

The Week That Was: 2018-01-13 (January 13, 2018)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

Quote of the Week. *All things are poison and nothing is without poison; only the dose makes a thing not a poison.* — Paracelsus, Swiss physician and chemist.

Number of the Week: More than 77%

THIS WEEK:

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

Number Games – Models: If one uses models to describe the influence that changing any variable or component of the model may have on nature, or a human, it is important that the model accurately capture the processes involved. Far too frequently, government agencies abuse the use of models to justify the expansion of governmental powers, without regard to whether the model carefully fits the processes involved. One of the purposes of proper testing is to assure proper fit. A model frequently abused by the EPA to justify questionable policies is the Linear-No-Threshold model, which has a poor foundation in toxicology, the study of the nature, effects, and detection of poisons.

Some chemicals can be extremely deadly, but most chemicals are not. One example of a highly toxic chemical is VX. One drop of the nerve agent on the skin of a person will kill the person within minutes, if proper attention is not given. Yet, the components are not acutely toxic. Under the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993, VX is classified as a “weapon of mass destruction” with the production of stockpiling banned for amounts exceeding 100 grams (3.53 oz) per year. During the cold war, the US and the USSR produced and stockpiled hundreds of tons of VX in various types of munitions. Following President Nixon’s 1969 order cancelling its chemical weapons program, the US destroyed its stockpiles of VX, including dumping over 100 tons into the ocean. The status of the destruction of Russian weapons is not clear, nor is the production and stockpiling by other countries such as North Korea and Syria.

The public is justified in fearing these highly toxic chemical weapons. However, some opportunists have taken advantage of this fear to create fear of other chemicals as well. Since its inception in 1970 under a government reorganization, the EPA has been a leader in using inappropriate models to create fear of chemicals. One such model is the Linear-No-Threshold (LNT) model, which is a faulty model developed for radiation protection; but, used by the EPA, and others, to promote fear of chemicals, often by claiming unmeasured cancerous effect.

Under the assumptions of the linear-no-threshold model as simply applied, if 1000 aspirin taken in one dose will kill someone, then a dose of one aspirin spread over 1000 people will kill someone. More generally, the assumption is that if some amount of a substance is toxic, then any lesser amount is also toxic. There is no threshold amount below which there is no toxicity. Empirical evidence to the contrary is not sought. As measurement technologies have become more sensitive, regulations have been able to lower requirements to the point that some activities are impossible or too expensive to maintain within regulation compliance.

The LNT model ignores physiology, the functions of living organisms. A more fitting model is the dose-response model, where careful observation and experimentation are used to detect adverse physiological outcomes, based upon body weight. From these experiments, what is called a lethal dose, killing 50% of the subjects, can be determined. For example, under a dose-response model it can be estimated that drinking a dose of 6 liters (quarts) of pure water will kill about 50% of the people so exposed (average body weight).

In a letter to the *Dose-Response Journal*, statistician Stanley Young supports recent work by James Enstrom in challenging the EPA assertions that fine particulate matter (PM2.5) is toxic. [PM2.5 is atmospheric particulate matter with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers.] The EPA bases much of its “scientific” assertions on studies never made public. The EPA claims that the research is proprietary (private), yet uses it for public policy. Mr. Young’s letter starts:

“Enstrom does a reanalysis of a large national cohort study and, unlike the original authors, finds no effect of small particulate matter, PM2.5, on total mortality. This result, if true, calls into question the current U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, paradigm that PM2.5 is causal of increased mortality. Logically it takes only one valid negative study to invalidate all association studies. In a response to a request from the EPA to suggest regulations in need of examination, Young points to 21 studies, including Enstrom, that find no evidence of an association PM2.5 with mortality. Two of these studies are essentially experiments that directly negate causality.”

The letter is part of a long battle with the EPA to make research known to the public, if the EPA uses it to justify public policy. In this instance, research is on fine particulate emissions by motor vehicles, originally, and now the regulations are extended to power plants. EPA’s failure to make the research public reinforces those who believe the EPA is not accountable and serves only special interest groups, not the American public. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Number Games – Arithmetic: One of the fascinating concepts in arithmetic is a result from division: no matter the size of the numerator, if it is held constant, and the denominator made ever smaller, the result will increase towards infinity. Writing in *American Thinker*, SEPP Chairman Tom Sheahan exposes how some promoters use these simple mathematical relationships to promote the fear of greenhouse gases. In so doing, he demolishes the silly concept of the Happy Planet Index, created to promote “sustainability”, the repeated claims that methane, nitric oxide, or CFCs will create global warming X times more than carbon dioxide (CO2), and game playing by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and its followers, in calculation of “climate sensitivity.”

These three activities depend on small denominators to gain political attention. As Sheahan writes:

“The take-home lesson in all of this is to beware of tiny denominators. Any numerical factor that is cranked out is increasingly meaningless as the denominator shrinks.”

See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Debate on Video: Several months ago, Israeli physicist Nir Shaviv participated in a climate debate at the Cambridge Union Society in Cambridge England, which states it has been defending

free debate since 1815 and is the oldest debating society in the world. Shaviv posted the video of the debate on his web site *Science Bits*. His comments in the post are disturbing:

“I should add that the debate was a real eye opener. By living in Israel, I have had the luxury of experiencing a mostly diverse society, open to a wide range of scientific (and other) opinions. This has allowed me to carry out research without having to care about what other people think. It stands however in stark contrast to the body of Cambridge students I addressed. They are well intentioned but unfortunately completely brainwashed. They cite the 97% polemic about most scientists believing in anthropogenic global warming without stopping for a second to think about it, or the evidence that supposedly supports it. They want to think of themselves as liberals, but in fact, they have the most conservative mindset unable to even attempt objective thinking.

The only exception, which stood out as remarkable contrast to the rest, was the remark made by a historian named Josh from Christ college (at 1h 21m 21s).”

See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Political Games: Interestingly, many political types calling themselves liberals are taking action that are often termed as very conservative – actions designed to prevent others from freedom of activity. Included in this group are the politicians who claim their small political jurisdiction is participating in Paris Agreement. They ignore or dismiss the Constitution which provides that the United States Congress shall have power "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes." Further, the Constitution gives the President the power “to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.” And the Supremacy Clause provides that “treaties,” like statutes, count as “the supreme law of the land.” The Paris Agreement has never been submitted to the Senators for concurrence.

In expressing their displeasure with Mr. Trump and their certainty that they know the causes of global warming / climate change, the mayor of New York City and the leaders of several California cities and counties are suing Exxon-Mobil and other oil majors for climate conspiracy covering up the claim that carbon dioxide is causing dangerous climate change. As readers of TWTW will realize, these politicians claim to possess a knowledge that only they have and one for which the physical evidence is lacking.

Exxon-Mobil has begun to push back stating in effect, if carbon dioxide-caused global warming from fossil fuels is so dangerous, and will cause irreparable harm to these political jurisdictions; why have they not so informed potential investors when they sell bonds? Failure to discuss known risks is a severe securities violation, subject to harsh fines and criminal charges. Perhaps the politicians and their attorneys were so busy counting the potential rewards from these actions to prevent imagined risks that they forget to consider the real risks.

Another issue that arises is the effort to persuade pension funds entrusted with the respective governments to divest from stocks and bonds in fossil fuel companies. If the pension funds underperform those that have not divested, then fiduciary responsibilities become a major problem for those who did what may be only politically popular. See Article # 2 and links under Litigation Issues.

Hand-in-Glove? The Wall Street Journal had an editorial discussing what may become an issue. It appears that the State of Washington has outsourced development of its energy policy to a green

non-profit, the World Resources Institute, which reimburses the state for the salary, benefits, and expenses of one of its key “employees” as a senior adviser for climate and sustainability.

Imagine if a coal company was caught doing the same. See Article # 1 and links under The Political Games Continue.

Number of the Week: More than 77%. Tom Sheahan discusses that all gases absorb radiant energy in certain spectral bands, including nitrogen, N₂, which accounts for more than 77% of the atmosphere. It absorbs energy near the ultraviolet band in the shorter end of the electromagnetic spectrum, shorter than visible light and the infrared energy that is given off by the earth. The absorption capability of gases and the bands in which they absorb energy are important in discussing so called greenhouse gases, but frequently overlooked. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Commentary: Is the Sun Rising?

Why Low Sunspot Activity Portends Prolonged Climate Chill

By Larry Bell, Newsmax, Jan 8, 2018

<https://www.newsmax.com/larrybell/astronomy-shaviv-svensmark-zharkova/2018/01/08/id/835726/>

2 New Papers Indicate Modern Climate Still In A ‘Colder Stage’, Modulated By Solar Activity, ENSO

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Jan 8, 2018

<http://notrickszone.com/2018/01/08/2-new-papers-indicate-modern-climate-still-in-a-colder-stage-modulated-by-solar-activity-enso/#sthash.ib5ibVLR.dpbs>

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

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

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

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

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

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

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

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

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

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

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge

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

Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate

S. Fred Singer, Editor, NIPCC, 2008
http://www.sepp.org/publications/nipcc_final.pdf

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Evidence Supporting No Dose Response of Mortality to Air Quality

By Stanley Young, Letter, Dose-Response, Jan-Mar 2018

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1559325817750485>

Climate debate at the Cambridge Union - The Video

Video posted by Nir Shaviv, Science Bits, Jan 6, 2018

<http://sciencebits.com/climate-debate-cambridge-union-video>

How to Deceive with Statistics: Distortions Due to Diminutive Denominators

By Thomas P. Sheahan, American Thinker, Jan 11, 2018

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2018/01/how_to_deceive_with_statistics_distortions_du_e_to_diminutive_denominators.html

Scary But Deceiving Climate Statistics

By Cliff Mass, Weather and Climate Blog, Jan 11, 2018

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2018/01/scary-but-deceiving-climate-statistics.html>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Columbia Asylum/Warming Study Given “Damning Verdict” By German Spiegel, Leading Scientists

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jan 10, 2018

<http://notrickszone.com/2018/01/10/columbia-asylumwarming-study-given-damning-verdict-by-german-spiegel-leading-scientists/#sthash.2i7pZNAg.dpbs>

Link to paper: Asylum applications respond to temperature fluctuations

By Anouch Missirian, Wolfram Schlenker, Science, Dec 22, 2017

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/358/6370/1610>

[SEPP Comment: Predicting human asylum requests to the end of the century from a 14 year trend in weather?]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Rex Murphy: Too frigid for global warming? This is why they rebranded it ‘climate change’

Any variety of weather whatsoever can be traced, if you keep the grants flowing and the contradictions unexamined, to the One Holy Underlying Theory of All Weather

By Rex Murphy, National Post, Canada, Jan 5, 2018

<http://nationalpost.com/opinion/rex-murphy-too-frigid-for-global-warming-this-is-why-they-rebranded-it-climate-change>

2 New Papers Find Stable To Growing Penguin Populations In The ‘Global Warming’ Era

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Jan 11, 2018

<http://notrickszone.com/2018/01/11/2-new-papers-find-stable-to-growing-penguin-populations-in-the-global-warming-era/#sthash.wLYHJVu.dpbs>

Change in US Administrations

Zinke announces plan for massive reorganization of Interior Dept.

By Max Greenwood and Timothy Cama, The Hill, Jan 10, 2018

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/368447-zinke-announces-plan-for-massive-reorganization-of-interior-dept>

Seeking a Common Ground

Today's issues

By Martin Livermore, The Scientific Alliance, Jan 12, 2018

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/todays-issues>

9 ways the world got a lot better in 2017

It seemed awful. But overall, it was a great year for humanity.

By Charles Kenny, Vox, Jan 7, 2018

<https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2018/1/3/16843404/good-news-2017-global-health-development-war>

[SEPP Comment: Death rates from famine, war, natural disasters, and pestilence are down; prosperity and life expectancy are up.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO2 Science

Elevated CO2 Improves Photosynthesis and Growth in an Endemic Antarctic Macroalga Species
Iñiguez, C., Heinrich, S., Harms, L. and Gordillo, F.J.L. 2017. Increased temperature and CO2 alleviate photoinhibition in *Desmarestia anceps*: from transcriptomics to carbon utilization. *Journal of Experimental Botany* 68: 3971-3984. Jan 11, 2018

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V21/jan/a6.php>

“The Impact of the Diurnal Temperature Range on Human Mortality in China

Zhang, Y., Yu, C., Yang, J., Zhang, L. and Cui, F. 2017. Diurnal temperature range in relation to daily mortality and years of life lost in Wuhan, China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 14: 891, doi:10.3390/ijerph14080891. Jan 10, 2018

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V21/jan/a5.php>

“Of significance to Zhang et al.'s findings is the fact that multiple researchers have reported a decline in DTR in recent decades at locations all across the globe in conjunction with a rise in global temperatures.”

CO2-enhanced Heat Tolerance of a C4 Perennial Grass Species

Yu, J., Li, R., Fan, N., Yang, Z. and Huang, B. 2017. Metabolic pathways involved in carbon dioxide enhanced heat tolerance in bermudagrass. *Frontiers in Plant Science* 8: 1506, doi: 10.3389/fpls.2017.01506. Jan 9, 2018

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V21/jan/a4.php>

Barley Yield and Belowground Rhizosphere Response to Atmospheric CO2 Enrichment

Szoboszlay, M., Näther, A., Mitterbauer, E., Bender, J., Weigel, H.-J. and Tebbe, C.C. 2017. Response of the rhizosphere prokaryotic community of barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) to elevated atmospheric CO2 concentration in open-top chambers. *MicrobiologyOpen* 6: e462, doi:10.1002/mbo3.462. Jan 8, 2018

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V21/jan/a3.php>

Model Issues

Climate models underestimate cooling effect of daily cloud cycle

By Staff Writers, Princeton NJ (SPX), Jan 10, 2018

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Climate_models_underestimate_cooling_effect_of_daily_cloud_cycle_999.html

Link to paper: Diurnal cloud cycle biases in climate models

By Jun Yin & Amicare Poporato, Nature Communications, Dec 22, 2017

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-017-02369-4>

Changing Weather

Climate Scientists' Projections Refuted...Data Show Tornadoes Becoming LESS FREQUENT!

Tornadoes have become less frequent since 2010: Pacific ocean cycles control storm frequency

By Dr. Sebastian Lüning and Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt (German text translated/edited by P Gosselin),

No Tricks Zone, Jan 9, 2018

<http://notrickszone.com/2018/01/09/climate-scientists-projections-refuted-data-show-tornadoes-becoming-less-frequent/#sthash.ls958K34.dpbs>

Sydney Heat and “Bomb” Snowstorm: Pimped Out for Climate Change

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Jan 7, 2018

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2018/01/sydney-heat-and-bomb-snowstorm-pimped-out-for-climate-change/>

Changing Climate

Lawrence Solomon: Carbon bounties (not taxes) could save us from the next Little Ice Age

With scientists increasingly predicting a long period of global cooling, we may need incentives to put additional carbon dioxide into the atmosphere

By Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post, Jan 5, 2018

<http://business.financialpost.com/opinion/lawrence-solomon-carbon-bounties-could-save-us-from-the-next-little-ice-age>

The Mysterious Cycles of Ice Ages

By Matt Ridley, The Rational Optimist, Jan 12, 2018

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/explaining-ice-ages/>

Link to paper: Modulation of ice ages via precession and dust-albedo feedbacks

By Ralph Ellis and Michael Palmer, Geoscience Frontiers, 2016

<http://www.futureofenergyinitiative.org/Pubs/Ellis.pdf>

Changing Seas

Acidification weakens Calif. mussel shells — study

Cecelia Smith-Schoenwalder, E&E News reporter, Jan 8, 2018

<https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2018/01/08/stories/1060070367>

Link to paper: A mineralogical record of ocean change: Decadal and centennial patterns in the California mussel

By Sophie J. McCoy, Nicholas A. Kamenos, Peter Chung, Timothy J. Wootton, & Catherine A. Pfister, Global Change Biology Jan 4, 2018

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.14013/full>

“Our results use an archival record of natural specimens to provide centennial-scale context for altered mineralogy and variability in shell features as a response to acidification stress and illustrate the utility of long-term studies and archival records in global change ecology.”

[SEPP Comment: No measurements of pH are discussed!]

SEA LEVEL: Rise and Fall – Part 4 – Getting a Rise Out of Nothing

Guest Essay by Kip Hansen (with help from Steve Case), WUWT, Jan 9, 2018

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2018/01/09/sea-level-rise-and-fall-part-4-getting-a-rise-out-of-nothing/>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Study: strong El Niño events increase height and mass of Antarctic ice shelves

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 8, 2018

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2018/01/08/study-strong-el-nino-events-increase-height-and-mass-of-antarctic-ice-shelves/>

Link to paper: Response of Pacific-sector Antarctic ice shelves to the El Niño/Southern Oscillation

By F. S. Paolo, L. Padman, H. A. Fricker, S. Adusumilli, S. Howard & M. R. Siegfried, Nature Geoscience, Jan 8, 2018

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41561-017-0033-0>

Un-Science or Non-Science?

Learning From an Extreme El Niño

A recent paper in Reviews of Geophysics describes new scientific insights on the El Niño-Southern Oscillation from analysis of the 2015-2016 extreme El Niño.

By Agus Santoso, EOS, VOX, Jan 10, 2018

<https://eos.org/editors-vox/learning-from-an-extreme-el-nino>

Link to paper: The Defining Characteristics of ENSO Extremes and the Strong 2015/2016 El Niño

By Agus Santoso, Michael J. McPhaden, & Wenju Cai, Reviews of Geophysics, Dec 20, 2017

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2017RG000560/abstract;jsessionid=E7C71692D2DC1AF0EAF000776CEE6BA6.f02t04>

“Our recent studies [Cai et al., 2015] using these models tell us that the frequency of extreme El Niño will double under business-as-usual greenhouse gas emission scenarios by the end of the 21st century. Even under the Paris Agreement scenario of limiting greenhouse gas warming to 1.5°C globally, the frequency is still projected to increase significantly and to continue to increase for a century after global warming stops [Wang et al., 2017]. On the other hand, we found the risk of extreme La Niña to increase under a business as usual scenario, but to taper off if the Paris Agreement goals can be met.”

Lowering Standards

Sydney before “climate change” — over 50C, 122F recorded at Windsor Observatory, 1939

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jan 9, 2018

<http://joannenova.com.au/2018/01/sydney-before-climate-change-over-50c-122f-recorded-at-windsor-observatory-1939/>

Sydney “hottest ever” mistake generates fake news

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jan 8, 2018

<http://joannenova.com.au/2018/01/sydney-hottest-ever-mistake-generates-fake-news/>

Questioning European Green

Emergency Costs for German Energiewende Explode

By Alex Reichmuth, Basler Zeitung, Via GWPF, Jan 6, 2018

<https://www.thegwpf.com/emergency-costs-for-german-energiewende-explode/>

“Irregular and unpredictable wind and solar power is increasingly becoming a problem for Germany’s power grid. Utility company Tennet TSO spent almost a billion euros last year on emergency interventions to stabilize the national grid.”

Germany Becomes the New Poster Child for Climate Change Hypocrisy

By Nicolas Loris, Daily Signal, Jan 11, 2018

<http://dailysignal.com/2018/01/11/germany-becomes-new-poster-child-climate-change-hypocrisy/>

German coalition negotiators agree to scrap 2020 climate target – sources

By Markus Wacket, Reuters, Jan 8, 2018 [H/t GWPF]

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-germany-politics/german-coalition-negotiators-agree-to-scrap-2020-climate-target-sources-idUKKBN1EX0OW>

Many Europeans 'too poor' to heat homes

Almost 9% of Europeans can’t afford to heat their homes

By Staff Writers, Euronews, Jan 4, 2018 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/04/who-will-be-coldest-in-europe-this-winter->

Questioning Green Elsewhere

More renewables mean less stable grids, researchers find

By Tildy Bayar, Power Engineering, Jan 11, 2018 [H/t Energy Matters]

<http://www.powerengineeringint.com/articles/2018/01/more-renewables-mean-less-stable-grids-researchers-find.html>

[SEPP Comment: No link to paper.]

Keeping Fossil Fuels Underground Makes No Sense

Restricting the production of oil and natural gas would be catastrophic for energy markets.

By Mark Perry, U.S. News, Jan 10, 2018 [H/t GWPF]

https://www.usnews.com/opinion/economic-intelligence/articles/2018-01-10/leaving-fossil-fuels-like-oil-and-natural-gas-underground-makes-no-sense?src=usn_tw

Funding Issues

NASA should create a new \$350 million earth science program, National Academies advise

By Paul Voosen, Science, Jan 5, 2018 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/01/nasa-earth-science-needs-350-million-mission-line-national-academies-advise>

Think Tank Rips New York City’s Fossil Fuel Divestment Plan

The American Council for Capital Formation released a report Thursday criticizing New York’s focus on ESG investing.

By Alicia McElhaney, Institutional Investor, Jan 11, 2018

<https://www.institutionalinvestor.com/article/b16f14ty8rd1wt/think-tank-rips-new-york-citys-fossil-fuel-divestment-plan>

The Political Games Continue

In tomorrow’s WSJ – a tale of climate cash, collusion, and apparently, corruption

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 11, 2018

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2018/01/11/in-tomorrows-wsj-a-tale-of-climate-cash-collusion-and-apparently-corruption/>

Washington Governor Inslee Working on Climate Policy for an Environmental Group

By Myron Ebell, CEI, Jan 12, 2018 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<https://cei.org/blog/washington-governor-inslee-working-climate-policy-environmental-group>

Litigation Issues

Exxon Prepares To Sue California Cities, Says They Contradict Themselves On Climate Change

By John O'Brien, Forbes, Jan 8, 2018

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/legalnewsline/2018/01/08/exxon-prepares-to-sue-california-cities-say-they-contradict-themselves-on-climate-change/#2ec8b8e3522a>

Exxon launches counterattack against California-based climate 'conspiracy' lawsuits

By John Siciliano, Washington Examiner, Jan 9, 2018 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/exxon-launches-counterattack-against-california-based-climate-conspiracy-lawsuits/article/2645352>

Exxon Starts To Push Back Against The Climate Mob

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Jan 10, 2018

<http://manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2018/1/10/exxon-starts-to-push-back-against-the-climate-mob>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

A Hidden Gasoline Tax

By Billo38, Reality Based Policy, Jan 11, 2018

<http://realitybasedpolicy.com/a-hidden-gasoline-tax/>

[SEPP Comment: Are government enforced fuel economy standards a hidden tax?]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

USEPA Shows What Can Happen When a Regulatory Agency Is Captured by Zealots

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Jan 12, 2018

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/4128>

Energy Issues – Non-US

OPEC Doesn't Want Brent Over \$60 a Barrel, Says Iran's Oil Minister

By Staff Writers, Hellenic Shipping News, Jan 10, 2018 [H/t Energy Matters]

<http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/opec-doesnt-want-brent-over-60-a-barrel-says-irans-oil-minister/>

Church of England tells landowners it owns their mineral rights

Church of England Banks on UK Shale Revolution

By Staff Writers, The Times, Via GWPF, Jan 9, 2018

<https://www.thegwpf.com/church-of-england-banks-on-uk-shale-revolution/>

Denmark on track to have 50% renewable energy by 2030

By Staff Writers, RTE, Jan 11, 2018

<https://www.rte.ie/news/newslens/2018/0111/932573-denmark-wind-farm/>

[SEPP Comment: At what costs and how much is imported?]

Energy Issues – Australia

Big new renewable projects planned across Australia as Tesla effect hits

Following the success of Elon Musk's 100-megawatt battery in South Australia, another battery and renewable power plant are in the works

By Naaman Zhou, Guardian, UK, Jan 11, 2019

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jan/11/big-new-renewable-projects-planned-across-australia-as-tesla-effect-hits>

Higher electricity bills if Snowy 2.0 hydro not built, says Frydenberg

Despite costing up to \$4.5bn, the feasibility study for 'Australia's biggest battery' finds it would still be economically viable

By Paul Karp, Guardian, UK, Jan 8, 2018

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jan/09/higher-electricity-bills-if-snowy-20-hydro-not-built-says-frydenberg>

[SEPP Comment: Using coal-fired plants would be less costly than building needed big batteries for times that solar and wind fail.]

Energy Issues -- US

Microgrids: All that Glitters is not Gold

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Jan 12, 2018

<http://www.powerforusa.com/2018/01/12/microgrids-all-that-glitters-is-not-gold/>

"Microgrids are nearly always a front for promoting wind or solar generation...Microgrids are not necessary for improving reliability or resiliency...Microgrids are almost always far more costly than established practices."

Grid Reliability and Resilience

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Jan 9, 2018

<http://www.powerforusa.com/2018/01/09/grid-reliability-and-resilience/>

Renewable Energy Shines, Coal Dims In New Federal Report

By Tina Casey, Clean Technica, Jan 4, 2018 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<https://cleantechnica.com/2018/01/04/renewable-energy-shines-coal-dims-new-federal-report/>

Link to report: Energy Infrastructure Update.

By Staff Writers, Office of Energy Projects. Nov 2017

<https://www.ferc.gov/legal/staff-reports/2017/nov-energy-infrastructure.pdf>

From the article: "Natural gas might not hold its lead position much longer. Renewable energy — wind, solar, hydro, biomass and a smattering of geothermal — is already creeping up on coal at a combined 19.92%, and low-cost wind and solar are beginning to edge out natural gas in some markets."

[SEPP Comment: And what will provide the needed back-up and at what cost?]

Washington's Control of Energy

California AG calls on Zinke to remove state from offshore drilling expansion

By Brandon Carter, The Hill, Jan 9, 2018

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/368231-california-ag-calls-on-zinke-to-remove-state-from-offshore-drilling>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

US Crude Oil Production: Facts and Implications

By John Constable, GWPF, Jan 10, 2018

<https://www.thegwpf.com/us-crude-oil-production-facts-and-implications/>

Link to report: Short-Term Energy Outlook

By Staff Writers, EIA, Jan 9, 2018

<https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/report/index.php>

“New data from the United States Energy Information Administration (EIA) reveals not only that rising domestic oil production in the US puts that economy in a good position to trade to advantage on the world’s energy markets, but also that it is shifting towards non-energy uses of hydrocarbons.”

The 2018 Oil Production Forecast Explained

By Euan Mearns, Energy Matters, Jan 11, 2018

<http://euanmearns.com/the-2018-oil-production-forecast-explained/#more-20650>

“The post could easily have been called ‘Oil Production Forecasting for Beginners’ and explains things like decline rates and oilfield interventions in addition to presenting an overview of global production and rig count statistics.”

Into The Void - Refined-Product Delivery And Storage Infrastructure In Mexico, Part 2

By Housley Carr, RBN Energy, Jan 7, 2018

<https://rbnenergy.com/into-the-void-refined-product-delivery-and-storage-infrastructure-in-mexico-part-2>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Nuclear power receives its death sentence in California: Regulators vote to shut down Diablo Canyon

By Rob Nikolewski, The San Diego Union-Tribune, Jan 13, 2018 [H/t Energy Matters]

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/business/energy-green/sd-fi-diablocanyon-shutdownvote-20180111-story.html>

“I’m sorely disappointed the CPUC has neglected the ratepayers and the environment,” said Gene Nelson, government liaison with Californians for Green Nuclear Power. “Solar and wind cannot be counted on ... They’re subject to random interruptions.”

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Solar's Bright Future Is Further Away Than It Seems

Yes, panels are cheaper, but much more R&D is needed for a true green energy breakthrough.

By Tyler Cowen, Bloomberg, Jan 2, 2018

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-01-02/solar-s-bright-future-is-further-away-than-it-seems>

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

Mass Transit: Perilous Times Ahead (new strategies needed)

By Randal O'Toole, Master Resource, Jan 9, 2018

<https://www.masterresource.org/mass-transit-policy/mass-transit-bad-investment-getting-worse-worse/>

Carbon Schemes

A biological solution to carbon capture and recycling?

By Staff Writers, Dundee UK (SPX), Jan 09, 2018

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/A_biological_solution_to_carbon_capture_and_recycling_999.html

California Dreaming

California: Legalize Marijuana But Ban Particle Pollution?

By Steve Goreham, Daily Caller, Jan 10, 2018

<http://dailycaller.com/2018/01/10/california-legalize-marijuana-but-ban-particle-pollution/>

[SEPP Comment: And smoking does not cause cancer if it is marijuana?]

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Run!

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Jan 6, 2018

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/1623>

“The deserts of north Africa are threatening to leap the Mediterranean and creep through Spain, according to government figures made public as part of a national campaign to halt desertification. A third of the country is at risk of being turned into desert as climate change and tourism add to the effects of farming.”

The Guardian, 18 Jun 2005

ARTICLES:

1. Climate of Unaccountability

Are foundations running state energy policy without transparency?

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 12, 2018

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/climate-of-unaccountability-1515717585>

SUMMARY: The editorial states:

“With President Trump putting economic growth above climate alarms, green activists are turning to progressive states to press their regulatory agenda. Governors from 15 states have formed the U.S. Climate Alliance, for example, to enforce the Paris Climate Agreement despite Mr. Trump’s withdrawal. Fair enough if it’s all above board, but records we’ve obtained suggest that foundations are steering policy behind the scenes without transparency or clear public accountability.

“A leading example is Washington Governor Jay Inslee’s office, which seems to have subcontracted some of its work and budget to two foundations pushing an activist climate agenda. An environmental nonprofit, the World Resources Institute, actually hired Washington’s state government as a contractor last July.

Under this remarkable arrangement, the state agreed to perform a ‘scope of work ‘ for the nonprofit that includes ‘activities and deliverables ‘ to advance a green agenda. The special-interest tail is officially wagging the democratic dog, given that the contract provides the job framework for Mr. Inslee’s senior policy adviser for climate and sustainability, Reed Schuler.

“According to Mr. Schuler’s official job description, his duties include working to ‘identify policy ideas, ‘ ‘draft policy proposals and briefs for communication to Policy Director and Governor’s

executive team, ‘ and ‘prepare letters, executive orders, and other directives for the Governor’s signature. ‘ Beyond the executive branch, Mr. Schuler is also involved in ‘monitoring progress of clean energy legislation ‘ and representing Washington ‘among multi-state and international efforts. ‘

“In other words, he holds an influential policy position. And it’s funded through a grant from the World Resources Institute, which reimburses Washington for Mr. Schuler’s salary, benefits and expenses. Under its contract, Washington State sends progress reports alongside its \$33,210 quarterly invoices to the nonprofit.

“Tara Lee, the Governor’s spokeswoman, says Mr. Schuler is ‘a Washington state employee with the same scope of work, review process and accountability as any other state employee. The only difference is the funding source. ‘ She adds the World Resources Institute’s largesse amounts to ‘general support for expanding the Inslee Administration’s work to combat climate change, ‘ but that ‘they do not decide or dictate the details of this work, nor do they have input on any employee’s work plan. ‘ And she says such arrangements are ‘not unusual. ‘

“World Resources Institute spokesman Michael Oko says that ‘public-private partnerships enable governments to hire experts to advise them on policies that benefit their constituents, ‘ adding that they are ‘common across the political spectrum. ‘ Oh?

“If this is common practice, Washingtonians deserve more details about which outside groups fund Mr. Inslee’s policy team. Substitute the Koch brothers for the World Resources Institute, and the outrage would be predictable. This setup creates real concerns about accountability and interest-peddling. Mr. Schuler knows who pays him, and it’s not Washington taxpayers.

“The money trail also extends to the Hewlett Foundation, which pledged in December to devote \$600 million to climate advocacy in the U.S. and abroad between 2018 and 2023. Hewlett calls this its ‘single largest commitment to date in any area of its philanthropic work, ‘ and it is overseen by Jonathan Pershing, Mr. Schuler’s former colleague at Barack Obama’s State Department.

“In one of many emails obtained by the Competitive Enterprise Institute’s Chris Horner, Mr. Inslee’s Morocco-based climate adviser, Chris Davis, called Mr. Schuler ‘our refugee from Kerry’s office at State ‘ and said that ‘Pershing at Hewlett is paying him to work in our shop for 12 months. ‘ In another email, Mr. Davis said that Mr. Schuler is ‘here through support from the Hewlett Foundation. ’”

The Editorial discusses further details implying the lack of transparency and concludes:

“The implications of all this extend beyond Washington. Mr. Inslee is working with New York’s Andrew Cuomo and California’s Jerry Brown on the U.S. Climate Alliance, a multistate effort. Where else are such special interest groups paying to influence policy?”

2. New York City Sues Oil Companies Over Climate Change

Mayor de Blasio says lawsuit goes after ‘those who have profited’ and urges pension funds to divest from fossil fuel

By Corinne Ramey and Mara Gay, WSJ, Jan 10, 2018

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/city-sues-oil-companies-over-climate-change-1515607107>

The article states:

“New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said Wednesday his administration had filed a lawsuit against five major oil companies and was pushing New York City pension funds to divest from fossil fuel, both part of an effort to fight climate change.

‘This is a tragedy that was wrought by the fossil-fuel companies,’ Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat, said at a news conference. ‘We are going after those who have profited. And what a horrible, disgusting way to profit.’

“The pension fund divestment requires approval from the trustees of the city’s five major pension funds. Some funds may choose to implement the proposal while others may not. City officials plan to present a proposal to the funds on Thursday.

“The \$189 billion pension funds hold about \$5 billion in securities from fossil-fuel companies, officials said.

“The lawsuit, filed late Tuesday, asks for billions of dollars to protect the city from climate change. San Francisco and Oakland filed similar suits in September against the same five companies.”

After some detail the article states:

“The complaint said that ‘the very climate disruption and injuries that Defendants’ scientists and consultants warned them about decades ago have now arrived.’” [Boldface added]

The article concludes with the mayor’s political posturing.
