along a belt stretching from Utah to Montana that includes the Powder River Basin. The industry is also losing long-sought shipping outlets on the West Coast, where local communities have blocked construction of coal terminals amid concerns about climate change and pollution.

“Out of seven West Coast export terminals proposed in the past five years—which combined could have handled over 125 million tons of coal annually—not one has opened.

“The coal companies’ defeats—under pressure from environmental groups—show the limits of miners’ sway over authorities as cheaper natural gas and tighter emissions standards have slashed demand for the fuel. With three of the four largest U.S. producers in bankruptcy and others hampered by debt, the retrenchment has been swift.

“Cloud Peak Energy Inc., the country’s No. 3 coal producer, said last month it was exploring “all options,” including a sale of its stake in a planned terminal about 100 miles north of Seattle, after

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in May blocked the project. The Army Corps said the terminal would have infringed on the fishing rights of an American Indian group, the Lummi Nation.

“Oregon denied a permit for a coal-export facility on the Columbia River in 2014, and another large terminal in Washington has been under review by the Army Corps for four years.

“Environmentalists have cheered the rejections.”

3. The Looting of Volkswagen

The company deserves a fine, but politicians keep demanding more.

Editorial, WSJ, Aug 4, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-looting-of-volkswagen-1470353904>

[SEPP Comment: As with BP, the Volkswagen debacle is illustrating another example of government greed in capitalizing on errors of corporations.]

The Editorial states:

“But it’s time to ask how much government attorneys should be able to extract from VW shareholders.

“In late July a federal judge in San Francisco gave preliminary approval to a \$14.7 billion civil settlement, the largest in the history of the auto industry. The fun for lawyers is only beginning, because this gigantic settlement doesn’t even cover all the relevant cars, nor all of the pending claims. Next come additional payouts for penalties assessed by state and federal officials. The state of Washington got the party started with a \$176 million fine announced last Thursday.

“VW shares have lost more than 20% of their value—close to \$21 billion—since the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board flagged the company in September for disguising levels of smog-causing pollution. Ironically, by allowing these diesel cars emitting high levels of nitrogen oxides on the road, the company may have reduced greenhouse emissions. Conventional vehicle alternatives often emit more carbon dioxide.

“But the law is the law. The company admitted its dishonesty last year and began surrendering documents by the million and then cash by the billions to various levels of government. The settlement that received initial approval in San Francisco makes one wonder what public purpose is being served and how many times and how many ways shareholders can be forced to pay for the same offenses.

“Recently we told you about the green boondoggles to be funded by the settlement, including the promotion of “Zero Emission Vehicles.” There’s also a nice deal for vehicle owners, who can get their cars fixed—or sell them back to VW at their pre-scandal value—and receive additional compensation of up to \$10,000. States can also apply for a piece of VW’s \$2.7 billion environmental remediation trust for any alleged damage caused by the vehicles.

“But even that’s not enough for prosecutors like New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. ‘We are seeking hundreds of millions of dollars more,’ his spokesman says. The day after announcing a new lawsuit against the company on July 19, he emailed supporters of his re-election campaign to share the “big news” about the lawsuit.

“His spokesman says Mr. Schneiderman’s campaign sends out emails “related to cases the office is involved in all the time.” So it’s now standard procedure for New York’s senior law enforcement official to politicize prosecutions by using them to promote his re-election.

“Beyond Mr. Schneiderman’s avarice, all of this raises a question about America’s business climate. As with BP after its Gulf oil spill, companies that make a mistake in America can now expect to be looted far beyond the compensatory damages of making victims whole. The political class uses the opportunity to soak the business for many more billions to serve their political ends. If this keeps up, America’s tort system will be as much a political risk as arbitrary law enforcement in China.”

#####