

The Week That Was: 2013-12-14 (December 14, 2013)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: • *“It is hard to overstate the damage done in the recent past by people who thought they knew more about the world than they really did.”* - British Economist John Kay in “Obliquity”, 2010 [H/t Judith Curry]

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Number of the Week: \$43,422

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

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

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

To donate to SEPP by check please make it payable to SEPP and send it to the address below: or **To donate to SEPP by credit card or pay pal:** Please go to www.SEPP.org, hit the donate button on the bottom of the page, then hit the donate button on the next page and follow the instructions.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

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PLEASE NOTE: The SEPP web site has been hit by sophisticated hackers using facilities in Russia and China. Those going to the SEPP web site seeking information have been redirected to web sites of Chinese products.

Our web site provider is a national, commercial firm with extensive experience. Working closely together, the provider and SEPP undertook a number of tests to determine the weaknesses in the

system, including shutting down the web site for over 24 hours. We may have the problems resolved. We apologize for any difficulties you may have incurred.

Those making donations to SEPP through the web site should experience no difficulty. If you experience any difficulties in obtaining information, please e-mail Ken@SEPP.org.

The one good point coming from this attack is the realization that the SEPP web site ranks highly among those organizations that rate web sites – further encouraging SEPP to maintain and improve it.

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THIS WEEK:

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

A Hearing: The US House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a hearing on the relationship between climate and weather featuring John Christy, Roger Pielke, Jr. and David Titley, a former US Navy Rear Admiral and currently a "professor of practice" at Penn State. In her comments on the hearing, Judith Curry stated she did not think that Titley was very effective and he may not have been the best choice for the hearing.

Both Pielke and Christy emphasized using extreme weather events as evidence of climate changes has little scientific support. Pielke also emphasized that, globally, the costs of weather related losses have not increased since 1990 as a portion of Gross Domestic Product, and that extreme weather events have not increased since at least 1970.

Christy used the opportunity to challenge the entire climate establishment and its faulty models. He stated: *"I see two things here, (1) the need to go back to the drawing board on climate modeling with special attention to the causes of natural variations and with a rigorously independent validation program, and (2) the world community needs to be exposed to the real debates in climate science rather than statements amounting to a consensus of those who already agree with a certain consensus."*

In his written testimony Christy reinforced his remarks by asserting that extreme events are poor metrics for climate change and by their rarity run the danger of setting up a non-falsifiable hypothesis. That is, whatever the event is, it is consistent with any hypothesis. Such an attitude does not advance science. Science advances by constantly testing specific, falsifiable predictions based on hypotheses (assertions).

Christy presented a new (to SEPP at least) graph showing 102 model runs of atmospheric temperatures in the tropics organized into 24 groupings by types of models, six of which were models created by U.S. institutions. He compares these model groupings with observations from six independent sources, the average from four weather balloon data sets and the average from two satellite data sets. In general, the models over-estimated the observed temperatures by 2 to 5 times.

Further, Christy brought up a 2013 study by Stephen and Bony in which the authors test four separate models against a very simplified earth, the surface of which is all oceans. The purpose was to reveal the impact of warming on the climate system (whatever the cause), particularly how it affects clouds and rain. The models not only produced different results in terms of magnitude, but also in sign (positive or negative)! In addition, Christy brought up a paper recently published

by Swanson, who compared the latest models used by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) with the ones used earlier. According to Christy, Swanson found that the newer models are worse at depicting actual climate variation than the earlier ones. Swanson suggests the reason the models are worse is that the models have been adjusted to try to replicate Arctic warming and now severely overestimate warming for the rest of the globe. [A case of man-made global warming?]

Christy reminded the members of the committee that 17 years ago he testified before the committee that the climate models over estimate warming by 2 to 4 times of what is being observed by satellites. He stated we still do not know “... *what portion of the recent modest change is natural and what portion might be human-caused.*” He concluded with: “*Climate models are promoted as tools that are able to discriminate natural climate events versus those that might happen as a result to increases in greenhouse gases due to human activities and have been used by EPA for regulatory actions.*” The climate models have not demonstrated acceptable skill in depicting even fundamental, large-scale variations. “*It is unfortunate, in my opinion, that recent policy has been made based on the projections of these faulty models. Climate science has a long way to go.*”

Pielke reports that Titley invoked *the incantation, "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence" - for what purpose I am not sure. I doubt he realizes that the phrase originates in debates over the existence of God.* Further, the hearing ended on a religious argument between Titley and Spencer [Christy]. Perhaps Titley was influenced by Senators Boxer and Whitehouse who questioned Spencer's religious beliefs. This attitude that religious belief somehow diminishes scientific integrity reflects the desperation of some in the climate establishment. Maybe the next step is to claim that those who do not accept the climate pronouncements of the administration are anti-American traitors. See links under A Hearing.

Inconsistency in the IPCC? Writing in Steve McIntyre's Climate Audit, Nic Lewis explores if observational evidence presented in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) supports the models the IPCC uses. As Christy points out (above) the latest models (CMIP5) are worse at depicting actual climate variation than the earlier ones. One of the major issues is Transient Climate Response (TCR), which can be defined as the sensitivity of the climate system to an increasing of carbon dioxide (CO2) concentrations. In the comments section, Ross McKittrick sums up the findings well.

One of the really remarkable points Nic makes here is that, just using numbers from the IPCC report itself, and applying their own formula for transient climate response, an estimate of around 1.3C is unavoidable. Yet most of the models they employ have TCR's of 1.6 or higher, and quite a few are even above 2, implying way too much sensitivity to CO2 emissions. Yet the IPCC goes on to say things like "There is very high confidence that models reproduce the general features of the global-scale annual mean surface temperature increase over the historical period, including the more rapid warming in the second half of the 20th century, and the cooling immediately following large volcanic eruptions." (Ch 9 p. 3). The whole summary section of Ch 9 gives the impression that models and observations are beautifully in alignment. Something's gotta give here.

One can wonder what the final, final AR5 will state. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Endangerment Finding: The written briefs from the petitioners challenging the EPA's finding that greenhouse gases (GHG), primarily carbon dioxide, endanger human health and welfare have

been submitted to the Supreme Court. The amicus curiae, friends in court, briefs are due on December 16. The oral arguments have been set for February 24, and no doubt it will be packed. As stated previously, the Supreme Court limited its acceptance of hearing the case in such a way that scientific arguments are excluded.

The plaintiff group of which SEPP is a member is headed by the Southeastern Legal Foundation. The main points included:

- Congress has not authorized EPA to regulate GHG emissions
- CO2 becomes well mixed, regardless where released around the world. Controlling US emissions will have little impact.
- There are no adverse health risks from direct exposure
- There is measurable differentiated local effect
- The regulations cannot prevent significant deterioration of air quality
- By applying the rules intended for vehicles to stationary sources, the EPA took on powers that the court specifically denied government agencies in *Brown & Williamson*
- National Ambient Air Quality Standards cannot apply for CO2
- If applied as the law requires – regulating sources that emit 100 to 250 tons per year – it will lead to absurd consequences
- Congress shot down numerous proposals to limit CO2 emissions from stationary sources
- EPA's action violates Constitutional separation of powers and is an unconstitutional power grab.

The Court may or may not reach a decision before it recesses for the summer in early July. This case should not be confused with the one the Supreme Court heard this week on EPA regulations on the transport of air borne materials across state lines. For the latter, see Article #2 and links under Litigation Issues.

Ozone: NASA reports that the annual “hole” in the ozone layer over the Antarctic is stable, neither expanding nor shrinking. It has been more than twenty years since the Montreal Protocol was signed, specifically to restrict human-made chlorine-based chemicals thought to deplete the ozone layer (expand the hole). *Two new studies show that signs of recovery are not yet present, and that temperature and winds are still driving any annual changes in ozone hole size.*

According to reports, NASA calculates the hole will not be fully recovered until 2070. Could it be that the science behind the claim that these chemicals were the cause was less than accurate? See links under Problems in the Orthodoxy.

Surreal Science: Borrowing a phrase from Bob Carter, mathematician Christopher Essex writes in *American Thinker* that popular discussions on climate have come to take on the appearance of a Salvador Dali painting. A review of comments using terms such as carbon pollution, carbon credits, carbon taxes, decarbonize, and carbon-free sugar (!) can leave one with the same detachment from reality as a visit to a Dali exhibit, such as the Dali museum in Figueres, Spain. See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Uncertainty: On her web site, Judith Curry has another post on the value of uncertainty, including points such as confusing science with removing uncertainty, delusional certitude, and wilful blindness. Popular false precision, when results are given in significant numbers far beyond what is justified by the assumptions, falls within these concepts. The quote of the week comes from the discussion on delusional certitude. See links under Seeking a Common Ground.

CCC: Showing all the great certitude of the British Army high command during World War I, when they ordered large units of men to their deaths, the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has announced that, regardless of what other countries do, the UK must stay the course in severely cutting CO2 emissions and promoting green energy. Keep a stiff upper lip and the losses be damned. See links under Defending the Orthodoxy.

Survey Says? The questionable poll of **some** members of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) continues to create controversy. Only 30% of the reported respondents stated they were very worried about climate change. According to reports, the lead author of the paper is criticizing members of the AMS, including claiming that they are driven by political ideology, as if being able to forecast well what nature will bring is based on politics. See links under Lowering Standards

Number of the Week: \$43,422. On her blog Jo Nova lists the US fines paid by some energy companies for killing migratory and endangered birds. Exxon paid \$600,000 for killing 85 birds, or \$7,059 per bird. Duke Energy (wind farm) paid \$1,000,000 for killing 163 birds, or \$6,135 per bird. BP paid \$100,000,000 for killing birds in the Gulf oil spill. As stated in the April 23, 2011 TWTW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service reported finding 2303 dead birds with visible oil (oil did not necessarily kill them) during the entire year following the spill. This works out to be \$43,422 per bird. The BP shareholders have every reason to claim the US government treated them shabbily. See links under Washington's Control of Energy.

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see this week's TWTW at: www.sepp.org. The articles are at the end of the pdf.

1. China Releases Blueprint for Adapting to Climate Change

By Wayne Ma, WSJ, Dec 10, 2013

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/12/10/china-issues-blueprint-to-help-minimize-effects-of-global-warming-and-climate-change/>

[SEPP Comment: Adaptation, not only reducing CO2 emissions. Web site is in Chinese.]

2. EPA's Thin Legal Air

The Supreme Court considers another regulatory power grab.

Editorial, WSJ, Dec 9, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303997604579242431978486244?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

3. Osborne's Low-Energy Economy

Improving productivity is the key to raising British living standards.

By Rupert Darwall, WSJ, Dec 9, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303560204579247762870103346>

4. A bit of humor from the Wall Street Journal, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

The truth about ‘We have to get rid of the medieval warm period’

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 8 , 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/08/the-truth-about-we-have-to-get-rid-of-the-medieval-warm-period/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Does the observational evidence in AR5 support its/the CMIP5 models’ TCR ranges?

By Nic Lewis, Climate Audit, Dec 9, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/12/09/does-the-observational-evidence-in-ar5-support-its-the-cmip5-models-tcr-ranges/>

[SEPP Comment: TCR – Transient Climate Response.

On the Futility of Long-Range Numerical Climate Prediction

By William Gray, WUWT, Dec 10, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/10/on-the-futility-of-long-range-numerical-climate-prediction/>

IPCC’s Report on Climate Change: Myths & Realities

Guest essay by Dr. S. Jeevananda Reddy, Formerly Chief Technical Advisor – WMO/UN, WUWT, Dec 7, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/07/ipccs-report-on-climate-change-myths-realities/>

Climate Bullies, the Surrealists of Science

By Christopher Essex, American Thinker, Dec 9, 2013

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

Nobel winner declares boycott of top science journals

Randy Schekman says his lab will no longer send papers to Nature, Cell and Science as they distort scientific process

By Ian Sample, Guardian, UK, Dec 9, 2013 [H/t Anne Debeil]

<http://www.theguardian.com/science/2013/dec/09/nobel-winner-boycott-science-journals>

Lord, Save Us From Impact Factors

By Matt Brings, His Blog, Dec 12, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=10441>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Planet Earth: Is It As Fragile As Environmentalists Say?

By Walter Williams, IBD, Dec 11, 2013 [H/t Paul Refern]

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials-viewpoint/121113-682576-man-not-the-destructive-force-that-nature-is.htm?p=full>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Climate ‘Refugee’ Left High and Dry

A New Zealand court has rejected the argument that one can claim asylum from the alleged ravages of climate change. For the plaintiff, it is back to teeming Kiribati, where the real problem is a booming population

By Michael Kile, Quadrant, Dec 12, 2013

<http://quadrant.org.au/opinion/doomed-planet/2013/12/climate-refugee-left-high-dry/>

[SEPP Comment: The judge claimed a long term problem from rising ocean levels attributable to climate change.]

Green energy targets cannot be cut, government adviser says

Committee on Climate Change defies Osborne over greenhouse gas targets

By Emily Gosden, Telegraph, UK, Dec 11, 2013

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/10509744/Green-energy-targets-cannot-be-cut-government-adviser-says.html?utm_source=Daily+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=c8b98f896c-DAILY BRIEFING&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_876aab4fd7-c8b98f896c-303421281&utm_source=Weekly+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=8dcdbc6bde-Carbon Brief Weekly 18 7 137 18 2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3ff5ea836a-8dcdbc6bde-215218249

Ministers must stick to carbon dioxide emissions reductions, says CCC

Committee on Climate Change says current plans will save money in long run by reducing dependence on imported gas

By Fiona Harvey, The Guardian, UK, Dec 11, 2013

http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/dec/11/uk-carbon-budget-emissions?utm_source=Weekly+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=8dcdbc6bde-Carbon Brief Weekly 18 7 137 18 2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3ff5ea836a-8dcdbc6bde-215218249

Questioning the Orthodoxy

IPCC spin translated – the leaked Synopsi s admits 97% of models fail

By Geoff Sherrington and Jo Nova, Her Blog, Dec 10, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/12/ipcc-spin-translated-between-the-lines-in-their-leaked-synopsis-97-of-models-fail/#more-32135>

Intelligence and the hockey stick

By Christopher Monckton, WUWT, Dec 8, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/08/intelligence-and-the-hockey-stick/>

A climate of fear, cash, and correctitude

By Paul Driessen and Dennis Mitchell, Net Right Daily, Dec 11, 2013

http://netrightdaily.com/2013/12/climate-fear-cash-correctitude/?utm_source=WhatCounts+Publicaster+Edition&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=7+percent+unemployment%E2%80%A6+happy+days+are+here+again%2c+right%3f&utm_content=A+climate+of+fear%2c+cash%2c+and+correctitude%0d+

Effects Of Environmentalist and Climate Alarmist Crying Wolf Begin To Appear.

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Dec 10, 2013

<http://drtimball.com/2013/2122/>

On the limits to climatology

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 11, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/11/on-the-limits-to-climatology.html>

Analysis of Entire Inventory of Historical Data Clearly Points to One Conclusion: Natural Factors Are Dominant

A History of Global Temperature

By Ed Caryl, No Tricks Zone, Dec 10, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/10/analysis-of-entire-inventory-of-historical-data-clearly-points-to-one-conclusion-natural-factors-are-dominant/>

Why Humans Don't Have Much To Do With Climate Change

By Lawrence Solomon, Huffington Post, Dec 9, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/lawrence-solomon/global-cooling_b_4413833.html

A Short History of Climate Hysteria

By David Archibald, Quadrant, AU, Dec 11, 2013

<http://quadrant.org.au/opinion/doomed-planet/2013/12/short-history-climate-hysteria/>

As the pumped-up spectre of climatic catastrophe continues to deflate, Rupert Darwall's new book makes a handy guide to the conceits, careerism, delusions and blatant misrepresentations that debased the good name of science and set the stage for economic ruin

Social Benefits of Carbon

Biospheric Productivity of China Deserts

By Staff Writers, SPPI & CO2 Science, Dec 11, 2013

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

[SEPP Comment: Reversal of feared desertification?]

Problems in the Orthodoxy

Recovery of Ozone Hole on Hold Says NASA

By Staff Writers, Reporting Climate Science, Dec 11, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.reportingclimatescience.com/news-stories/article/recovery-of-ozone-hole-on-hold-says-nasa.html>

Link NASA report: NASA Reveals New Results From Inside the Ozone Hole

By Staff Writers, NASA, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.nasa.gov/content/goddard/new-results-from-inside-the-ozone-hole/#.UqoARvRDvCt>

NASA says ozone hole stabilizing but won't fully recover until 2070

By Tony Barboza, LA Times, Dec 12, 2013

<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-ozone-hole-recovery-nasa-20131212,0,2385709.story#ixzz2nKGkMY19>

How to make a global climate change deal

Editorial, Washington Post, Dec 6, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-to-make-a-global-climate-change-deal/2013/12/06/119efca6-5ba3-11e3-a66d-156b463c78aa_story.html?utm_source=Daily+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=b92ca3b08e-DAILY_BRIEFING&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_876aab4fd7-b92ca3b08e-303421281&utm_source=Weekly+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=8dcdeb6bde-Carbon+Brief+Weekly+18+7+137+18+2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3ff5ea836a-8dcdeb6bde-215218249

Merkel Embraces Coal as Rookie Lawmaker Makes Mark on Policy

By Arne Deifs, Bloomberg, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t GWPF]
<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-12-11/merkel-embraces-coal-as-rookie-spd-lawmaker-makes-mark-on-policy.html>

A Hearing

Hearing: A Factual Look at the Relationship Between Climate and Weather

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 11, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/11/hearing-a-factual-look-at-the-relationship-between-climate-and-weather/>

House Environment Subcommittee Testimony

By Roger Pielke, Jr, His Blog, Dec 11, 2013

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2013/12/house-environment-subcommittee-testimony.html>

Subcommittee on Environment Hearing - A Factual Look at the Relationship Between Climate and Weather

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Dec 11, 2013

<http://science.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-environment-hearing-factual-look-relationship-between-climate-and-weather>

Seeking a Common Ground

Taylor and Ravetz on the value of uncertainty

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 12, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/12/taylor-and-ravetz-on-the-value-of-uncertainty/>

Twenty Tips For Interpreting Scientific Claims

By William Briggs, His Blog, Dec 2, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=10234>

Link to paper: Policy: Twenty tips for interpreting scientific claims

By William J. Sutherland, David Spiegelhalter and Mark A. Burgman, Nature, Nov 20, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/news/policy-twenty-tips-for-interpreting-scientific-claims-1.14183>

[SEPP Comment: Statistician William Briggs gives his evaluation of the 20 tips.]

Public engagement and communicating uncertainty

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Dec 8, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/12/08/public-engagement-and-communicating-uncertainty/>

What Is And What We Know Of It, Probabilistically Speaking

By William Briggs, His Blog, Dec 11, 2013

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=10401>

[SEPP Comment: A technical discussion on the difference between probability and relative frequency.]

NASA Developing Natural Hazard Warning Systems

By Staff Writers, Pasadena CA (JPL), Dec 11, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/NASA_Developing_Natural_Hazard_Warning_Systems_999.html

Lowering Standards

Global Warming Alarmist Trashes His Own Poll Of Meteorologists Showing No Climate Crisis

By James Taylor, Forbes, Dec 5, 2013 [H/t Christine French]

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamestaylor/2013/12/05/global-warming-alarmist-trashes-his-own-poll-of-meteorologists-showing-no-climate-crisis/>

How do meteorologists fit into the 97% global warming consensus?

A new study examines meteorologists, the global warming consensus, political ideology, and climate expertise

By Dana Nuccitelli, Guardian, UK, Dec 2, 2013

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2013/dec/02/meteorologists-global-warming-consensus>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Geological Society does woo!

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 10, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/10/geological-society-does-woo.html>

Royal Society Fellows Meet: More Reactions.

By Staff Writers, GWPF, Dec 12, 2013

<http://www.thegwgf.org/royal-society-fellows-meet-reactions/>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Ex-Im Bank joins Treasury in cutting coal plant funding

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 13, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/193148-ex-im-bank-joins-treasury-in-cutting-coal-plant-funding>

[SEPP Comment: Promoting poverty!]

Lights out please

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 11, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/11/lights-out-please.html>

Questioning European Green

Sustainable Energy

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Dec 13, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/sustainable-energy>

Let's put our efforts into developing economic sources of energy generation and storage which supplant fossil fuels because they are better, not spending public money on technologies which are not yet mature enough to warrant deployment.

A sudden realization

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Dec 13, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/12/13/a-sudden-realisation.html>

[SEPP Comment: Even Shell's climate change advisor begins to understand the true mission of the greens!]

UK Carbon Emission Targets 'May Have to Be Jettisoned'

By Ben Webster, The Times, Via GWPF Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/uk-carbon-emission-targets-may-jettisoned/>

[SEPP Comments: See comments by Benny Peiser]

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Another Kick to Malthus

By Walter Russell Mead, American Interest, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/blog/2013/12/12/another-kick-to-malthus/>

The Power to Develop

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Dec 12, 2013

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/bj-rn-lomborg-argues-that-environmental-imperatives-should-not-trump-the-needs-of-the-poor>

Green Jobs

Spain Alters Environment Law to Speed Industrial Projects

By Todd White, Bloomberg, Dec 9, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-12-09/spain-alters-environment-law-to-push-through-industrial-projects>

[SEPP Comment: Green jobs are far fewer than promised.]

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

Geoengineering approaches to reduce climate change unlikely to succeed

By Staff Writers, Munich, Germany (SPX), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Geoengineering_approaches_to_reduce_climate_change_unlikely_to_succeed_999.html

Link to paper: A simple explanation for the sensitivity of the hydrologic cycle to surface temperature and solar radiation and its implications for global climate change

By Kleidon and Renner, Earth System Dynamics, Aug 14, 2013

<http://www.earth-syst-dynam.net/4/455/2013/esd-4-455-2013.html>

[SEPP Comment: Without a clear definition of natural versus human-caused climate change such articles have little value.]

NASA Finds Reducing Salt Is Bad For Glacial Health

By Carol Rasmussen, JPL, Dec 10, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/NASA_Finds_Reducing_Salt_Is_Bad_For_Glacial_Health_999.html

Ice loss seen in Antarctica is generally attributed to the well-documented rise in temperature of the surrounding ocean, but scientists are still puzzling out the mechanisms behind the regional variations that they are observing.

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to the article, the sea ice is expanding and the rise in temperature is not well documented.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

More on Trenberth and Fasullo (2013) “An Apparent Hiatus in Global Warming?”

By Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Dec 11, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/11/more-on-trenberth-and-fasullo-2013-an-apparent-hiatus-in-global-warming/>

[SEPP Comment: The last paragraph sums it all. To advance knowledge, it is perfectly acceptable to produce speculative papers in hope of fostering discussion and disagreement. It is something

else to imply that assertions are substantiated as knowledge in a yet to be published paper in a journal that promotes speculation.]

What the past tells us about modern sea-level rise

Press Release, U. of Southampton, UK, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t WUWT]

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/2013/dec/13_223.shtml

[SEPP Comment: In spite of what the press release states, the prediction is not based on historic evidence: "Geological data showed that sea level would likely rise by nine metres or more as the climate system adjusts to today's greenhouse effect." The issue is that we do not know what the greenhouse effect is! What we have from the models is speculation.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Go Personal.

Climate scientists need protection to think without fear

By Tom Harris and Terry Dunleavy, Sun Star, PI, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.sunstar.com.ph/cagayan-de-oro/opinion/2013/12/11/letter-editor-climate-scientists-need-protection-think-without-fea>

Measurement Issues

Antarctica: Record Cold and Growing Ice Chills Global Warming Theories

By Ben Gaul, Los Vegas Guardian Express, Dec 12, 2013

<http://guardianlv.com/2013/12/antarctica-record-cold-and-growing-ice-chills-global-warming-theories/>

Coldest ever temperature recorded on Earth found in Antarctica

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 9, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/09/coldest-ever-temperature-recorded-on-earth-found-in-antarctica/>

AMSU Surface Air Temperature Retrievals of the Coldest Place on Earth

Slight warming over Dome A for the last 15 years. (updated)

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Dec 13, 2013

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2013/12/amsu-surface-air-temperature-retrievals-of-the-coldest-place-on-earth/>

Changing Weather

A Blast from the Past

By Roger Pielke, Jr. His Blog Dec 10, 2013

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2013/12/a-blast-from-past.html>

30 Years Of 'Killer Winter Storms'? Alarmists Wrong Again

Editorial, IBD, Dec 9, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/120913-682278-why-global-warming-was-changed-to-climate-change.htm>

Hurricane Predictions

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Dec 13, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/12/13/hurricane-predictions/>

Snow falling. In Australia. In summer. That is all

By Anthony Sharwood, News.com AU, Dec 5, 2013 [H/t Catherine French]
<http://www.news.com.au/technology/environment/snow-falling-in-australia-in-summer-that-is-all/story-e6frflp0-1226775945701>

[SEPP Comment: Nothing like a nice summer snow, except if there is a big biking event scheduled.]

Changing Seas

Top Swedish Climate Scientist Also Confirms No Sea Level Acceleration...Desperate Pachauri Insisting No Acceleration “Is An Acceleration”!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Dec 12, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/12/top-swedish-climate-scientist-also-confirms-no-sea-level-acceleration-desperate-pachauri-insisting-no-acceleration-is-an-acceleration/>

New Jersey Shore Likely Faces Unprecedented Flooding by Mid-Century

By Staff Writers, New Brunswick NJ (SPX), Dec 11, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/New_Jersey_Shore_Likely_Faces_Unprecedented_Flooding_by_Mid_Century_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The issue is separating the factual from the speculation: “The unprecedented 20th-century sea-level rise had a significant human impact.” Earlier in the Holocene sea level rise was faster and the significant human impact for New Jersey may be from pumping out groundwater.]

Veteran Meteorologist: “Old And New Data Show Sea Level Rise Deceleration”...Alarmist Projections “Contradicted”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Dec 12, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/12/12/veteran-meteorologist-old-and-new-data-show-sea-level-rise-deceleration-alarmist-projections-contradicted/>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Fire And Ice — Volcanoes, Not CO2, Melt West Antarctic

Editorial, IBD, Dec 10, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/121013-682455-active-volcanoes-melting-west-antarctic-ice.htm?p=full>

Ice melting Arctic cyclones more common than previously thought

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 12, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/12/ice-melting-arctic-cyclones-more-common-than-previously-thought/>

Changing Earth

East Antarctica is sliding sideways

By Staff Writers, San Francisco CA (SPX), Dec 12, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/East_Antarctica_is_sliding_sideways_999.html

Deep-sea study reveals cause of 2011 tsunami

By Staff Writers, Montreal, Canada (SPX), Dec 11, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Deep_sea_study_reveals_cause_of_2011_tsunami_999.html

New Japan volcanic islet here to stay, for now: official

By Staff Writers, Tokyo (AFP), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/New_Japan_volcanic_islet_here_to_stay_for_now_official_999.html

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

China's massive water diversion project starts delivering water

By Staff Writers, Beijing (UPI), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Chinas_massive_water_diversion_project_starts_delivering_water_999.html

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Arctic Clouds and Sea Ice in CMIP5 Climate Models

Reference: Karlsson, J. and Svensson, G. 2013. Consequences of poor representation of Arctic sea-ice albedo and cloud-radiation interactions in the CMIP5 model ensemble. *Geophysical Research Letters* 40: 4374-4379.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/10dec2013a1.html>

Creating Global Climate Models for Agricultural Impact Research

Reference: Ramirez-Villegas, J., Challinor, A.J., Thornton, P.K. and Jarvis, A. 2013. Implications of regional improvement in global climate models for agricultural impact research. *Environmental Research Letters* 8: 10.1088/1748-9326/8/2/024018.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/10dec2013a2.html>

Solar and Planetary Influences on Global Climate Change

Reference: Scafetta, N. 2013. Solar and planetary oscillation control on climate change: Hind-cast, forecast and a comparison with the CMIP5 GCMs. *Energy & Environment* 24: 455-496.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/10dec2013a3.html>

Earth's Changing Biosphere

Reference: Fung, I. 2013. A hyperventilating biosphere. *Science* 341: 1075-1076.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/dec/11dec2013a3.html>

The Political Games Continue

Pathetic press release from House Democrats disappears the testimony of Christy and Pielke

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 12, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/12/pathetic-press-release-from-house-democrats-disappears-the-testimony-of-christy-and-pielke/>

Litigation Issues

Northeast states push EPA on Midwestern, Southern emissions

By Zac Colman, Washington Examiner, Dec 9, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/northeast-states-push-epa-on-midwestern-southern-emissions/article/2540409?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today%20Recurring%20-%2012/10/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today

Supreme Court reviews pollution limits

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Dec 10, 2013

<http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/192643-supreme-court-hears-interstate-pollution-arguments>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Bipartisan push imperils ethanol mandate

By Ben Goad The Hill, Dec 12, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energy-environment/192978-bipartisan-push-imperils-ethanol-mandate>

[SEPP Comment: Are members of Congress learning?]

Hallelujah: Aversion to the Renewable Fuel Standard seems to be catching on in Congress

By Erika Johnsen, Hot Air, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://hotair.com/archives/2013/12/12/hallelujah-aversion-to-the-renewable-fuel-standard-seems-to-be-catching-on-in-congress/>

Report: US solar installations skyrocket

By Peter Sullivan, The Hill, Dec 10, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/192611-report-us-solar-installations-skyrocket>

[SEPP Comment: If they are so successful, why do they need subsidies and mandates?]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

EPA Absurdity Infinitum

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Dec 10, 2013

http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/12/10/epa-absurdity-infinitum/?utm_content=buffer3653b&utm_source=buffer&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Buffer

Drowning In A Costly, Intrusive Federal Regulatory Flood

Editorial, IBD, Dec 12, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/121213-682769-new-wall-of-regulation-is-coming-hard.htm>

Analysis Group's Tierney says concerns over EPA air regulations are misplaced

Transcript by Staff Writer, EETV, Dec 10, 2013

<http://www.eenews.net/tv/videos/1756/transcript>

[SEPP Comment: Supporting the EPA.]

Energy Issues – Non-US

Daunting Days Ahead as Mexico Readies Oil Opening

By Katherine Corcoran and E. Eduardo Castillo, AP, Dec 13, 2013

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

IEA Boosts 2014 Global Oil Demand Forecast on U.S. Recovery

By Grant Smith, Bloomberg, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-12-11/iea-boosts-2014-global-oil-demand-estimate-amid-u-s-recovery.html>

Shale Boom Shakes U.K.'s \$32 Billion Chemicals Industry: Energy

By Nidaa Bakhsh, Bloomberg, Dec 13, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-12-12/shale-boom-shakes-u-dot-k-dot-s-32-billion-chemicals-industry-energy>

[SEPP Comment: Thanks to private initiative, the US profits and the British government bumbles.]

Why China's renewables industry is headed for collapse

By Patricia Adams and Brady Yauch, Financial Post, Dec 9, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/12/09/why-chinas-renewables-industry-is-headed-for-collapse/>

Energy Issues -- US

Green Power Gridlock: Why Renewable Energy Is No Alternative

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Dec 10, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/12/10/green-power-gridlock-why-renewable-energy-is-no-alternative/>

DOE: Widespread Grid Storage Deployment Faces Crucial Challenges

By Sonal Patel, Power, Dec 12, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/doe-widespread-grid-storage-deployment-faces-crucial-challenges/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2800322&hq_l=12&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Except pumped hydro, there is no such storage on a commercial scale.]

Fail: US Has Wasted \$154 Billion on 'Renewable Energy'

By Julian Morris & Victor Nava, Breitbart, Dec 5, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2013/12/05/Energy-subsidies-are-going-to-junk-investments-and-failing-companies>

[SEPP Comment: SEPP was unable to locate the basis for the \$154 billion figure.]

Report: Coal Power Plant Retirements Could Push Up Future Wholesale Power Prices

By Sonal Patel, Power, Dec 12, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/report-coal-power-plant-retirements-could-push-up-future-wholesale-power-prices/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2800322&hq_l=10&hq_v=5e660500d0

Link to report: Coal Plant Retirements: Feedback Effects on Wholesale Electricity Prices

By Onur Aydin, Frank Graves, and Metin Celebi, The Brattle Group, Nov 2013

http://www.brattle.com/system/news/pdfs/000/000/584/original/Coal_Plant_Retirements_-_Feedback_Effects_on_Wholesale_Electricity_Prices.pdf?1386628173

Washington's Control of Energy

OK to kill endangered birds? Yes if you are a windfarm. Greens seem to be fine with that.

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Dec 13, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/12/ok-to-kill-endangered-birds-yes-if-you-are-a-windfarm-greens-seem-to-be-fine-with-that/#more-32195>

TransCanada now pumping oil into part of Keystone XL

By Rebecca Shabad, The Hill, Dec 10, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/192619-transcanada-now-pumping-oil-into-part-of-keystone-xl>

[SEPP Comment: *But not across the international boundary*].

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

We Are Drilling, Baby! U.S. Passing Saudi Arabia in Oil Production

By David Kreutzer, The Foundry, Dec 10, 2013

<http://blog.heritage.org/2013/12/10/we-are-drilling-baby-u-s-passing-saudi-arabia-in-oil-production/>

New shale gas drilling areas to be revealed as communities promised £100,000 benefits for fracking

Large swathes of UK to be opened up for shale drilling, with communities where fracking takes place to receive £100,000, even if no gas is produced

By Emily Gosden, Telegraph, UK, Dec 10, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/energy/fracking/10507162/New-shale-gas-drilling-areas-to-be-revealed-as-communities-promised-100000-benefits-for-fracking.html>

UK Climate Change Committee Gives Green Light for Fracking

By Ben Webster, The Times, Via GWPF, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.thegwgf.org/uk-climate-change-committee-green-light-fracking/>

Return of King Coal?

Global coal demand growth calls for intensified search for clean coal solution

By Martin Creamer, Mining Weekly, Dec 13, 2013

<http://www.miningweekly.com/article/global-coal-demand-growth-calls-for-intensified-search-for-clean-coal-solution-2013-12-13>

[SEPP Comment: *As long as life-giving carbon dioxide is called a pollutant, defining clean coal is an important issue.*]

Coal in the Global Energy Landscape

By Nicolas Loris, Heritage Foundation, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/12/coal-in-the-global-energy-landscape>

Europe's Most Efficient Coal Plant Comes Online

By Aaron Larson, Power, Dec 11, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/europes-most-efficient-coal-plant-comes-online/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2800322&hq_l=11&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: *Not necessarily the least costly.*]

Kenya to Offer 31 Coal Blocks After Pact With China's Fenxi

By David Malingha Doya, Bloomberg, Dec 9, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-12-08/kenya-will-offer-31-coal-blocks-after-accord-with-china-s-fenxi.html>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

US takes last shipment of Russian uranium

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/US_takes_last_shipment_of_Russian_uranium_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Costly, but served a purpose.]

Japan to spend \$970 mn on nuclear soil store: report

By Staff Writers, Tokyo (AFP), Dec 11, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Japan_to_spend_970_mn_on_nuclear_soil_store_report_999.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

A More Realistic Cost of Wind Energy

By Willem Post, Energy Collective, Nov 29, 2013 [H/t AWED]

<http://theenergycollective.com/willem-post/310631/more-realistic-cost-wind-energy>

[SEPP Comment: A long post analyzing the high hidden costs of wind power.]

Negative Pricing Distortions of Windpower

By Lisa Linowes, Master Resource, Dec 12, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/12/linowes-negative-wind-pricing/#more-28910>

Privileged Tax Treatment of Industrial Wind Generation: Time to End

By Kevon Martis, Master Resource, Dec 11, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/12/privileged-tax-wind-generation/#more-28864>

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

Federal Regulations Discourage Renewable Energy

By Staff Writer, National Center for Policy Analysis, Dec 13, 2013

http://www.nepa.org/sub/dpd/index.php?Article_ID=23908&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DPD

[SEPP Comment: Hydro – the forgotten form of electricity generation.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Diesel, Fuel Cells Get Spotlight as Plug-Ins Lose Favor

By Angela Greiling Keane, Bloomberg, Nov 11, 2013 [H/t NCPA]

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-11-11/diesels-to-fuel-cells-join-spotlight-dimming-on-plug-ins-cars.html>

Carbon Schemes

\$8 Billion DOE Solicitation for Advanced Fossil Energy Projects Announced

By Gail Reitenbach, Power Line, Dec 12, 2013

http://www.powermag.com/8-billion-doe-solicitation-for-advanced-fossil-energy-projects-announced/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2800322&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Squandering resources for the unnecessary. Increased efficiency is desirable, costly CCS is not.]

Health, Energy, and Climate

Is the NYTimes reverting to the bad old days of DDT denial?

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Dec 13, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/12/nytimes-reverting-bad-old-days-ddt-denial/>

Environmental Industry

WWF and cohorts barred from Moscow polar bear forum

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Dec 8, 2013

<http://polarbearscience.com/2013/12/08/wwf-and-cohorts-barred-from-moscow-polar-bear-forum/>

[SEPP Comment: Even though WWF is a major funder of such events.]

Global warming skeptic buries Sierra Club director under avalanche of facts [VIDEO]

By Brendan Bordelon, Daily Caller, Dec 11, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/12/11/global-warming-skeptic-buries-sierra-club-director-under-avalanche-of-facts-video/>

Other Scientific News

New long-lived greenhouse gas discovered by University of Toronto chemistry team

By Staff Writers, Toronto, Canada (SPX), Dec 12, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/New_long_lived_greenhouse_gas_discovered_by_University_of_Toronto_chemistry_team_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The compound, perfluorotributylamine, is a liquid used in the electrical equipment industry and is approved by FDA as a blood substitute.]

Two stories in one: No link found between secondhand smoke and lung cancer; and no one seems to care

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Dec 11, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/12/two-stories-one-link-found-secondhand-smoke-lung-cancer-one-seems-care/>

Scientist: Near-miss solar storm should be a wake-up call

By Staff Writers, Boulder, Colo. (UPI), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Scientist_Near-miss_solar_storm_should_be_a_wake-up_call_999.html

Study finds rivers and streams release more greenhouse gas than all lakes

By Staff Writers, Waterloo, Canada (SPX), Dec 12, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Study_finds_rivers_and_streams_release_more_greenhouse_gases_than_all_lakes_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Should they all have extensive dams?]

Other News that May Be of Interest

More logging, deforestation may better serve climate in some areas

By Staff Writers, Hanover, NH (SPX), Dec 10, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/More_logging_deforestation_may_better_serve_climate_in_some_areas_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Don't tell the Greens!]

NASA Snow Mapper Reaps Big Benefits for California

By Staff Writers, Pasadena CA (JPL), Dec 12, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/NASA_Snow Mapper_Reaps_Big_Benefits_for_California_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Better knowledge of the water content in the snow permits better management of water discharges from the dams.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Santa Warns In Greenpeace Video Christmas Will Be Canceled Due To Global Warming

By Staff Writers, CBS, Dec 10, 2013 [H/t David Kreutzer]

<http://washington.cbslocal.com/2013/12/10/santa-warns-in-greenpeace-video-christmas-will-be-canceled-due-to-global-warming/>

Zombie asks a question

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Dec 10, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/12/10/zombie-asks-a-question/>

[SEPP Comment: *Right there with: do wind farms slow down the rotation of the earth?*]

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ARTICLES:

1. China Releases Blueprint for Adapting to Climate Change

By Wayne Ma, WSJ, Dec 10, 2013

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/12/10/china-issues-blueprint-to-help-minimize-effects-of-global-warming-and-climate-change/>

[SEPP Comment: *Adaptation, not only reducing CO2 emissions. Web site is in Chinese.*]

China issued its first nation-wide blueprint for adapting to climate change, as governments around the world shift their efforts from focusing solely on curbing global warming to minimizing its impact on people and the environment.

“Addressing climate change isn’t only about reducing greenhouse-gas emissions, it’s also about taking initiative on adaptation,” the National Development and Reform Commission, China’s top economic planning agency, said in a report posted to its website.

The agency calculated that climate change has cost China more than 200 billion yuan (\$32.9 billion) since 1990. In the same period, more than 2,000 people have died here because of extreme weather-related disasters such as floods, droughts, typhoons and storms, it said.

“China isn’t only the world’s largest carbon-dioxide emitter but also a vulnerable country that suffers a lot from climate change,” said Fuqiang Yang, senior adviser on energy, environment and climate at the National Resources Defense Council. The document will help decision makers, enterprises and the public better understand that adaptation is as important as mitigation, he said.

The commission laid out an extensive list of objectives—signed off by the ministries of finance, housing, transportation, water, agriculture and forestry—to achieve by 2020, including improving early-warning detection systems for natural disasters, promoting better farming practices, protecting nature and wildlife, and improving infrastructure. The document also offers detailed measures that aim to help protect some of China’s most vulnerable regions such as the western Qinghai-Tibet Plateau.

Some of the more novel guidelines include establishing a “comprehensive system for artificial rainfall” and promoting weather-based financial instruments such as catastrophe bonds and weather index-based insurance, which is often used by small-scale farmers in developing countries to protect against financial losses caused by inadequate rainfall.

The agency acknowledged a number of deficiencies and “weak links” that have made China vulnerable to climate change such as a lack of public awareness, disaster-response measures and health regulations as well as inadequate and aging infrastructure.

Mr. Yang said while the document is broad and all-encompassing, the central government will still need to prioritize and target regions that are most vulnerable.

“The government needs to decide what are the most cost-effective measures and which measures will produce the most significant impact,” he said. “China doesn’t have that much money or resources to address everything on this list.”

Li Shuo, a climate-policy officer at Greenpeace East Asia, said that until now, guidelines for adapting to climate change have been issued only on a provincial level in areas such as Qinghai and Shaanxi.

“We are in a stage where the country realizes that mitigation isn’t enough and that adaptation is very important,” Mr. Li said. “It’s good to see that on a national level, the country is picking this matter up.”

2. EPA's Thin Legal Air

The Supreme Court considers another regulatory power grab.

Editorial, WSJ, Dec 9, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303997604579242431978486244?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

The Environmental Protection Agency's habit of stretching its legal authority faces another reckoning on Tuesday when the Supreme Court considers whether the agency can rewrite the Clean Air Act to usurp state responsibilities. This one ought to be in Justice Anthony Kennedy's federalist sweet spot.

The case focuses on the Clean Air Act's "good neighbor" provision that gives EPA the power to oversee remedies when pollution in one state blows into a neighboring state. An upwind state that EPA judges to "significantly contribute" to a downwind state's failure to meet federal standards can be required to limit emissions by a commensurate amount.

Some 27 states are considered upwind, and for decades EPA adhered to an interpretation of the law that let states come up with ways to minimize their contributions to downwind states. Only if a state plan was inadequate did the feds swoop in with tailored orders for how an individual state must limit emissions. This fit with the Congressional intent in the text of the Clean Air Act that regulating air pollution was "the primary responsibility of States and local governments."

Enter the Obama Administration, whose 2011 cross-state air pollution rule violated the federalist structure of the Clean Air Act in two ways. First EPA no longer gave states a chance to develop their own plans to meet their required "good neighbor" emissions targets. Instead the agency began to issue its own federal implementation plans immediately.

Second, EPA issued a cookie-cutter standard that all states must adhere to regardless of their contribution to downstate pollution. The move was an obvious attempt to expand EPA's writ, letting the agency set new emissions standards that exceed what an individual state might need to ease its own downwind pollution.

The rule was almost certainly targeted at Texas and other states with large coal-fired electric plants. This is part of the Obama Administration's larger anti-carbon fuels agenda, which it is trying to impose by fiat because it can't get Congress to go along, not even a Democratic Senate.

Texas and more than a dozen other states as well as private companies challenged EPA in *Environmental Protection Agency v. EME Homer City Generation*, and in August 2012 the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down the rule. Judge Brett Kavanaugh wrote for a 2-1 majority that "Congress did not authorize EPA to simply adopt limits on emissions as EPA deemed reasonable." Democrats cried foul and blamed Judge Kavanaugh for being a Bush appointee, but it's telling that the full D.C. Circuit denied en banc review.

The EPA says in its defense that business should love the rule because it is the most cost-effective, but that isn't necessarily true for certain states. The Administration is also arguing that the states didn't raise their objections loudly enough during the rule-making process, but the states also didn't know how far this EPA would go until the rule was final.

The D.C. Circuit only rarely overturns EPA rules, which shows how out of bounds the cross-state regulation is. The Supreme Court should overturn it for violating the federalist intentions of Congress, but there is also the added judicial incentive to show this increasingly rogue agency that it can't rewrite the law as it pleases.

3. Osborne's Low-Energy Economy

Improving productivity is the key to raising British living standards.

By Rupert Darwall, WSJ, Dec 9, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303560204579247762870103346>

The stars were in alignment for Chancellor George Osborne last week in his autumn statement on the U.K.'s fiscal and economic outlook. Higher growth has propelled the U.K. to the top of the G-7 to -0.53% growth league. Government debt is forecast to peak one year earlier at 80% of GDP, rather than 85% as assumed in his March budget.

It's an outcome his Labour opponent, Ed Balls, argued could not happen. Whatever else, Mr. Balls's Keynesian critique of the chancellor's fiscal consolidation has run out of road. The truth, as Mr. Osborne recognizes, is that Britain still has a long way to go.

A more justified criticism is that budget tightening has been too slow. The International Monetary Fund estimates that the U.K. will be the last major economy to stabilize its net debt, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies reckons that Britain's debt workout is less than half done.

The political risk of such a protracted time scale is that voters will tire of austerity when their living standards are being squeezed. Alert to the politics, Mr. Osborne loosened the purse strings to cancel a planned increase in fuel duty, extend free school meals and switch £500 million of green levies from electricity bills to the taxpayer. Bowing to local pressure, he even canned a proposal to finance a £1.5 billion road project with tolls. The tab will be picked up by taxpayers instead.

None of these will improve the performance of the British economy. Nor will the damaging distortions to the personal tax code, with spikes in marginal tax rates to more than 60%. The same

might be said of the stamp duty on property sales, expected to raise £7.7 billion of tax revenue this year, which impedes labor mobility.

Serious tax reform, Prime Minister David Cameron implied shortly before the autumn statement, would have to wait until the deficit was dealt with. This highlights the biggest risk with such a lengthy consolidation, and the biggest downside of Mr. Osborne's economic policies: The U.K. economy could weaken before his fiscal consolidation is completed, sending public finances way off track again.

Although British economic growth has accelerated, it is still sluggish by comparison with past upturns, and as Mr. Osborne acknowledged, productivity growth remains too low. According to OECD data, annual labor-productivity growth (defined as real GDP per hour worked) rose during the recession of the early 1990s and peaked at 5.9% as recovery got under way, staying largely above 2% until the 2008 recession.

Similarly, total factor productivity rebounded sharply at the beginning of the 1990s, its annual growth averaging 1.6% until 2008. These productivity gains gave the subsequent expansion its long legs, carrying it through temporary weakness at the turn of the century. By contrast, U.K. productivity growth since the 2008 recession has been poor. Output per hour is below where it was before the recession, and multifactor productivity has flatlined.

Thus a clear imperative for economic policy should be to help improve productivity, boosting wages and living standards and making the recovery durable. Yet the government is doing the opposite. Along with the autumn statement came the government's National Infrastructure Plan, articulating its "overall vision" for British infrastructure. It argues that improved infrastructure "will allow the economy to function more efficiently." At more than £215 billion, the energy sector accounts for well over half the spending in the plan, with most of that going to low-carbon electricity generation and associated transmission networks. Danny Alexander, the chief secretary to the Treasury, claimed that lower electricity prices depended on this investment.

Both claims are wrong. Investors in renewable-energy projects are assuming the inflation-adjusted wholesale price of electricity will rise from £50 per kilowatt-hour to £80 per KWh before inflation over the next 20 years—a 60% increase. The type of investment mandated by the government to generate expensive electricity is intended to prevent global warming, not to improve economic efficiency and cut energy prices.

The Committee on Climate Change, which monitors the government's compliance with its decarbonization targets, says that "an ambitious and comprehensive" global deal to cut global emissions "will be essential" for the U.K. to shrink its carbon footprint, which has grown 10% since 1992. That failed to materialize at the Copenhagen climate conference four years ago, so it's betting that the world will reach one at the Paris conference in two years' time.

There is a growing shortage of generating capacity to cover for the intermittency of wind and solar power. There is little prospect of investment coming forward before the general election in 2015. For the Conservatives, the party least wedded to green energy, this offers the prospect of making the best of a bad situation: If there is no effective global agreement at Paris, it can promise a rational energy policy driven by the market, not by central planners. Otherwise Britain is embarked on a dystopian energy future of high-cost electricity while outsourcing its carbon emissions to China. That's not a formula for economic growth and higher living standards.

Mr. Darwall is the author of "The Age of Global Warming: A History" (Quartet, 2013).

4. A bit of humor from the Wall Street Journal, Dec 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]



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