

The Week That Was: 2011-04-16 (April 16, 2011)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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PLEASE NOTE: The complete TWTW, including the articles, can be downloaded in an easily printable form at the SEPP web site: www.sepp.org.

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Quote of the Week:

“EPA determined in December 2009 that climate change caused by emissions of greenhouse gases threatens the public's health and the environment.” EPA “Denial of Petitions...” (Emphasis added)

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Number of the Week: 22

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THIS WEEK:

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

GOOD NEWS! Heartland Institute is sponsoring the Sixth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-6) to take place in Washington, DC from breakfast Thursday, June 30, to noon Friday, July 1, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. This event will be more modest than in the past, yet as informative and, perhaps, even more challenging to the orthodoxy. Of course, SEPP is a co-sponsor. Details to follow!

The above quote illustrates the extent to which the leadership of the EPA will ignore all science that interferes with its quest for power. The work of Sherwood, Craig, and Keith Idso, and many other scientists, has clearly established that an atmosphere enriched with carbon dioxide provides for more robust plant growth than the current atmosphere. Thus, a carbon dioxide enriched atmosphere is a great benefit to agriculture, humanity, and the environment. The EPA ignores this work.

Further, the threat to the public's health is based on numerical models that have never been verified and are likely very wrong. Generally recognized calculations based on the “greenhouse theory” demonstrate that a doubling of atmospheric carbon dioxide will result in an increase of about 1 deg C. Even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recognizes this. When compared with the natural temperature changes for the past 20,000 years, when the last ice age reached its maximum extent, an increase of 1 deg. C is not particularly significant.

The creators of the numerical models assumed that a small initial warming from carbon dioxide would be greatly amplified by a significant warming from an increase in atmospheric water vapor, centered above the tropics in the mid-troposphere (about 8 to 12 km). Twenty years of research have failed to uncover this hot spot. Yet, the EPA and the creators of the numerical models have ignored this scientific failure.

Instead, the EPA cites the work of the IPCC, which was followed by the work of the U.S. National Academy of Science and the U.S. Global Change Research Program, all of which ignore the crucial scientific failure. Further, EPA disguises this failure by citing melting Arctic ice, sea level rise, etc. All these claims may be true, but they do not establish cause. It is the unsubstantiated claim that increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide is causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming, that provides the sole scientific justification for the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide emissions.

EPA's Alan Carlin recognized that the science behind the Endangerment Finding was inadequate, but was ignored and his work hushed-up. Please see Articles #1, Article # 2, and articles under “Challenging the Orthodoxy.” For the EPA “Denial of Petitions...” please see:

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment/petitions.html>

Number of the Week: 22: According to the IPCC-AR4, greenhouse gas emissions have a Global Mean Radiative Forcing effect on climate 22 times greater than solar irradiance, the only natural influence considered. It is claimed that the level of scientific understanding is high for the influence of greenhouse gases. Yet, in spite of IPCC claims of high knowledge, and increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide, atmospheric temperatures reached a peak in 1998, an El Nino year, and have not gone above that since. The gases are CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, and Halocarbons. 2007, p. 32. The IPCC totally ignores the much more important climate effects on variations in solar activity other than irradiance. These are summarized in the 2008 NIPCC report (p.12) “Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate,” direct published evidence confirms this fact.

The Washington budget wars continue. As stated earlier, last year’s House of Representatives and Senate failed to pass an annual budget for the year ending September 30, 2011. (The Democratic leaders of House of Representatives, from which all budget matters originate, did not consider one.) The control of the House of Representatives has changed. As details of last Friday’s compromise to keep the Federal government fully functioning were released, many of those who desire to curtail government powers were disappointed. Many of the claimed budget cuts were illusionary. They were not actual cuts in expenditures but were a reduction in the proposed expansion in expenditures. Further, the hoped for elimination of EPA funding for greenhouse gas regulations did not survive the compromise. The six month budget does not limit the EPA’s ability to damage the economy with regulatory excesses. However, the EPA did have some of its programs actually cut.

However, several of the administration’s pet projects for increased environmental regulation were eliminated in the budget compromise, including the “Wild Lands” scheme announced by Department of Interior Ken Salazar during a Congressional recess. The scheme demonstrates how Washington bureaucrats create environmental policy without Congressional authority. Initially it seemed innocuous, to identify and map western lands that are little used. But those who have witnessed growth of power in Washington realize that the program would quickly become denial of use of such lands and its beneficial resources to virtually all Americans.

For example, initially the Wilderness Areas Act was not to deny Americans access to these areas and the mineral resources they contain. Now about 5% of the nation (about the size of California, 109,478,939 acres (443,045.55 km²) is “off-limits” to all but the most physically fit who can hike-in, ride horses, or are politically privileged to helicopter in. About 50% of the land is in Alaska and some of it beautiful. These vast lands do not include special designations such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that encompasses massive oil and gas reserves in a small area or the massive new National Monuments, such as the million plus acre Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument that encompasses huge deposits of low sulfur coal in a small area.

Apparently, no amount of acreage will satisfy the appetite of some government officials and the environmental industry that they support.

Another provision in the 2011 budget removes the gray wolf in the Northern Rocky Mountains from the endangered species list. Of course, the environmental industry claimed politicians should not interfere with the science establishing the endangered species list. But some scientists politicized the endangered species act with false declarations, such as, the polar bear are threatened while polar bear populations were increasing substantially. When the Federal government re-introduced the gray wolf into Yellowstone Park and in Idaho, it chose the largest sub-species – the Mackenzie Valley wolf – not the smaller Northern Rocky Mountain wolf. The range of the wolf population has increased substantially, alarming residents in states with wolf populations.

With the passage of a six month budget the environmental battles continue. This Friday, the Republican controlled House passed a budget for 2012 that was far different from what President Obama proposed. Details are still to be released and understood. Please see Article # 5 and articles under “EPA and Other Regulators on the March.”

Other programs that are slated for funding reductions or elimination (at least temporarily) include NOAA’s National Climate Service and upgraded weather satellites. The National Climate Service appeared to be a politicized entity issuing pronouncements on global temperature, atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2), incoming sunlight, sea level, and Arctic ice. The value of such pronouncements to citizens making decisions are dubious at best.

Fred Singer, the first Director of the US Weather Satellite Service, expressed that the satellite programs have been poorly managed and overly ambitious, resulting in huge cost overruns.

A study of the actual electricity generation from November 2008 to December 2010 by Scottish Wind Farms has created controversy. The study was performed by Stuart Young Consulting and funded by the John Muir Trust. The study was based on publicly available data. In general, the conclusions are that the promoters of wind farms (developers and politicians) understate the lapses in generation and overstate the annual average production. Most importantly, they ignore that wind often fails to deliver when most needed.

The average generation for the period was 24% of metered “nameplate” capacity -- not the 30% generally claimed. There were extended periods of unexpected little or no production, which is contrary to wind power promoter claims.

Immediately, the study was criticized by some environmental pressure groups because it was funded by an anti-wind environmental pressure group – The John Muir Trust.

In support of the study, the Scientific Alliance has an excellent essay stating the need to thoroughly understand the consequences of alternative energy policy decisions prior to taking them and that the source of the funding should not interfere with the thoughtful policy decision making.

Unfortunately, the study will likely be ignored by most promoters of wind energy, including those who wrote the Virginia Energy Plan, claiming that on-shore wind would have an annual production of 30 to 45% of rated capacity (without reference). Please see articles reference under “Alternative, Green (Clean) Energy.”

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see: www.sepp.org.

1. Suppressed EPA Hushgate climate report returns to snag CO2 regulation

By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Apr 14, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/2011/04/ron-arnold-suppressed-epa-hushgate-climate-report-returns-snag-co2-regula>

2. A less-than-nobel consensus

By Garth Paltrige, Joannenova, Apr 15, 2011

<http://joannenova.com.au/2011/04/professor-points-out-its-a-less-than-nobel-consensus/#more-14384>

3. Our ‘Infected’ Planet

Editorial, IBD, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/569072/201104131900/Our-Infected-Planet.htm>

4. GOP Wins Deep Cuts in Environmental Spending

By Janet Hook, Naftali Bendavid and Stephen Power, WSJ, Apr 13, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703385404576258550820756980.html>

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Yamal and Oxburgh's "Blinder Well Played"

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Apr 11, 2011

<http://climateaudit.org/>

[SEPP Comment: Steve McIntyre substantiates his assertion that the Oxburgh panel investigating CRU practices of "hiding the decline" was negligent. "A distinguishing characteristics of 'professionals' is an obligation of due diligence."]

When is a contract not a contract?

By David Holland, Bishop Hill, Apr 14, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2011/4/14/when-is-a-contract-not-a-contract.html>

[SEPP Comment: Investigators ignoring the inconvenient.]

Climategate U loses bid to stifle critic

By Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post, Apr 10, 2011 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Dept]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2011/04/10/lawrence-solomon-climategate-u-loses-bid-to-stifle-critic/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

The Climate Refugee Hoax

Editorial, IBD, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/569069/201104131900/The-Climate-Refugee-Hoax.htm>

[SEPP Comment: Why should anyone believe projections from the UN?]

Research on Forecasting for the Manmade Global Warming Alarm

By Scot Armstrong, Kesten Green and Willie Soon, To House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, March 31, 2011, Reprinted by SPPI

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/images/stories/papers/reprint/research_to_date_forecasting.pdf

The political insanity of climate change

Why are our politicians advocating "solutions", they know will fail?

By Lorrie Goldstein, Toronto Sun, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t ICECAP]

http://www.torontosun.com/comment/columnists/lorrie_goldstein/2011/04/11/17956576.html

Climate models go cold

Carbon warming too minor to be worth worrying about

By David Evans, Financial Post, Apr 7, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2011/04/07/climate-models-go-cold/>

Is the Atmosphere Still Warming?

By David Stockwell, WUWT, Apr 13, 2011

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/04/13/stockwell-asks-is-the-atmosphere-still-warming/#more-37889>

Science without method

By John Nicol, Quadrant Online, Apr 12, 2011

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2011/04/scientific-method>

No Need To Tell The Truth When you Are Hiding the MWP

By Steven Goddard, Real Science, Apr 9, 2011

<http://stevengoddard.wordpress.com/2011/04/09/no-need-to-tell-the-truth-when-you-aresaving-the-world/>

[SEPP Comment: A Japanese study of time of flowering of cherry trees showed an urban heat island effect and a Medieval Warm Period, not the earliest flowering in 1200 years as warmers claimed.]

After years of blitzkrieg, is Tim Flannery's mega-idea going the way of the giant wombat

Comments, Australian, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/after-years-of-blitzkrieg-is-tim-flannerys-mega-idea-going-the-way-of-the-giant-wombat/story-fn72xczz-1226037449328>

[“Seems like natural climate change, but not mankind, has killed off the mega beasties.”]

Seeking a Common Ground

Scafetta on climate oscillations

By Judith Curry, Climate, etc, Apr 14, 2011

<http://judithcurry.com/2011/04/14/scafetta-on-climate-oscillations/#more-2929>

[“The paper show that astronomical cycles match the temperature cycles with a probability of 96% and above, while current general circulation models such as the Giss ModelE would reproduce the same temperature cycles with a probability of just 16%.”]

Scientists Often Pigeonholed By Political Debates

Transcript of Interview of Richard Muller, by Neal Conan, NPR, Apr 11, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.npr.org/2011/04/11/135320209/climate-change-skeptic-says-warming-is-real>

Climate Science Myths and Misconceptions – Post #2 On the Metric of Global Warming

By Roger Pielke Sr, Climate Science, Apr 14, 2011

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/>

Communicating Better by Changing Language (to the more extreme)

Scientists checking changing Puget Sound

By Staff Writers, AP, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t Best on the Web]

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2014751924_apwapugetsoundchemistry.html

[“The Seattle Times reports Puget Sound already has some of the most **corrosive** seawater on Earth.” (Emphasis added) SEPP Comment: Ever try deep sea vents where the pH is actually acidic?]

AP: Another major oil spill could ‘absolutely’ happen again

By Andrew Restuccia, The Hill, Apr 14, 2011

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/677-e2-wire/156151-ap-another-major-oil-spill-could-absolutely-happen-again>

[SEPP Comment: Technically correct, anything could ‘absolutely’ happen.]

Temperatures and Extreme Weather

Towards a Sane Policy on Natural Disasters

By Wilson Tuckey, Quadrant Online, Apr 2011

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/magazine/issue/2011/4/towards-a-sane-policy-on-natural-disasters>

The Political Games Continue

Weather Satellites on the Chopping Block

By Justin Gillis, NYT, Apr 14, 2011

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/weather-satellites-on-the-chopping-block/?ref=science#>

[Comment by Fred Singer, first Director of the US Weather Satellite Service: Mismanaged overly ambitious programs have led to huge cost overruns. Now they are using scare tactics.]

RIP: Obama's National Climate Service

By Steve Malloy, Junkscience, Apr 12, 2011

<http://junkscience.com/2011/04/12/rip-national-climate-service/>

Senate Vote on S.482: Fiddling While the Republic Burns

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Apr 12, 2011

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2011/04/12/senate-vote-on-s-482-fiddling-while-the-republic-burns/#more-7958>

Litigation Issues

Climate Change Heads to the Supreme Court

Green activists hope to force electric utilities and many others to pay 'public nuisance' claims for emitting carbon dioxide

By David Rivkin, Jr. and Lee Casey, WSJ, Apr 15, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703551304576261271226827718.html?KEYWORDS=rivkin>

[May be behind a pay wall.]

What's Wind Got to Do With It?

By Paul Chesser, American Spectator, Apr 13, 2011

<http://spectator.org/archives/2011/04/13/whats-wind-got-to-do-with-it>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Environmentalists suffer on key budget provisions

Resolution prohibits 'wild lands' policy funding

By Valerie Richardson, Washington Times, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/13/environmentalists-suffer-on-key-budget-provisions/>

Economy In Jeopardy As Budget Deal Affirms EPA Climate Programs

By James Taylor, Forbes, Apr 13, 2011

<http://blogs.forbes.com/jamestaylor/2011/04/13/economy-in-jeopardy-as-budget-deal-affirms-epa-climate-programs/>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Biggest Drop in U.S. Greenhouse Emissions

World Climate Report, Apr 14, 2011

<http://www.worldclimaterreport.com/index.php/2011/04/14/biggest-drop-in-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions/#more-484>

[SEPP Comment: Comparison of the growth of China's emissions with the US should give any rational cap-and-trader pause.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Pass the Boone Pickens Bill

By Joe Nocera, NYT, Apr 11, 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/12/opinion/12nocera.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=th212#

[SEPP Comment: There may be good reason to encourage natural gas for transportation – but not \$5 Billion in subsidies. If the savings in fuel costs exist as claimed, the market for these vehicles will appear.]

Gas Stations Get Aid to Sell More Ethanol

By Bill Tomson, WSJ, Apr 9, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704503104576251023724394758.html?mod=ITP_pageone_1

[SEPP Comment: Loan guarantees from the Department of Agriculture for gas stations. May be behind a pay wall.]

DOE Finalizes Large Loan Guarantee For BrightSource Energy

By Staff Writers, SPX, Apr 13, 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/DOE_Finalizes_Large_Loan_Guarantee_For_BrightSource_Energy_99.html

Energy Issues

ARPA-E Is Poised to Put Products on the Grid

By Mathew Wald, NYT, Apr 14, 2011

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/arpa-e-is-poised-to-put-products-on-the-grid/?ref=science>

[Comment by Fred Singer on massive compressed storage of air: The big problem here is that atmospheric moisture will turn to ice on decompression and block the air. Simple thermodynamics. I hope they know how to deal with that.]

Economics, Physics Are Roadblocks For Mass-Scale Algae Biodiesel Production

By Staff Writers, SPX, Apr 7, 2011

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/Economics_Physics_Are_Roadblocks_For_Mass_Scale_Algae_Biodiesel_Production_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Economics and physics interfere with a government scheme.]

Our unpredictable, bright energy future

By Karel Beckman, European Energy Review, Apr 7, 2011

<http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=2881>

Nuclear Fears & Responses

Japan Raises Daiichi Accident Rating to Chernobyl Level

By Staff Writers, Power News, Apr 13, 2011

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3599.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2180804&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e66050d0

[SEPP Comment: It is ranked as a “major accident.” But does the rating system have categories estimating the threat to human health?]

Media Hype Over Nuclear Energy Increases Anxiety and Confusion

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]

<http://blogs.forbes.com/larrybell/2011/04/12/media-hype-over-nuclear-energy-increases-anxiety-and-confusion/>

Fear Itself

A one-in-a-million risk may not be imaginary, but it's pretty damned close to it.

By Ronald Bailey, Reason, Apr 12, 2011

<http://reason.com/archives/2011/04/12/fear-itself>

Faster, Japan

Editorial, IBD, Apr 12, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/568925/201104121859/Faster-Japan.htm>

Spooked by nukes

Japanese disaster fires up coal plants worldwide

Editorial, Washington Times, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/13/spooked-by-nukes/>

Why nuclear power is still a good choice

Perspective is needed when deciding between nuclear and other power sources. Renewable energy and conservation aren't enough in the real world. And burning fossil fuels will only worsen global warming

By Mark Lynas, LA Times, Apr 10, 2011 [H/t Warren Wetmore]

<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-lynas-nukes-20110410,0,3424093.story>

So Happy Together

By William Tucker, American Spectator, Apr 12, 2011

<http://spectator.org/archives/2011/04/12/so-happy-together>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Natural Gas for Transportation Part I

By Donn, Power America, Apr 15, 2011

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2011/04/15/natural-gas-for-transportation-part-i/>

[SEPP Comment: An analysis of the costs of converting to natural gas for transportation. Will the savings in fuel costs justify the conversion costs?]

The greenest car you've (likely) never heard of

By Staff Writers, AFP, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/The_greenest_car_youve_likely_never_heard_of_999.html

Shale gas as dirty as oil coal for warming: study

By Staff Writers, AFP April 12, 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Shale_gas_as_dirty_as_oil_coal_for_warming_study_999.html

[SEPP Comment: A highly questionable, and expected, study.]

Five Things to Know about the Cornell Shale Study

Energy in Depth, Apr 11, 2011

<http://www.energyindepth.org/2011/04/five-things-to-know-about-the-cornell-shale-study/>

[SEPP Comment: A review of the above shale gas study.]

New York – and America – can profit from ‘fracking’ Marcellus Shale

By Rep Tom Reed, Washington Examiner, Apr 14, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/2011/04/new-york-and-america-can-profit-fracking-marcellus-shale>

German shale gas faces uphill battle

By Stefan Nicola, European Energy Review, Apr 11, 2011

<http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=2890>

BP Oil Spill and Administration Control of Drilling

Oil, Microbes and the Risk of Dead Zones

Did oil-eating bacteria deplete oxygen in the Gulf of Mexico?

By Cherie Winner, Oceanus, Apr 15, 2011

<http://www.whoi.edu/oceanus/viewArticle.do?id=95889§ionid=1000>

[SEPP Comment: No major oxygen depletion but some surprising results.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy

Report Questions Wind Power’s Ability to Deliver Electricity When Most Needed

By Staff Writers, John Muir Trust, Apr 6, 2011

<http://www.jmt.org/news.asp?s=2&nid=JMT-N10561>

[SEPP Comment: Scotland is not as windy as promoters and politicians claimed.]

A rational choice of energy sources

Scientific Alliance, Apr 15, 2011 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/rational-choice-energy-sources>

[SEPP Comment: A thoughtful argument why the above mentioned report should be considered even if it was funded by a special interest group.]

“Clean Energy Standard”: Time to Revisit Fundamental Assumptions

By Glenn Schleede, Master Resource, Apr 12, 2011

<http://www.masterresource.org/2011/04/response-senate-clean-energy-standard/#more-14656>

Wind Spin: Responding to the American Wind Energy Association

By Lisa Linowes, Master Resource, Apr 11, 2011 [H/t Randy Randol]

<http://www.masterresource.org/2011/04/wind-spin-awea/>

Spanish Wind, Revisited

By Robert Peltier, Master Resource, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.masterresource.org/2011/04/spanish-wind-revisited/>

[SEPP Comment: NREL criticized the Spanish study stating it failed to use an input-output model that are customarily used in the US. NREL failed to identify one that applied for Spain.]

U.S. urged to mine ‘rare earth’ minerals for high-tech devices

China dominates market in obscure metals

By Josh Brown, Washington Times, Apr 11, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/11/us-urged-to-mine-rare-earth-minerals/>

[SEPP Comment: The Environmental Industry would severely object to such a polluting idea.]

Questioning the European Green

Clean Energy Investment Fell 34% as Incentives Cut in Europe, BNEF Says

By Alex Morales, Bloomberg, Apr 15, 2011

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-04-15/clean-energy-investment-fell-34-as-incentives-cut-in-europe-bnef-says.html>

[SEPP Comment: Fourth quarter, 2010 data. Even Europe may be discovering that expenditures in sustainable energy are unsustainable.]

California Dreaming

California Governor Signs 33% RPS Law, Eyes More Ambitious Target

By Staff Writers, Power News, Apr 13, 2011

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3602.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2180804&hq_l=4&hq_v=5e66050d0

[SEPP Comment: A 12.3% unemployment rate is not enough.]

Oh Mann!

UVA: Climate research investigation raises 34,000 documents, call for academic protection

By Brendan Fitzgerald, cville, Apr 14, 2011 [H/t Robert Ferguson]

<http://www.c-ville.com/index.php?cat=1991704080566501&act=post&pid=12031404114589889>

ATI Slams ACLU's Plea for University of Virginia to Deny FOIA Request for Michael Mann's Records

Press Release, American Tradition Institute, Apr 14, 2011

<http://www.atinstitute.org/ati-slams-aclu%E2%80%99s-plea-for-university-of-virginia-to-deny-foia-request-of-michael-mann%E2%80%99s-records/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Sea Level Rise Around Mainland Australia

Reference: Watson, P.J. 2011. Is there evidence yet of acceleration in mean sea level rise around mainland Australia? *Journal of Coastal Research* **27**: 368-377.

Excess Winter Mortality in Various Developed Countries and Its Implications for Mitigation Policies

Reference: Falagas, M.E., Karageorgopoulos, D.E., Moraitis, L.I., Vouloumanou, E.K., Roussos, N., Peppas, G., Rafailidis, P.I. 2009. Seasonality of mortality: the September phenomenon in Mediterranean countries. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* **181**: 484-6.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/12apr2011a3.html>

Coral Disease in a Warmer World

Reference: Yakob, L. and Mumby, P.J. 2011. Climate change induces demographic resistance to disease in novel coral assemblages. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA* **108**: 1967-1969.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/13apr2011a5.html>

The Response of High Arctic Tundra to Long-Term Warming

Reference: Klady, R.A., Henry, G.H.R. and Lemay, V. 2011. Changes in high arctic tundra plant reproduction in response to long-term experimental warming. *Global Change Biology* **17**: 1611-1624.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/apr/12apr2011a4.html>

Other Scientific News

Atlas Gives Scientists New View of the Brain

By Robert Lee Hotz, WSJ, Apr 13, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703518704576258842075419366.html>

[May be behind a paywall.]

Antarctic meteorite reveals new mineral

By Jeanna Bryner, Christian Science Monitor, Apr 7, 2011

<http://www.esmonitor.com/Science/2011/0407/Antarctic-meteorite-reveals-new-mineral>

Electric Yellowstone

Conductivity Image Hints Volcano Plume Is Bigger than Thought
Press Release, Univ. of Utah, Apr 11, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.unews.utah.edu/p/?r=032411-5>

[SEPP Comment: Emotional language of the announcement detracts from its substance.]

Other News that May Be Of Interest

‘Chemical’ Is Not A Four-Letter Word

By Henry Miller, Forbes, Apr 13, 2011 [H/t ACSH]

<http://blogs.forbes.com/henrymiller/2011/04/13/chemical-is-not-a-four-letter-word/>

UN Agenda 21 Will Rule the US Waves

By Dennis Ambler, SPPI, Apr 5, 2011

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/images/stories/papers/originals/un_agenda_21_will_rule_the_us_waves.pdf

Warmists and the Organic Farming Activists

By Mischa Popoff, American Thinker, Apr 9 2011

http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/warmists_and_the_organic_farmi.html

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Carbon emissions linked to Europe’s hay fever rise

Carbon dioxide emissions may be raising pollen counts in European cities, according to a continent-wide study.

By Richard Black, BBC, Apr 8, 2011 [H/t Malcolm Ross]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13015248>

[SEPP Comment: The study cites an increase of pollen in urban areas but no increase in rural areas. Is cleaner urban air responsible for more pollen, therefore for more hay fever incidents?]

World’s first carbon neutral bra

The world’s first carbon neutral bra, made in a factory run on solar panels, has been launched onto the fashion market with hopes that all clothing will be more environmentally friendly in future.

By Louise Gray, Telegraph, UK, Apr 13, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://fashion.telegraph.co.uk/article/TMG8445588/Worlds-first-carbon-neutral-bra.html>

Fish carried up a mountain on backs of llamas to escape global warming

By Louise Gray, Telegraph, UK, Apr 12, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/8444032/Fish-carried-up-a-mountain-on-backs-of-llamas-to-escape-global-warming.html>

[SEPP Comment: Are not llamas an invasive species in the UK?]

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ARTICLES:

1. Suppressed EPA Hushgate climate report returns to snag CO2 regulation

By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Apr 14, 2011

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/2011/04/ron-arnold-suppressed-epa-hushgate-climate-report-returns-snag-co2-regula>

Inside the National Center for Environmental Economics, analysts scurried to finish the vital technical support document to fulfill President Obama's most draconian campaign pledge: "Implement an economywide cap-and-trade program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050."

The NCEE was ready to cement the case for the Environmental Protection Agency's "endangerment finding," the official declaration that carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels poses a threat to human health and welfare. Thousands of government careers, academic contracts, and Big Green grants hung in the balance, and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson needed to release it within days.

But senior research analyst Alan Carlin, Ph.D., a 38-year EPA veteran never known as an ideologue, submitted his unlikely critique that the agency's case was full of predetermined, politically mandated, cherry-picked scientific garbage.

Carlin criticized as many details as possible in the four days before the finding's release: EPA had relied on outdated research and ignored major new developments, including declines in global temperatures, projections that hurricanes won't get worse, and findings that ocean cycles best explain temperature fluctuations.

"I did the reasonable thing," said Carlin. "I applied the scientific method to every study used in EPA's technical support document," as you'd expect from a man with a physics degree from CalTech and a Ph.D. in economics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Alarming, he found more computerized guesswork and editing by advocates than observable results. Carlin urgently requested that his report be forwarded immediately to top decision makers.

The director refused. In an email to Carlin, he said, "The administrator and the administration has decided to move forward on endangerment, and your comments do not help the legal or policy case for this decision."

Imperiling his career, Carlin explained that he knew where his duty lay concerning scientific truth and the administration, and got these appalling replies: "I don't want you to spend any additional EPA time on climate change," and, "Do not have any direct communication with anyone outside of NCEE on endangerment. There should be no meetings, emails, written statements, phone calls etc."

The message: Dr. Carlin, hush your mouth. EPA Administrator Jackson and President Obama have made up their minds. Don't bother them with facts. And don't you dare tell the American public. Hush!

An outraged source in EPA who was not Carlin passed the whistleblower documents and emails to Sam Kazman, general counsel of Competitive Enterprise Institute, a Washington free-market think tank.

Kazman was astounded by the "Hush" emails, accepted the case, and began a successful campaign to make the suppression of Carlin's report a cause celebre. A few days later, the Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade bill barely passed the Democrat-held House and the Senate warily let the measure die.

But EPA released its endangerment finding, which immediately faced an appeals court challenge.

As Obama's much-touted "science-based policy" rotted into "policy-based science," Big Green sycophants praised the administration in a quarter-page Washington Post ad.

And so we got Hushgate. That was two years ago. Two weeks ago, Carlin's report, updated, expanded, and peer-reviewed, was published in the respected International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.

Carlin's 47-page, no-nonsense report rips computer modeling, false comparisons between hypotheses and real-world data, and efforts to manipulate climate measurements.

Main points: The economic benefits of reducing CO2 emissions are vastly lower than EPA estimates, and the costs are vastly higher. Conclusion: "the risk of catastrophic anthropogenic global warming appears to be so low that it is not currently worth doing anything to try to control it."

That will sorely test the influence of Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp, who recently called for disdainful green groups to recognize their waning clout and "adopt a less arrogant approach that takes into account all sides of the global warming debate."

Fat chance.

Examiner Columnist Ron Arnold is executive vice president of the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise.

2. A less-than-nobel consensus

By Garth Paltrige, Joannenova, Apr 15, 2011

<http://joannenova.com.au/2011/04/professor-points-out-its-a-less-than-nobel-consensus/#more-14384>

We hear that Julia Gillard is happy to have the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology and the Australian Academy of Science on her side while making her arguments for a carbon tax. Well of course she is. She and her predecessor bought them. And bought them but good. Over the last couple of years her Department of Climate Change (the DCC) gave them 27 million dollars in the form of research grants. That pays a fair swag of the salaries of the CSIRO and Bureau climate scientists who make up the majority of all employed climate scientists in Australia.

University climate researchers, while relatively few in number, are vocal enough to be heard in many public forums. Julia has bought them too with another 5.5 million dollars from the same source. That sort of money is handy in the university environment, since it is mostly on top of already assured salaries. Moreover, it is fairly easy to get. Certainly it is much easier than normal university research funds which come mainly from the Australian Research Council – this after a soul-destroying application and peer-review procedure that wipes out 80% of the applications and reduces the individual grant moneys to sub-optimal levels. Julia's climate money is very different. Among other things it can be put towards such niceties as business-class travel to the many international workshops and conferences that are part of the climate-change industry.

Monopolistic Funding

The bottom line is that virtually all climate research in Australia is funded from one source – namely, the government department which has the specific task of selling to the public the idea that something drastic and expensive has to be done to the structure of society in the name of mitigating climate change. And if you think that government agencies shouldn't be in the game of social engineering, then you are way behind the times. Over the last two years more than 100 million dollars was distributed by the DCC for exactly that purpose.

So there can be no doubt that climate-research grant recipients know perfectly well that scepticism concerning the climate-change story does very little for their careers. One therefore wonders a bit about the much-vaunted consensus of the global warming establishment regarding climatic doom.

Surely there is no way a whole scientific discipline can be subverted, either consciously or subconsciously, by crass materialism? Well, maybe not in the long term. But if past experience is any guide, the sorting out of a problem of vested scientific interest can take many decades. At the moment, climate scientists are trapped in the coils of a disaster theory sold prematurely to the world at large. They are supporting the theory with long-term forecasts about an atmosphere-ocean system whose behaviour in many respects is inherently unpredictable. On the one hand, public discussion of the uncertainties associated with the 'main conclusions of the science' must be discouraged, and on the other there is a need for sufficient uncertainty to justify a continued flow of research funding. In short, they are in a right-royal mess of political correctness.

Scientists are human too!

The average climate scientist is extremely reluctant to go against the tide of official opinion set by the research activists of his field, whatever might be his private thoughts on the matter. Loyalty to colleagues gets in the way, and perhaps also the seductive attraction of a 'noble cause'. With those sorts of justification, it is much easier for an idealistic scientist to be mindful of the fact that, when Julia buys people, they have to stay bought if they want to continue in the game.

Where is the independent advice?

Surely there are independent scientific establishments whose advice can be trusted by both government and public? Well yes there are – most of the time. The Australian Academy of Science is a prime example. But one has to mumble a bit when talking about the independence of such bodies in the context of climate change. They generally don't have much in-house expertise on the subject, and when asked for advice, are obliged to put together committees of advisors from the relevant research establishments. It is not too difficult to imagine where the advisors come from. Moreover, it costs money to service a committee. Guess where that comes from.

Would 'big-oil' funded research be any less reliable than this?

3. Our 'Infected' Planet

Editorial, IBD, Apr 13, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/569072/201104131900/Our-Infected-Planet.htm>

Ideology: Bolivia wants the United Nations to recognize Earth as having the same rights as humans. This, of course, is harebrained nonsense. Unfortunately, such thinking isn't confined by national borders. The Bolivian regime of President Evo Morales is pursuing a United Nations treaty that will recognize the Earth as "a living entity that humans have sought to dominate and exploit, to the point that the well-being and existence of many beings is now threatened."

This is a country, after all, that has a Ministry of Mother Earth.

Bolivia has no monopoly on absurdity, though. Developed nations have more than their fair share of zealots who believe that man is but a plague on Mother Earth. As Sierra Club founder John Muir said: "Man is always and everywhere a blight on the landscape."

Such thinking even flows through the schools, where our children go to attain wisdom. University of Texas biologist Eric Pianka once said, "We're no better than bacteria" and declared that "things are gonna get better after the collapse" of the human population "because we won't be able to decimate the Earth so much."

Sounds a lot like the reader who admitted during a complaint about our editorials that he made no distinction between human life and any other. To his way of thinking, an amoeba has the same rights as a person.

We don't recall the reader's name. But we can't rule out that he's a contributor to the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, the "primary mandate" of which is to "assume a law enforcement role as provided by the United Nations World Charter for Nature." Its position is that humans are the "AIDS of the Earth."

Sea Shepherd founder Paul Watson wrote some years ago that "we need to radically and intelligently reduce human populations to fewer than 1 billion."

Some would say those are the words of a deep thinker. But columnist Deroy Murdock provided the proper context when he noted that men like Watson and Pianka are looking for "better living through mass death."

Though man-as-plague is a fringe idea, it's a thread that weaves through mainstream environmental groups. It's hardly harmless, because it incites violence. Eco-terrorists aren't developed in a vacuum.

4. GOP Wins Deep Cuts in Environmental Spending

By Janet Hook, Naftali Bendavid and Stephen Power, WSJ, Apr 13, 2011

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703385404576258550820756980.html>

In negotiating the budget deal that averted a government shutdown, Democrats and the White House claimed a big victory in preventing Republicans from blocking a set of environmental regulations. But as details of the compromise became known Tuesday, it was clear Republicans had won deep reductions in spending at the Environmental Protection Agency.

Under the deal headed to House and Senate votes by the end of this week, the EPA's 2011 budget would be reduced by 16% from 2010 spending, taking it to \$8.7 billion.

That reflects the kind of tradeoffs each side made in the negotiations over the bill. The legislation doesn't include most of the policy provisions that Republicans proposed to block funding for key administration priorities on health care, the environment and other issues. But Republicans found Democrats moving more than halfway in the compromise over how much to cut spending in the \$1.05 trillion bill for the remaining six months of the 2011 fiscal year.

Democrats had wanted to freeze spending; Republicans sought \$61 billion in cuts from 2010 levels. The final bill calls for about \$39 billion in cuts—the largest one-time federal spending reduction in history.

Although the outlines of the compromise were announced Friday, the details were not released until Tuesday, when legislation was filed spelling out how the cuts were spread across legions of programs.

Negotiators cut some programs less than GOP lawmakers wanted, and even allowed spending increases for programs that were top priorities of the Obama administration. The final deal includes a \$700 million

boost for President Barack Obama's signature education initiative, the "Race to the Top" program to provide incentives for school improvement.

The Securities and Exchange Commission budget was increased \$74 million, to help the agency carry out its new responsibilities under the 2010 Dodd-Frank financial-services overhaul. Republicans had wanted to cut SEC funding by \$42 million.

The deal included enough money for Head Start, the preschool program for low-income children, to keep enrollment from dropping, and for Pell Grants to maintain the current \$5,500 annual maximum award to low-income college students. Republicans had wanted to cut Head Start and proposed freezing the Pell program, which would have cut the maximum grant size.

The EPA was also a major focus of both parties. The deal didn't include a Republican-backed measure that would have stripped the agency of its authority to regulate greenhouse gases and other pollutants. But the bill cuts \$1.6 billion from the agency.

"The Obama administration has dumped money into the EPA over the past two years, and what the American people have seen as a result is a slew of new regulations pouring out of the agency," said Rep. Mike Simpson (R., Idaho). Mr. Simpson, chairman of the Interior subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, helped fashion the EPA cut in the spending deal.

On Mr. Obama's watch, the EPA's budget has risen sharply, to \$10.3 billion in the 2010 fiscal year, after years in which its funding hovered between \$7.5 billion and \$7.7 billion.

Most of the EPA cuts will reduce aid to help states implement health and environmental-protection laws. Mr. Obama had proposed cutting those programs, but only by about \$200 million.

"These federal cuts make our job to provide a clean environment that much harder," said R. Steven Brown, the agency's executive director, who said the practical effect would be to derail roughly \$1 billion in improvements to sewage-treatment and drinking-water plants.

The deal also cuts by \$149 million, or 33%, a federal fund for buying land for environmental purposes. Programs related to climate change would be cut by \$49 million, or 13%.

The position of the president's special adviser on climate change would be eliminated. The post has been open since Carol Browner left the administration earlier this year, and the White House has said it will not name a successor. But the job had not been formally eliminated.

Also included in the compromise was a provision, backed by Mr. Simpson and Sen. Jon Tester (D., Mont.), that would take gray wolves in the northern Rockies off the endangered-species list.

Environmentalists say it is the first time Congress has taken such a step, and that it sets a bad precedent for lawmakers, rather than scientists, to determine what species should be on the list. But Mr. Tester said wolf populations had recovered in Montana and should no longer be considered at risk.

Another GOP-backed provision would block the Interior Department's Wild Lands initiative, which would have inventoried federal lands for their wilderness characteristics. Ranchers and others feared it would have led to greater restrictions on oil drilling, mining or cattle grazing or snowmobiling on those lands.

"The provision to defund Wild Lands is a victory for Utah and all public lands states," said Rep. Rob Bishop (R., Utah), one of the lawmakers who pushed to include language in the bill defunding the policy.

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