California Assemblyman Taking Nuclear Power to the People

California Assemblyman Chuck DeVore can’t persuade his colleagues to consider nuclear power, so he is hoping to place a ballot initiative before voters themselves next June.

By James Hoare

Frustrated by obstructionism in the California Assembly, Assemblyman Chuck DeVore (R-Irvine) is taking the issue of nuclear power directly to the people. DeVore in July announced he has begun gathering signatures necessary for placing a nuclear power ballot initiative before voters next June. A state law passed in 1976 prohibits the construction of new nuclear power plants in California until the national government begins accepting spent fuel.

Chicago Mayor Is Scolded for Warming Hypocrisy

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley (D) was slammed on Capitol Hill June 20 for being all talk and no action regarding greenhouse gas emissions.

By James M. Taylor

The legislation designed to extend the national government’s power over isolated local bodies of water is being pushed by environmental activist groups in the weeks leading up to the 2007-2008 U.S. House of Representatives session.

By James M. Taylor

A new study reported in the July 8 issue of Science magazine shows crops genetically modified to resist insects and other pests are having a beneficial effect on the environment.

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WHY POOR COUNTRIES FIND OUR SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL WARMING HARD TO SWALLOW.

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Currently one billion people in the world use unsafe sources of drinking water. As a result of this contaminated water and lack of basic sanitation, 4,500 children die each day.

Worrying about deaths from global warming is, at best, a case of misplaced priorities. Obviously, we can’t ignore any real global warming threats. But, with limited resources, we need to make smart, moral choices about what we do.

Technological advancement is the key to controlling environmental pollution. And it takes wealth to make those advancements. If saving lives is our goal, we must advocate policies that will help developing countries prosper.

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Human Freedom, Not Climate, Is at Risk

By Vaclav Klaus

We are living in strange times. One exceptionally warm winter is enough—irrespective of the fact that in the course of the twentieth century the global temperature increased only by 0.6 percent—for the environmentalists and their followers to suggest radical measures to do something about the weather, and to do it right now.

Silencing Science

In the past year, Al Gore’s so-called “documentary” film was shown in cinemas worldwide; Britain’s—more or less Tony Blair’s—Stern report was published; the fourth report of the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was put together; and the Group of Eight summit announced ambitions to do something about the weather.

Rational and freedom-loving people have to respond. The dictates of political correctness are strict and only one permitted truth, not for the first time in human history, is imposed on us. Everything else is denounced.

The author Michael Crichton stated it clearly: “The greatest challenge facing mankind is the challenge of distinguishing reality from fantasy, truth from propaganda.” I feel the same way, because global warming hysteria has become a prime example of the truth versus propaganda problem.

It requires courage to oppose the “established” truth, although a lot of people—including top-class scientists—see the issue of climate change entirely differently. They protest against the arrogance of those who advocate the global warming hypothesis and relate it to human activities.

Activists Threaten Freedom

As someone who lived under communism for most of his life, I feel obliged to say that I see the biggest threat to freedom, democracy, the market economy, and prosperity now in ambitious environmentalism, not in communism. This ideology wants to replace the free and spontaneous evolution of mankind by a sort of central (now global) planning.

The environmentalists ask for immediate political action because they do not believe in the long-term positive impact of economic growth and ignore both the technological progress that future generations will undoubtedly enjoy, and the proven fact that the higher the wealth of society, the higher is the quality of the environment. They are Malthusian pessimists.

The scientists should help us and take into consideration the political effects of their scientific opinions. They have an obligation to declare their political and value assumptions and how much (those assumptions) have affected their selection and interpretation of scientific evidence.

Scientific Facts Ignored

Does it make any sense to speak about warming of the Earth when we see it in the context of the evolution of our planet over hundreds of millions of years? Every child is taught at school about temperature variations, about the ice ages, about the much warmer climate in the Middle Ages. All of us have noticed that even during our lifetime temperature changes occur (in both directions).

Due to advances in technology, increases in disposable wealth, the rationality of institutions, and the ability of countries to organize themselves, the adaptability of human society has been radically increased. It will continue to increase and will solve any potential consequences of mild climate changes.

“We are living in strange times. One exceptionally warm winter is enough ... for the environmentalists and their followers to suggest radical measures to do something about the weather, and to do it right now.”

History’s Verdict

I agree with Professor Richard Lindzen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who said, “future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early twenty-first century’s developed world went into hysterical panic over a globally averaged temperature increase of a few tenths of a degree, and, on the basis of gross exaggerations of highly uncertain computer projections combined into implausible chains of inference, proceeded to contemplate a rollback of the industrial age.”

The issue of global warming is more about social than natural sciences and more about man and his freedom than about tenths of a degree Celsius changes in average global temperature.

Avoiding Irrational Interventions

As a witness to today’s worldwide debate on climate change, I suggest:

• Small climate changes do not demand far-reaching restrictive measures.
• Any suppression of freedom and democracy should be avoided.
• Instead of organizing people from above, let us allow everyone to live as he wants.
• Let us resist the politicization of science and oppose the term “scientific consensus,” which is always achieved only by a loud minority, never by a silent majority.
• Instead of speaking about “the environment,” let us be attentive to it in our personal behavior.
• Let us be humble but confident in the spontaneous evolution of human society.
• Let us trust its rationality and not try to slow it down or divert it in any direction.
• Let us not scare ourselves with catastrophic forecasts, or use them to defend and promote irrational interventions in human lives.

Vaclav Klaus is president of the Czech Republic. This article first appeared in the Financial Times and is reprinted with permission.
Greenland Was Much Warmer in Recent Past

By James M. Taylor

A new study of Greenland’s ice sheet shows the Earth’s temperature a few hundred thousand years ago was approximately 15° Celsius warmer than it is today, contradicting assertions by global warming alarmists that current temperatures are unprecedented and dangerous to the planet.

**Lush Forest Preceded Ice**

Scientists drilled ice cores more than a mile deep into the base of the Greenland ice sheet and analyzed DNA from remains of insects and plant life found there. A thorough study of the DNA, reported in the July 6 issue of *Science* magazine, concludes only a lush boreal forest could have supported the pollen, insects, and other life found beneath the ice sheet.

The particular plant and animal species that thrived in this boreal forest required temperatures ranging from approximately 10° Celsius in the summer to -17º Celsius in the winter. Temperatures currently range from -8 degrees Celsius in the summer to -30° Celsius in the winter in the same regions of Greenland.

The analysis showed the forest thrived roughly 500,000 years ago. A mere blink of an eye in geologic time, this relatively recent balmy warmth contradicts alarmist assertions that the Earth is experiencing unprecedented warming.

“A new study of Greenland’s ice sheet shows the Earth’s temperature a few hundred thousand years ago was approximately 15° Celsius warmer than it is today ...”

**Warmer Periods Common**

Scientists have known that during the past 450,000 years temperatures in Greenland have several times been at least 3° Celsius warmer than today. Although these warmer periods had already contradicted assertions by global warming alarmists that current temperatures are unprecedented and alarming, the new discovery of temperatures 15° Celsius warmer than today is nothing short of astonishing.

“It provides further evidence that natural processes can and do produce climate change, and that this can be large enough to produce effects similar to those predicted to result from anthropogenic warming,” Dr. Martin Sharp, co-author of the study, told the Canadian Television Network.

“[W]hat we’ve learned is that this part of the world was significantly warmer than most people thought,” Sharp added in a news release.

“There is a great deal of natural climate variability that obviously has not been caused by humans,” said Marlo Lewis, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC. “In light of what we know about the Earth’s climate, you cannot say that any rise in temperatures proves that humans are driving the climate.”

Lewis noted future technologies may well render any human impact on global temperatures moot. “In 50 years, we very well could be using forms of energy that emit little or no greenhouse gases anyway,” said Lewis. “We could very well know how to efficiently and economically suck carbon dioxide out of the air.”

James M. Taylor (taylor@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.

Chicago

Continued from page 1

Daley told the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming that the City of Chicago is leading by example on global warming issues. Daley criticized the federal government for failing to do the same.

**Mayor’s Criticisms Mocked**

Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) responded by pointing out that while Daley makes environmental activists giddy with endless pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions and with endless attacks on others for not making similar promises, Daley consistently fails to live up to his pledges.

Repeatedly referencing a June 18 article in the *Chicago Tribune*, Sensenbrenner mocked Daley for the Chicago city government’s 10 percent rise in greenhouse gas emissions since 2001. Nationwide emissions have remained virtually unchanged since 2001.

Sensenbrenner also pointed out the Chicago city government is using 22 percent more electricity than it did in 2003, despite the city’s repeated self-congratulations for spending substantial taxpayer funds on expensive “green” building construction.

Daley responded by asserting the Tribune data had “discrepancies.”

“I know my eyes are getting a little weak,” said Sensenbrenner while looking down at the Tribune article on the table before him, “but it appears to me that the source [of the information] is the City of Chicago.”

**Market System Works Best**

Tom Tanton, vice president of the Institute for Energy Research, noted the irony in Daley’s government performing worse than the nation as a whole.

“As for the mayor’s complaints about federal leadership on greenhouse gases, he is simply wrong. The U.S. is making more progress in reducing greenhouse gas emission intensity, while emissions in other nations—kowing to Kyoto—are increasing,” Tanton said in an interview for this article.

“While the federal government is not using a hammer to beat emissions down, the market system in the U.S. seems to be working better anyway,” Tanton said.

**Chicago’s History of Failure**

This is not the first time Daley has caught heat for failing to live up to his fiery rhetoric on global warming. After pledging in 2001 his city government would run on 20 percent renewable power by 2006, the Tribune reported on November 20, 2006, “Chicago’s energy mix isn’t so green. Nearly all of the megawatts powering City Hall and other government buildings are still coming from nuclear and coal plants. ... The city hasn’t bought any green energy since 2004.”

The reason for the city’s failure is the prohibitive cost. The consumer cost of wind power in the Chicago region has averaged between 5 and 6 cents per kilowatt hour since 2002, roughly 50 percent more expensive than the 3.7 cents per kilowatt hour of nuclear power.

On June 1, Chicago’s Environment Department announced it was planning to purchase 60,000 megawatt hours of wind power, but less than a week later the city reneged on the pledge because of cost issues.

“It is no wonder that the Mayor’s promises haven’t been kept—renewables are simply too expensive. It is probably a good thing for the taxpayers in Chicago that they are not forced to pay the exorbitant prices for renewables,” observed Tanton.

James M. Taylor (taylor@heartland.org) is senior fellow with The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.
IPCC Records Show Thousands of Review Comments Ignored

By James Hoare

In a historic move, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released the expert review comments and responses to its latest assessment of the science of climate change. That release makes clear literally thousands of comments critical of the report were ignored or rejected by the IPCC lead authors.

The IPCC report is the primary source of data for Al Gore’s movie and book titled An Inconvenient Truth.

At Odds with ‘Consensus’

Many of the comments are strongly critical of claims contained in the final report, released earlier this year, and are directly at odds with the so-called “scientific consensus” touted by Gore and others calling for immediate government action.

For example, the following comment by Eric Steig appears in Second Order Draft Comments, Chapter 6, section 6-42:

“[T]here are numerous important references left out, and an over-emphasis on papers by the authors themselves, which do not accurately reflect the communities’ view. In general, the certainty with which this chapter presents our understanding of abrupt climate change is overstated. There is confusion between hypothesis and evidence throughout the chapter, and a great deal of confusion on the differences between an abrupt ‘climate change’ and possible, hypothetical causes of such climate changes.”

Such internal dissent was widespread and directly contradicts global warming alarmists’ assertions that the IPCC final product is the unified view of thousands of scientists.

Instead, the final product is merely the final word of a small number of “lead authors” who were selected by the political branches of their governments.

The reviewers’ comments confirm what many scientists have been saying all along—that IPCC does not reflect a unified view or even a consensus view of the world’s leading climatologists.

Extemism, Aggressiveness Rewarded

“There is a substantial diversity of opinion on climate change, but IPCC sometimes does not best reflect that diversity. It tends to give undue weight to extreme points of view, especially if such views are made quite loudly,” said Patrick Michaels, research professor of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia and a past president of the American Association of State Climatologists.

“One way in which IPCC falls short of the ideal is that it tends to gravitate to the opinion of a few loud extremists,” Michaels explained.

“A good example of this is Mike Mann’s hockey stick in the IPCC Third Assessment,” Michaels said. “Mann’s hockey stick was a recent postulation that had yet to be supported by comprehensive analysis. Yet Mann was very aggressive and a lead author. As it turns out, the hockey stick had problems, and IPCC has since reassessed the hockey stick.

“Similarly, the new IPCC report repeatedly refers to possibly unknown processes in ice dynamics that might accelerate the ice loss from Greenland,” said Michaels.

“That is essentially [NASA scientist and vocal global warming alarmist] James Hansen’s opinion. Interestingly, the IPCC report itself references material that shows that such a sea level rise is virtually impossible.”

James Hoare (ljahoare@aol.com) is an attorney practicing in Rochester, New York.

INTERNET INFO

The expert review comments and responses released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are available online at http://ipcc-wg1.ucar.edu/wg1/Comments/wg1-commentFrameset.html.

Concerned about Climate Change?

James Taylor says there’s no cause for alarm!

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News, a senior fellow with The Heartland Institute, and one of the nation’s most sought-after speakers on climate change. He has addressed elected officials, civic organizations, and church groups – always to applause and praise for his knowledge and accessible speaking style.

Taylor is author of What Climate Scientists Think about Global Warming (Heartland Institute, 2007) and other Heartland publications. He has appeared on CNN’s Glenn Beck show, the Fox News Channel, and the “Good Morning America” and “Newsmakers” national radio programs. His writing on environmental issues has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Houston Chronicle, Detroit News, Boston Globe, Tampa Tribune, and elsewhere.

Engagements are scheduled on a “first come, first served” basis, so call 312/377-4000 today to schedule James Taylor to keynote your next event!

An outstanding speaker ... and an expert on environment issues!
Ozone Plan Ignores Foreign Sources

By William L. Kovacs

On June 20 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to tighten the nation’s air quality standards for ground-level ozone, revising them for the first time since 1997. Not everyone is pleased.

“On June 20 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed to tighten the nation’s air quality standards for ground-level ozone, revising them for the first time since 1997. Not everyone is pleased.”

The proposed rule recommends lowering the ozone standard to within a range of 0.070 to 0.075 parts per million (ppm). EPA also is taking comments on alternative standards within a range from 0.060 ppm up to the current eight-hour ozone standard, which is 0.08 ppm.

According to EPA, the proposal is based on the most recent scientific evidence about the health effects of ozone—the primary component of smog. The scientific information on which EPA based its determination is found in the three-volume, 2,118 page Ozone Air Quality Criteria Document (AQCD), released in final form in February 2006.

Overseas Ozone Reaching U.S.

Around the same time EPA issued its proposed ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) rule, the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (HTAP), on which EPA serves, released its draft interim study. The report reiterates a finding that emissions from China and elsewhere increase ozone levels in the United States.

How much so remains an open question, but one thing is certain. Background ozone levels in the United States, over which state authorities have no control, are sure to rise as overseas economies expand.

Ethanol Creating Ozone

Additionally, scientific studies indicate the increasing use of ethanol for transportation fuel will increase background levels of ozone. This is a very problematic issue because government mandates for increased use of ethanol in transportation fuels essentially hamstring the ability of state authorities to limit growing background levels of ozone.

These and many other matters of great importance to business and industry will surely arise in the public comment period for EPA’s proposed ozone rule. Careless assumptions and computations by EPA could lead to a dramatic rise in the number of regions of the country that are pushed into ozone NAAQS non-compliance, resulting in a loss of federal highway funds.

On December 13, 2006 the U.S. Chamber of Commerce petitioned EPA to undertake a rulemaking that would protect states and local authorities as well as Chamber members and other stakeholders from suffering regulatory and economic burdens due to impacts on local air quality conditions arising from intrusive foreign emissions—like ozone and particulate matter originating in Asia—that ultimately come across the U.S. border.

To date, EPA has not formally responded to the Chamber’s petition.

EPA’s Treatment of Data, Models Is Worrisome

In late June 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) responded to a three-year-old data quality correction request filed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—by far the longest time ever taken by any agency to respond to any stakeholder Information Quality petition.

The petition sought correction of fundamental physical and chemical data used in models and databases disseminated or sponsored by EPA.

Although the agency acknowledged some improvements were needed, it continues to refrain from forming an inter-agency committee involving other government agencies, such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), that working together could greatly advance progress in addressing data quality problems.

“EPA continues to absolve itself of addressing data and model deficiencies by issuing disclaimers with disseminated data and models.”

Institutional Complacency

Despite the longstanding, well-known expertise of NIST and USGS in developing quality data—which was explicitly called to EPA’s attention by the Chamber and is recognized throughout the world—the agency failed to contact NIST and USGS directly, and instead contacted the co-chair of the National Science and Technology Council Digital Data interagency working group, which has no interest in specifically addressing the concerns raised in the Chamber’s petition.

EPA continues to absolve itself of addressing data and model deficiencies by issuing disclaimers with disseminated data and models. This stance by the agency adds strength to growing stakeholder skepticism and dismay about EPA’s openness to finding ways to improve its data, assumptions, and models. Additional data quality challenges by stakeholders may be needed to correct this problem.

This matter is likely to receive intense scrutiny during the public comment period concerning EPA’s proposed ozone rulemaking.

—William L. Kovacs

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William L. Kovacs (pr@uschamber.com) is vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Environment, Technology, and Regulatory Affairs Division.
Trading Blood for Oil

Just as importantly, more stringent CAFE standards will inevitably kill thousands of Americans each year. A 2001 report from the National Academy of Sciences found existing CAFE standards cause between 1,300 and 2,600 unnecessary traffic deaths each year due to vehicles being smaller and less crashworthy.

More stringent CAFE requirements will only add to the death toll, experts report.

“CAFE may well be one of the deadliness regulatory policies around, and it’s about to get even deadlier,” said Sam Kazman, general counsel for the Competitive Enterprise Institute. "CAFE kills people by restricting the production of larger, heavier vehicles. That may improve miles per gallon, but it reduces vehicle crashworthiness.

“So here we have, in effect, a blood-for-oil war, waged on civilians by policymakers who refuse to admit they’re putting lives at risk,” Kazman added.

“Fuel economy standards are being vigorously debated in Congress. Competing corporate average fuel economy standards threaten to reduce consumer choice among family vehicles and impose significant new financial and safety costs on U.S. consumers.

Emulating European Union

The battle over more stringent fuel economy restrictions is being fought in the House, as the Senate has already approved legislation requiring new cars and light trucks to average at least 35 miles per gallon by 2020. The Senate legislation represents a 30 percent increase in light truck fuel economy and a 50 percent increase in light truck fuel economy relative to current requirements.

Automakers are researching new technologies to improve the fuel economy of existing vehicle designs, but experts warn most of the gains can be met only by making vehicles smaller and lighter—and hence more likely to result in injuries to and deaths of occupants in the event of a collision.

“An expected reduction in gasoline usage is the most common reason cited for raising CAFE standards. It is not clear, however, that CAFE standards are particularly helpful in reducing gasoline use. Meanwhile, there are significant disadvantages to the standards,” said Amy Ridenour, president of the National Center for Public Policy Research.

$5,000 Per Car or More

To the extent new technologies are employed to improve fuel mileage, consumers can expect to pay substantially higher new car prices.

According to testimony offered in federal district court in May of this year, raising fuel economy standards to 43 miles per gallon would add anywhere from $1,500 to $5,000 or more to the price tag of new automobiles.

One proposed alternative to the Senate bill would maintain the distinction between cars and light trucks, allowing the latter to achieve 30 rather than 35 miles per gallon. Other senators see little justification for changing existing standards at all.

Analysts note consumers already may choose from nearly 200 vehicle models that achieve 30 or more highway miles per gallon, and that many consumers nevertheless choose larger vehicles for the additional safety.

James M. Taylor (taylor@heartland.org) is senior fellow with The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.
History Shows Carbon Caps a Failed Policy

By Robert L. Bradley Jr.

Climate change is the 800 pound guerrilla of energy policy in the United States and Europe, although the United States for the most part has kept the beast caged. This has been done despite business interests that have supported carbon dioxide restrictions when they could work it to their advantage.

In April 1992, for example, Natural Gas Week reported, “Enron Corp. Chairman Kenneth L. Lay pens ‘private letter’ to President Bush, urging him to attend global warming conference in Rio de Janeiro and agree to some limits on carbon dioxide emissions.”

Bush went, but he stopped short of agreeing to any form of mandatory carbon caps, and son George W. Bush has held the line as well.

Enron’s interest was to give an economic advantage to natural gas relative to oil, and to capture the market for new electric gas-fired generation capacity from coal and make inroads with natural gas vehicles.

Lay was an extraordinary political capitalist pushing hard through Enron for a variety of government favors—including a 13-year effort to price carbon dioxide. He was a get-out-in-front, get-to-the-table type guy when it came to government intervention, wise to the “get-to-the-table type guy when it came to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, and National Federation of Independent Business, all of which urged federal spending reductions instead.

That sort of backbone will be needed to block energy rationing legislation once again.

There is much talk today about a federal cap-and-trade carbon rationing program. Many industry interests are lining up behind the idea (“getting a seat at the table”) in order to head off a straight carbon tax and skew the rules in parochial ways.

James E. Rogers, chief executive officer of Duke Energy and a Lay protege, is at this table with strong motives to protect Duke’s coal plants and maximize the value of its nuclear plants. But Rogers is also the past chairman of the Edison Electric Institute. One hopes EEI keeps its consumers in mind and takes the moral high ground to defend affordable, plentiful energy as the “master resource” for a better world.

“Climate change is the 800 pound guerrilla of energy policy in the United States and Europe, although the United States for the most part has kept the beast caged.”

Kyoto Failure

Any discussion of climate change policy begins with the Kyoto Protocol. A non-binding international agreement that has never been ratified by the U.S. Senate, Kyoto is the most ambitious attempt to create a global consensus on climate change policy to date.

However, the hopes of 1997—when the treaty was opened for signature—have hit the twin obstacles of political reality and energy reality.

The failure of Kyoto is an open secret. “My thinking has changed in the past three or four years,” British Prime Minister Tony Blair said of the treaty at a climate conference hosted by former U.S. President Bill Clinton. “No country is going to cut its [emissions] growth.”

Pointing to fast-growing China and India, which refused to be part of the protocol, Blair added, “They are not going to start negotiating another treaty like Kyoto.”

Given Kyoto’s expiration date of 2012, and in light of its largely unfulfilled targets, United Nations negotiators are already scrambling to save face.

Technological Solutions

For the more realistic alarmists (if that is not an oxymoron), what is the way forward? Blair provided an answer. “What countries will do is work together to develop the science and technology,” he said. “There is no way we are going to tackle this problem unless we develop the science and technology to do it.”

Translated, the alternatives to oil, gas, and coal must be nearly as good, or political change will be limited. Citizens around the world know great quantities of inexpensive, reliable energy are the solution to, or insurance policy for, an uncertain future.

European Hypocrisy

The European Union (EU) has turned to cap-and-trade to help it meet its Kyoto reductions. But barely half its members—13 of 25—are expected to meet their 2012 targets.

Of the 15 nations that made up the EU before the inclusion of smaller states from Eastern Europe and elsewhere, only Britain and Sweden are set to meet their Kyoto targets. Major economies such as Germany, Italy, and France are off course.

Predictably, EU-based companies are threatening to relocate to non-Kyoto nations where they can do business without the burden of carbon caps.

Although Europe’s energy utilities receive carbon permits free of charge, they have passed the market price of the permits on to industry and consumers, giving themselves a windfall at others’ expense. In Germany alone, carbon-related energy costs rose by almost $9.2 billion in 2005, a price tag that is expected to double in the next couple of years.

This makes EU economies—many of which already are struggling to compete in world markets—less competitive and encourages outsourcing of jobs and businesses to nations without carbon caps.

“Given [the Kyoto Protocol’s] expiration date of 2012, and in light of its largely unfulfilled targets, United Nations negotiators are already scrambling to save face.”

Price Crash

The EU cap-and-trade experience has exposed other weaknesses. Since, in the absence of a price mechanism, governments cannot know what price carbon permits should or will command, the EU massively overallocated the number of permits. This resulted in a carbon credits price crash in April 2006.

Instead of reducing emissions, businesses took advantage of the newly created market to make money. Existing emitters were given carbon permits based on the size of their carbon emissions, blunting incentives to cut back. This unintended consequence has made big business one of the biggest beneficiaries of the EU’s cap-and-trade scheme.

Robert L. Bradley Jr. (iertx@swbell.net) is president of the Institute for Energy Research (http://www.energyrealism.org) and the author of five books on energy, including Climate Alarmism Reconsidered and Energy: The Master Resource.
Congress Considers Carbon Trading

By H. Sterling Burnett

Carbon dioxide (CO2) trading is being championed by nearly a dozen proposals floating around Congress during the summer recess, but the failure of Europe’s trading scheme is keeping most Congressmen skeptical as the 2007-2008 session approaches.

European Emissions Rising

In Europe, which has the most comprehensive carbon trading system in the world, emissions have risen during the past two years. U.S. emissions have declined. Moreover, economists note, the European trading scheme has enriched certain industries at the expense of consumers and other industries.

When Europe first issued carbon permits, energy prices skyrocketed as industries perceived the allotted amount of permits to be too low and had to find ways of doing business that were less carbon-intensive and more expensive. There was a backlash from European consumers at the higher energy prices. European politicians then issued more permits to industry, which caused the price of the permits to plummet. At this stage industry had little reason to cut emissions. As a result, the European Union has seen its CO2 output increase rather than decline since the emissions trading scheme came into effect.

“In Europe, which has the most comprehensive carbon trading system in the world, emissions have risen during the past two years. U.S. emissions have declined.”

“Any time government takes the place of the free market and arbitrarily determines the price or the availability of a product, social and economic penalties predictably follow,” said Cato Institute Senior Fellow Jerry Taylor.

Carbon Offsets Under Fire

Another aspect of carbon trading schemes is the buying and selling of “carbon offsets.” Carbon emitters purchase “offsets” from companies or organizations that promise to undertake projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an amount equal to the amount emitted by the purchaser. This is done by planting trees, creating wetlands, decreasing emissions at other locations or companies through efficiency measures, or investing in low/no-emission energy technology in developing countries.

In theory, companies that buy enough credits could become carbon-neutral; in practice, the offset industry has been beset by lax accounting practices and outright fraudulent behavior. The July 9 Los Angeles Times reported 10 of the world’s leading international banks are looking into self-regulation programs because of “reports of widespread problems in the [global] market for carbon offsets.” Most notably, the Times reported, “In April, the Financial Times found multiple examples of companies trading carbon offsets that carried no environmental benefits.”

In July, printer manufacturer Kyocera released a survey showing 47 percent of the United Kingdom’s large companies view carbon trading as a confusing scheme that lacks any real value in pursuing carbon emission reductions.

CBO Finds Trading Flaws

In the United States, proposed cap-and-trade programs have run headlong into economic analyses from the Congressional Budget Office indicating most of the costs of the program would ultimately be borne by consumers, with carbon emitters receiving value far above any costs they bear.

Other analysts have pointed out that countries like China are poised to reap windfall profits by selling excess carbon credits simply by not undertaking certain types of energy developments.

“The wrong model is being touted,” said James Johnston, senior fellow for energy and regulatory policy at The Heartland Institute. “There is little or no exchange of emissions reductions” taking place under the trading schemes.

H. Sterling Burnett (sterling.burnett@ncpa.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Policy Analysis.

CHALLENGE DEBATE

GLOBAL WARMING IS NOT A CRISIS

FOR

Dennis Avery

Coauthor of Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1,500 Years

AGAINST

Al Gore

Vice President of the US 1993-2001, author, An Inconvenient Truth

For more information about this challenge debate and global warming, please go to www.globalwarmingheartland.org.

The Heartland Institute is a 23-year-old national nonprofit organization devoted to discovering, developing, and promoting free-market solutions to public policy problems. For more information please visit our web site at www.heartland.org.
Timber Companies Exonerated, Barred Owls Blamed for Spotted Owl Decline

By Tom DeWeese

Environmentalists are quick to lecture the rest of us about the ways of nature. Don’t clean the dead trees off the forest floor; they’re natural. Cattle and horses on the range aren’t native, so let the grizzlies and wolves devour them; it’s natural. Man isn’t part of the ecology, so lock him out of vast areas of land; it’s natural.

It is interesting to note how the “natural” argument applies only when it is used to impose the radical environmental agenda. A case in point is the Northern spotted owl.

Timber Companies Ruined

Spotted owls, we were told a decade ago, were disappearing because big bad timber companies were cutting down old-growth forests. So the environmental movement rushed to the forests, hugged the trees, and issued news releases to decry the evils of the logging industry. Save the owl. Save the trees. Kill the timber industry.

Of course, that was exactly the point. Kill the timber industry. As a result of the hysteria to save the “endangered” owls, U.S. timber sales were reduced by 80 to 90 percent, forcing saw mills to close, loggers to go broke, and the literal disappearance of entire towns that depended on the industry.

The federal crackdown on the industry caused a shift in U.S. domestic lumber supplies to foreign sources. In short, American industry suffered in the name of protecting the spotted owl.

It’s natural. Man isn’t part of the ecology, so lock him out of vast areas of land; it’s natural. So instead, after the nation spent millions of dollars to destroy private property rights, the government plans to spend $200 million more on a “barred owl removal plan” in order to save the spotted owl from its natural competitor.

Government Still Clueless

Now the truth has come out. So, will the same federal government that rushed to impose harsh treatment of innocent property owners and industry now roll back those stifling regulations and let freedom breathe? Of course not. Agendas are agendas, regardless of the facts.

So instead, after the nation spent millions of dollars to destroy private property rights, the government plans to spend $200 million more on a “barred owl removal plan” in order to save the spotted owl from its natural competitor.

And as usual when a new government debacle is rolled out, there is always an emergency to drive the policy. According to Ren Lohefener, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Pacific Region, “Because the range and numbers of barred owls are expanding rapidly, our effectiveness in addressing this threat depends on immediate action.”

No Need for Panic

Here’s an immediate action sane folks could recommend: Leave the barred owls alone to do what comes natural to them.

If the spotted owl can’t keep up—then good riddance. It’s been used to cause enough pain, and obviously its time is up.

After all, it’s a natural process. Species come and go. We’ve got plenty of Mexican spotted owls to play with if we get homesick for them.

Of course, the final chapter is yet to be written. If the new “recovery plan” is successful, it won’t be long before the environmental movement has a new emergency—man’s wanton destruction of the barred owl. Creating false environmental disasters just comes natural for some people.

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Bald Eagle No Longer Endangered

**ESA role overstated**

By Adrian Moore

On June 28, the national government removed the bald eagle from the endangered species list. It is great news that bald eagle populations in the contiguous 48 states have done so well, where now there are more than 11,000 breeding pairs.

Unfortunately, some serious problems remain. The story is not being told of how many different factors led to the recovery of the bald eagle. The role of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has been significantly overstated. Indeed, the ESA may well have caused more harm than good to the eagle.

The bald eagle will be removed from the endangered list in name only, because despite the species’ much-hailed recovery, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has cut-and-pasted the ESA land-use regulations—the “teeth” that make the law so broadly powerful—into the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act was passed in 1940 and prohibits any form of possession or taking of either bald or golden eagles.

The Eagle Act was passed in 1940 and prohibits any form of possession or taking of either bald or golden eagles.

Brian Seasholes has written for the Reason Foundation a report on the many factors that led to the recovery of the bald eagle and the limited role the ESA played. His second short report looks at the many factors that led to the recovery of the bald eagle and the limited role the ESA played. His second short report looks at the many factors that led to the recovery of the bald eagle and the limited role the ESA played. His second short report looks at the many factors that led to the recovery of the bald eagle and the limited role the ESA played. His second short report looks at the many factors that led to the recovery of the bald eagle and the limited role the ESA played.

Many Reasons for Recovery

The recovery of the bald eagle is a more complex story than you might think.

Contrary to claims by a number of prominent ESA boosters, the bald eagle was never in danger of extinction. The vast majority of the species’ population (around 75 percent) has lived in Alaska and British Columbia, Canada, where the combination of superb habitat and lack of DDT has kept them safe. Alaskan eagles have never been listed under the ESA.

According to Seasholes, banning DDT in 1972, not passage of the ESA a year later, is widely acknowledged as the reason for the bald eagle’s resurgence. Seventy percent of the bald eagle population in the 48 contiguous states were not even listed under the ESA, and therefore not afforded the purported benefits of its protection, until 1978, several years after DDT was banned.

Habitat conservation and creation is a far more nuanced process than is portrayed by the ESA’s boosters. The ESA may well have done more harm than good on private land, where most of the listed eagles exist.

**Effective State, Private Efforts**

Releasing young eagles in areas where the species had been considered locally extinct proved to be very effective in the recovery effort, but these captive breeding programs were carried out primarily by state and private organizations, not federal agencies.

The main contribution of the federal ESA was to provide funding for these efforts, though given the eagle’s charisma, state and private entities proved able to raise substantial funds.

Public attitudes about eagles have changed, and people are much more inclined to respect and admire them and avoid bothering them. The ESA’s land-use regulations were not necessary to curtail shooting, and penalties for shooting actually got their biggest boost from the 1987 Criminal Fines Improvement Act, not the ESA.

Finally, the ESA played little role in people’s increasing environmental conscience and positive attitude towards eagles.

**Draconian Land-Use Restrictions**

Under the ESA and the Eagle Act, FWS has made land-use restrictions the centerpiece of the strategy to protect bald eagles. These land-use restrictions did more harm than good by leading many landowners to make their land inhospitable to eagles.

History shows FWS does not confine itself to measures that ensure the eagle’s recovery. In the mid-1990s the bald eagle population in the 48 contiguous states reached more than 3,000 breeding pairs, which met the goal for recovery of the species under the ESA. But FWS failed to take action to remove the eagle from the endangered list until 2005, when Minnesota landowner Edmund Contoski sued FWS for failing to delist the eagle in a timely manner.

Contoski won his case, and the court ordered FWS to remove the bald eagle from the endangered list. Now there are at least 11,137 pairs, exceeding the recovery goal by 371 percent.

**Bureaucratic Overreach**

Congress never intended for the Eagle Act to contain land-use control provisions. FWS used an administrative rulemaking process to add the ESA’s land-use control provisions to the Eagle Act beginning in the 1970s. In addition, FWS’s changes to the Eagle Act extend the ESA’s land-use regulations to bald eagles in Alaska and golden eagles in the contiguous 48 states and Alaska, both of which have never been covered by such regulations.

The land-use restrictions added by FWS to the Eagle Act can be used to encumber huge amounts of habitat. Applying FWS nest protection guidelines under the Eagle Act means the 11,137 pairs in the 48 contiguous states occupy 5.6 million acres (roughly the size of New Hampshire or New Jersey)—524,834 acres of which will be the most stringently regulated because they are closest to nest sites.

In addition, these figures don’t account for regulations protecting nesting birds in the outer extent of their ranges, non-nesting eagles, wintering eagles that migrate across the Canadian border, the Alaskan population of bald eagles, or golden eagles—all also potentially subject to the revised Eagle Act.

**Unnecessary Rules**

Even without increasing the land-use restrictions of the Eagle Act, the population of bald eagles will certainly continue to increase.

The combination of the bald eagle’s symbolic importance and state and private conservation efforts will ensure the eagle prospers into the future.

The time is long overdue for the bald eagle to fly free of the ESA’s land-use controls.

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**INTERNET INFO**

Two reports written for the Reason Foundation by Brian Seasholes are available through PolicyBot™, The Heartland Institute’s free online research database. Point your Web browser to http://www.policybot.org and search for:


“The Bald Eagle’s Worst Enemy,” Policy Brief No. 64, document #21738.
Environmental Activists Are Enemies of the Poor

By Roy Innis

People here have no jobs,” Mark Fenn admitted, after taking documentary producers on a tour of his $35,000 catamaran and the site of his new coastal home. “But if you could count how many times they smile in a day, if you could measure stress—and compare that to “well-off people” in London or New York—then tell me, who is rich and who is poor?”

Fenn is coordinator of the World Wildlife Fund’s campaign against a proposed mining project near Ft. Dauphin, Madagascar. The locals strongly support the project and want the jobs, improved port, sustained development, and improved living standards and environmental quality this state-of-the-art operation will bring.

No wonder.

People there live in abject poverty, along dirt roads, in shacks with dirt floors, barely able to afford food on their $1,000-a-year average income. There is little electricity and no indoor plumbing. The area’s rainforest has been destroyed for firewood and slash-and-burn agriculture. People barely eke out a living.

Hypocritical Activists

But Fenn claims the mine will change the “quaint” village and harm the environment. He says he feels “like a resident,” his children “were born and raised” there, and the locals “don’t consider education to be important” and would just spend their money on parties, jeans, and stereos.

Actually, Fenn lives 300 miles away and sends his children to school in South Africa. And the locals hardly conform to his insulting stereotypes. “If I had money, I would open a grocery store,” said one. “Send my children to school,” start a business, become a midwife, build a new house, said others.

Economic Growth Needed

You have to see the film, Mine Your Own Business, to fully grasp the callous disdain these radical activists have for the world’s poor. That’s certainly the reaction audiences had after seeing it May 30 on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Fenn’s demeaning and somewhat racist statements perpetuate human misery.

These enemies of the poor say they are “stakeholders” who want to “preserve” indigenous people and villages. They never consider what the real stakeholders want—the people who actually live in these impoverished communities and must endure the consequences of harmful environmentalist campaigns that are being waged all over the world—from Europe to Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the United States.

The WWF, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Sierra Club, Rainforest Action Network, and other multinational activist corporations battle against mines in Romania, Peru, Chile, Ghana, and Indonesia; electricity projects in Uganda, India, and Nepal; biotechnology that could improve farm incomes and reduce malnutrition in Kenya, India, Brazil, and the Philippines; and DDT that could slash malaria rates all over Africa, where it kills 3,000 children every day.

Activists Spreading Lies

When my son and some friends brought two tons of biotech food to impoverished families near Cancun, Mexico, Friends of the Earth protesters told the villagers the corn was poisonous. The radicals didn’t acknowledge that Americans eat the same corn every day—and they didn’t bring one peso in aid for the people whom they were deceiving into passing up free food.

They harp on speculative dangers of technology, and they ignore the real, immediate, life-or-death dangers that modern mining, development, and technology would prevent. They never mention the jobs, clinics, schools, roads, improved housing, and small business opportunities these economic activities make available—or the electricity, refrigeration, safe water, better nutrition, reduced lung and intestinal disease, and fewer deaths of children.

The activists pervert “sustainable development” to mean no development, and they ignore how mines lay the foundation for modern schools, hospitals, libraries, and businesses that can sustain prosperity and better living standards for generations.

Economic Development Needed

Agitators use global warming and “corporate social responsibility” to force companies to acquiesce to their agendas—and ignore human rights to energy and technology and people’s desperate cries for a chance to take their rightful place among the Earth’s healthy and prosperous people.

The activists promote the placing of little solar panels on huts, but they never advocate supplying enough electricity to help communities emerge from poverty and disease.

They extol the virtues of micro credit, to support minimal family enterprises, and they demand debt forgiveness and more foreign aid for corrupt dictators. But they oppose economic development that would eliminate the need for more international welfare.

They blame Newmont Mining for accidents that killed five people over a two-year period in Ghana, but they refuse to acknowledge their policies and pressure campaigns cause millions of deaths every year.

U.S. Not Immune

Such environmental injustice is prevalent here in the United States, too.

A few years ago, the poor, mostly black community of Convent, Louisiana welcomed plans for a $700 million plastics factory that would bring good construction and permanent jobs, health benefits, a stronger tax base, and better schools. More than 70 percent of the residents wanted it. But the Sierra Club and a Tulane University group claimed the high-tech plant would pollute and cause cancer.

In fact, cancer rates would have gone down, because residents would have had better nutrition and regular medical check-ups. But the radicals won, the plant wasn’t built, and residents still work menial jobs for minimum wages in sugarcane fields.

Technology’s Real-World Benefits

Yes, there are environmental impacts from mines, dams, and other development. They change lives and communities. There are health and other risks.

But those changes also came with the Industrial Revolution. Are we worse off for it? Would we prefer to return to the jobs, lifestyles, and living standards of pre-industrial, pre-electrical America—when cholera and malaria were ever-present, and the average life expectancy was 45? Would any of the greens, who clamor to keep the world’s poor “indigenous” (and thus impoverished, energy-deprived, and diseased) care to live that lifestyle for even one month?

This intolerable situation cannot continue, and people of conscience must no longer remain silent.

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T.S. Eliot once said, “half of the harm that is done in this world is due to people who want to feel important. They don’t mean to do harm—but the harm does not interest them. Or they justify it, because they are absorbed in the endless struggle to think well of themselves.”

Eliot said that long before real environmentalism existed, but can anyone describe the environmental activist movement better?

Misguided Activism
Some people, observed columnist George Will, “use environmental causes and rhetoric not for the purpose of environmental improvements, but rather, for them, changing society’s politics is the end, and environmental policies are mere means to that end.”

No one has ever exposed this movement better than Bonner Cohen in his brief, 240-page paperback book. The text is actually less than 180 pages, as the rest contains tables of wonderful data exposing the funding and power connections of the environmental fear-mongering groups.

There are more than 8,000 environmental advocacy— or should we say “obstacle”—groups in the United States today. This book deals with the largest few dozen, not because the others are not important, but to imprint upon the reader that in this David and Goliath battle, it is American industry that is the David and the environmental activists, with their vast resources, who are the Goliath.

This is a studious work not to be read quickly. It is in fact the detailed history of an environmental scare industry intent on defeating capitalism and pushing the world toward another socialist experiment that they suppose will not renew the murderous treachery and ultimate failure of the previous version.

Deadly DDT Ban
Cohen’s summary of the terrible impact of withdrawing DDT from the world’s battle with malaria is as good as it gets. He notes that global malaria death rates of 1,740 per million in 1930 were reduced to 160 per million by 1970 primarily through the use of DDT.

In Sri Lanka, a hotbed of malaria in the 1940s, there were only 17 cases in 1963, but in 1968, after DDT was banned, there were more than a million cases.

Cohen tells the sad story of how U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator William Ruckelshaus caved in to environmental advocates’ pressure when he banned DDT against the better judgment of his own research investigators.

I knew Ruckelshaus from my days at Princeton University. When years later I confronted him about this horrendous decision, he stuck to his guns, ignoring the devastation it caused. I wonder if the man ever sleeps at night.

“Bonner Cohen has made a fine contribution to honest environmental issue literature. I recommend The Green Wave highly.”

Activist Agenda Debunked
Cohen’s brief discourse on the Precautionary Principle, an absurd, artificial, and unscientific policy intended to stifle human progress, is excellent. He also exposes the concepts of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility for the sham they are.

He does a great job explaining the importance of genetically modified foods, which hold the primary hope of feeding future generations of an expanding population. Cohen exposes the environmental activists’ strategy of depriving the world of genetically improved foods by dividing their work among the more radical groups such as Greenpeace—which insists on the removal of all bioengineered foodstuffs—and the more moderate groups that claim to believe genetically improved crops may have value but should not be released until more research is completed.

Cohen points out there will never be enough research to satisfy these groups.

None of us needs to read any more about global warming than what we are now subjected to daily, but The Green Wave includes a nice summary of what we do know, which is that man has not warmed the planet to any significant degree and is incapable of altering its temperature.

Activists’ Distortions
A less well-known subject is how environmental activists distort the facts about environmental mercury to suppress the building and use of coal-fired power plants. Cohen explains mercury is a naturally occurring element that is ubiquitous in the environment. Coal-burning power plants account for less than 1 percent of total global mercury deposition.

A well-covered-up fact that exonerated coal-fired power plants was mentioned in an EPA research project carried out at Princeton University, where they discovered mercury levels in tuna were the same in 1998 as they were in 1971, even though the number and output of coal-burning power plants increased dramatically.

Similarly, Cohen does a good job explaining the endangered species follies and conservation claims. Species protection, he explains, is often just a ruse to slow economic growth and market activity. Similarly, most of today’s conservation movement does not provide the common-sense cost/benefit ratios many expect.

Green Funding Exposed
While technically the book is excellent, economically it is magnificent. Cohen exposes the budgets and sources of funding for the major environmental fear-mongering groups. He points out most of the groups are financed by once-levelheaded if not conservative foundations, which upon the passing of their founders were hijacked by their more liberal board members.

Bonner Cohen has made a fine contribution to honest environmental issue literature. I recommend The Green Wave highly.

Jay Lehr, Ph.D. (lehr@heartland.org) is science director for The Heartland Institute.
By James M. Taylor

Paul Driessen is a warrior on the front lines of the battle against Third World poverty and disease.

As a senior policy advisor for the Congress of Racial Equality and a senior fellow with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, Driessen dedicates himself to identifying and eliminating the obstacles that keep people in underdeveloped countries from breaking through the abject poverty barrier.

All too often, Driessen has discovered, the very environmental activist groups that claim to care so much about people in underdeveloped countries are the ones keeping them down.

James M. Taylor, a senior fellow for The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News, caught up with Driessen for a discussion of Third World nations and the environment.

Taylor: You have been one of the leaders in presenting affluent Americans with information about how environmental extremists are impoverishing and imperiling the lives of the world’s poorest people. What are the most significant threats the world’s poor face from extremists?

“The extremists focus on phony, speculative crises regarding insecticides, yet ignore the extreme and very real negative toll that so-called enlightened environmental policies are imposing on the poor people of the world.”

Driessen: I think malaria is probably the biggest threat. There has been tremendous opposition among environmental activists regarding DDT and insecticides. The extremists focus on phony, speculative crises regarding insecticides, yet ignore the extreme and very real negative toll that so-called enlightened environmental policies are imposing on the poor people of the world.

Another threat to the world’s poor are the proffered ‘solutions’ to global warming, where alarmists use speculative scenarios cranked out on computers to justify policies that will cause tremendous harm to the world’s poor.

Driessen: The malaria problem has been worsening for decades under political correctness schemes that emphasize inadequate “solutions” such as bed nets, education, and treatment rather than prevention. Today in developing nations, half a billion people still get malaria every year. One out of three people who contract malaria die from it—mostly kids.

In recent years, we are seeing signs that this might finally begin to change. The United States is participating with many international groups to provide DDT and insecticides as effective weapons in the battle against malaria.

Taylor: After DDT eliminated malaria in the United States in the mid-twentieth century, environmental activists succeeded in banning it. What has real-world experience told us about the importance of DDT in fighting malaria?

Driessen: In the United States and Europe, DDT got rid of malaria. It is as simple as that. It was the knockout blow that eliminated a substantial human health problem. But today in developing nations, half a billion people still get malaria every year, yet DDT has been banned due to alleged human health fears.

“Another threat to the world’s poor are the proffered ‘solutions’ to global warming, where alarmists use speculative scenarios cranked out on computers to justify policies that will cause tremendous harm to the world’s poor.”

What human health risks can exceed hundreds of millions of people contracting malaria every year? What can justify this horrendous annual death toll?

Developing nations merely seek the right to spray a small amount of DDT inside their homes once or twice a year to keep malarial mosquitoes out, but are being pressured not to.

Taylor: What are the environmental risks of DDT spraying?

Driessen: It is important to note that DDT functions not so much as an insecticide as a long-lasting repellent. You need only spray the huts once or twice a year and the mosquitoes will not enter. The few that enter will leave or die almost immediately. Limited indoor spraying is all people need.

Taylor: Are there any other effects that the DDT ban has on developing nations, in addition to the death toll?

Driessen: The reality of malaria is that hundreds of millions of people in Third World nations, and in Africa especially, spend much of the year sick, battling the disease. They can’t go to work. They spend much of their time in hospitals. They spend a great deal of money paying for medical care.

So many people die from malaria, and so many more suffer the pains of the illness and the poverty that it brings.

“Today in developing nations, half a billion people still get malaria every year, and one out of three people who contract malaria die from the disease—mostly kids.”

Taylor: Any final thoughts?

Driessen: I would just like to make people aware that the Congress of Racial Equality and the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow work so very hard to make a positive difference in people’s lives. As opposed to the environmental activists who sit in their offices opposing everything, we are out there on a person-to-person and village-to-village basis doing everything we can to fight disease and poverty.
Forests Are Expanding Worldwide, Aided by High-Yield Farming Practices

By Dennis Avery

A n international research team reports in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that 22 of the 50 most forested countries in the world have been gaining forest since 1990, reversing the trend of forest decline often associated with modern societies and rising populations.

Modern Growing Techniques

The countries with growing forest assets include the U.S., Canada, much of Europe, European Russia, China, and India.

This growth has been enabled by high-yield farms, which grow more food per acre on the best-quality land and leave marginal land to trees; high-yield tree plantations with faster-growing trees; wood imports from the world’s faster-growing warm-climate forests; and the continuing rural-urban migration that substitutes kerosene for firewood in Third World cooking and heating.

Unfortunately, Indonesia, Nigeria, and the Philippines report declining forest assets.

U.S. Success Story

In America, a huge surge of timber harvest and farming expansion between 1850 and 1910 denuded 190 million acres of forest, says Proceedings article co-author Jesse Ausubel of Rockefeller University. Since then, however, high-yield crops and livestock have permitted forests to re-grow in New England, West Virginia, the Ozarks, and other marginal farming areas.

U.S. corn yields have soared from 25 bushels per acre in 1860 to more than 140 bushels today. Meat and milk production per acre has doubled since 1970.

The researchers for the article say expanded tree plantations are expected to lower the percentage of wood cut from natural forests from 67 percent today to 25 percent by 2050.

Article co-author Paul Waggoner of the University of Connecticut notes more of today’s U.S. wood harvest is coming from Southern forests that can grow twice as fast as Northern ones, and from tree plantations where species selection, fertilizer, and weed suppression hasten tree growth.

“[Twenty-two] of the 50 most forested countries in the world have been gaining forest since 1990, reversing the trend of forest decline often associated with modern societies and rising populations.”

Mixed International Picture

French forest cover expanded from about 7 percent to 25 percent of the nation’s geographic area over the past century as wheat yields surged from less than 2 tons per hectare in 1950 to more than 7 tons per hectare with greater use of fertilizer, better seeds, and fungicides.

In Asia, 792,000 hectares of forest were cleared between 1990 and 2000—but reforestation programs in China and India added more than 1 million hectares of forests between 2000 and 2005. There are good reasons to believe the big Asian countries have now gotten rich enough to value trees and forests.

In the Caribbean, forests are recovering in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, but Haiti has been almost entirely deforested by poverty and poor governance.

Environmental Scares Threaten Forests

One of the biggest threats to forests today is the First World’s fear of global warming. Third World countries that have been over-cutting their forests for firewood are now being discouraged from substituting fossil fuels such as kerosene and fuel oil.

The current interest in biofuels is also threatening forests in the United States, France, and Malaysia. The U.S. mandate for 7.5 billion gallons of biofuels by 2012 could trigger the clearing of millions of acres of heartland forests to expand corn production for ethanol.

Corn ethanol produces only a net 50 gallons’ worth of gasoline per acre per year, so even dramatic deforestation won’t make much of a dent in the annual U.S. demand for 135 billion gallons of gasoline.

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Biotech

Continued from page 1

Research conducted by scientists at Santa Clara University, the Nature Conservancy, and the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) at the University of California at Santa Barbara concluded crops that are bioengineered to resist insects require less chemical spraying than conventional crops.

As a result, beneficial insect species—such as ladybird beetles, earthworms, and bees—that do no damage to the cultivated crops are left undisturbed, and fewer pesticides are residually released into the environment.

Beneficial Species Saved

The scientists analyzed nearly four dozen field experiments of genetically modified crops.

“A new study reported in the July 8 issue of Science magazine shows crops genetically modified to resist insects and other pests are having a beneficial effect on the environment.”

Genetic modifications that allow plants to internally produce insecticides effectively negated the need for large-scale insecticide spraying. As a result, beneficial insect species—including ladybird beetles, earthworms, and bees—were able to thrive among crops that otherwise would be sprayed with insecticides harmful to beneficial and dangerous insects alike.

“A meta-analysis of 42 field experiments indicates that nontarget invertebrates are generally more abundant in [biotech] cotton and [biotech] maize fields than in nontransgenic fields managed with insecticides,” the study concluded.

“This is a groundbreaking study and the first of its kind to evaluate the current science surrounding genetically modified crops,” Peter Kareiva, chief scientist of the Nature Conservancy, said in a June 7 Santa Clara University news release.

Governments Stifle Use

Henry Miller, a research fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution, noted that despite its repeatedly proven benefits and safety, biotechnology faces uniquely burdensome regulations.

“Even where gene-spliced crops are being cultivated, unscientific, overly burdensome regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has raised significantly the cost of producing new plant varieties and kept many potentially important crops from ever reaching the market,” observed Miller.

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which begins in September.

Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN) is leading the effort to pass H.R. 2421, the Clean Water Restoration Act, which would give federal agencies unprecedented authority over what were previously state and local issues.

The bill was introduced in May and is likely to be hotly debated in Congress this fall.

Court Limited Fed Power
The act’s supporters admit it is aimed at invalidating a U.S. Supreme Court decision that defined the limits of federal authority over isolated bodies of water.

Under the 1977 Clean Water Act (CWA), Congress gave the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authority to regulate pollution in “navigable waters.” The scope of the CWA was defined in 2006 by the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled “navigable waters” include not only those that are navigable but also any waters that share a common nexus “to perform important functions for an aquatic system incorporating navigable waters.”

While the Court expanded the definition of “navigable waters” beyond a face-value reading of the term, it nevertheless put the brakes on attempts by federal agencies to regulate isolated bodies of water that have little if any meaningful connection to navigable waters.

The Court justified its ruling by noting that pollutants reaching a non-navigable stream or watershed can still affect a navigable waterway if the stream or watershed discharges into the navigable waterway. By contrast, the Court ruled, isolated bodies of water with little or no meaningful interaction with navigable waterways have little impact on such waterways. The key to determining whether federal authority extends to such non-navigable watersheds is whether a non-navigable watershed performs important functions for the navigable waterway, the Court ruled.

Ire in Congress
Some members of Congress, upset the Court did not interpret the term “navigable waters” to grant the federal government full authority over even the most isolated waters and wetlands, have vowed to render the decision moot by new legislation. Led by Oberstar, they contend the CWA intended to give them such power.

“This bill is designed to restore the authority of the Clean Water Act so it has the same effect it had prior to the Court’s rulings,” said Oberstar in a May 22 press statement. “This legislation will not create onerous new rules or regulations.”

New Powers Sought
Linda Runbeck, a former Minnesota State Senator who now serves as president of the American Property Coalition, says the proposed legislation extends federal power far beyond any rational reading of the Clean Water Act.

The proposed legislation “puts the federal government in control of all ‘waters of the United States’—a very broad definition—and newly regulates ‘activities affecting these waters,’ said Runbeck. “It also strikes the word ‘navigable’ wherever it appears.”

Pacific Legal Foundation attorney James Burling agreed, saying, “If our constitutional system of limited federal powers means anything, we have to win on this issue.”

The bill mustered the support of approximately 160 House members in the spring, but it still must overcome some principled opposition.

Richard Baker (R-LA), the ranking Republican on the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment, has called the bill “the largest-ever expansion of federal powers over private property.”

James M. Taylor (taylor@heartland.org) is a senior fellow with The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.
Solar Power Presents Many Hurdles to Consumers

By Howard C. Hayden

It all sounds so simple. Buy a solar gadget for your roof, tie it into the household electric system, get all the electricity you want, buy a rustic place in the mountains, live “off the grid,” and congratulate yourself for being independent.

“In this article and next month’s installment we’ll discuss the off-the-grid and on-the-grid [solar power] scenarios in order.”

Like most dreams, this one is based on delusion.

Alternatively, you might dream of having the solar gadget produce enough extra electricity that you could tie it to the grid and sell the excess to the utility company. This “on-the-grid” dream involves somewhat different delusions.

There is nothing as devastating to a beautiful dream as waking up to a brutal gang of facts. In this article and next month’s installment we’ll discuss the off-the-grid and on-the-grid scenarios in order.

In subsequent issues, we’ll look at the solar gadgets variously called photovoltaic cells, photovoltaic (PV) cells, or solar batteries. Then we’ll discuss the ancillary systems required for any solar installation.

Off-the-Grid Storage

Let’s pretend, just for fun, that you could just buy the solar gadget—we’ll discuss that device in a future installment—and tie it into your wiring. OK, now how do you get electricity on a long, cold winter night? Clearly, the matter of storage rears its ugly head.

Sure, you can buy storage batteries, but something as small as the 30 pound lead-acid beast in your car is nowhere near adequate to produce your electricity for even one short night, let alone several nights and several cloudy days.

The batteries are neither small, nor free, nor everlasting. They are similar to car batteries, but different in manufacture and use. A car battery is rarely discharged more than a percent or so, unless somebody has left the lights on or the engine is balky about starting.

“[S]omething as small as the 30 pound lead-acid beast in your car is nowhere near adequate to produce your electricity for even one short night, let alone several nights and several cloudy days.”

Storage Issues

A battery used for backing up a PV system would be charged during sunny days but would be discharged during nighttime and cloudy days whenever somebody turned on a light or other electrical device. This battery would often be discharged to the point where it was almost dead.

On the other hand, while the starting current drawn from a car battery is often very high, the current drawn from the PV backup system battery would typically be much less.

For this purpose, there are “deep-discharge” batteries that are deliberately made to withstand such hard usage. The ones designed for PV systems are considerably larger than car batteries, both in physical size and in the amount of electrical energy they can store.

How many batteries to buy is a question with no easy answer, but the simple answer is “more is better.” Suppose your solar gadget can charge any number of batteries during one sunny day; it is still true that the number of sequential nights and cloudy days your system can handle is just a matter of how many batteries you have.

But don’t despair. Your PV system will be limited in how many batteries it can charge during a day, so it would be pointless to have a hundred batteries in the basement anyway. To quote an aphorism from E.F. Schumacher: Small is beautiful.

Economies of Scale

That brings us to a problem called “economies of scale.” Occasionally, you use a great deal of power, especially when the electric dryer and the oven are running while lights, the freezer, the refrigerator, the TV, and the computers are running simultaneously. At other times, you use very little power, as everything is turned off.

Measurements show a house will occasionally use as much as 15 kilowatts for short intervals, but in a neighborhood of eight to 10 non-air-conditioned houses supplied by a transformer, the power demand will not exceed about 3.5 kilowatts per house.

A substation handles the power for many distribution lines. The utility usually allocates about 2 kilowatts per household at this level.

From the standpoint of the power station, the utility needs to produce less than about 1.5 kilowatts per household. In other words, the local system of the off-grid user has to be designed to handle 10 times as much power as the power station would allocate to a single house.

“[A] power station can take advantage of the diversity of demand, providing enough capacity to allocate each house about 1.5 kW. An off-grid system cannot do so—it must be ready to handle the maximum demand, which can easily be 10 times as high as the citywide average demand.”

Better Deal for Consumers

That is, the power station can take advantage of the diversity of demand, providing enough capacity to allocate each house about 1.5 kW. An off-grid system cannot do so—it must be ready to handle the maximum demand, which can easily be 10 times as high as the citywide average demand.

Hence, even if the per-kilowatt cost were the same for the off-grid homeowner and the utility, the homeowner’s equipment cost is guaranteed to be much higher than the utility’s equipment cost for the same household.

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Regulations Cause Unintended Consequences

By Samuel Aldrich and Jay Lehr

Everyone has much to lose if regulatory standards are set beyond those necessary to protect health or ensure minimal unwanted environmental harms. The zealous pursuit of safety is deceptively attractive but has hidden costs when carried too far.

First, the potential benefits of new products are postponed. For example, in today’s regulatory climate the Salk vaccine for polio—which has saved countless American lives since it was first produced in the 1950s—would have been delayed for several years while many persons, mainly children, fell victim to the disease.

Paranoia Has a Cost
As a nation, we have become so paranoid that when one person appeared on Larry King Live and said his wife’s death was caused by a cellular phone, a study was launched almost at once. Purchasers of cellular phones have been paying for the costs of frivolous cell phone litigation and the costs of additional, yet unnecessary, safety research.

There is another hidden cost in that the additional regulatory resources devoted to unnecessary cell phone research have resulted in a slowdown of the regulatory approval process for other beneficial products.

When Businesses Capitulate
Some persons willingly accept risks, as the cost of an anticipated benefit, if they are given the freedom to choose. When government begins imposing its own value system over people’s right to choose what is in their own best interests, freedom is the victim. Personal choices are sacrificed to government’s “more enlightened” view of what is best for each person.

The natural tendency of a business or industry is to resist regulations that it believes are unnecessary or unwise. But as the power of the environmental activist movement grows, there is a disturbing trend for industries to decide their best interests dictate that they purchase a seat at the regulatory table rather than fight.

The McDonald’s fast food chain bowed to pressure generated by environmental activists and switched from plastic to paper containers. They gave up the polystyrene foam because it was costing too much to fight the anti-plastic groups.

The conversion to paper actually required a greater input of energy, which harmed McDonald’s and society at large. Moreover, the shift to paper angered environmental activist groups that oppose tree harvesting.

Favor Big Companies
A mom-and-pop dry cleaner is required to complete and file the same number of onerous forms as dry cleaner conglomerates. It is a tremendous competitive advantage for the larger company to accept onerous regulation if it alone among its competitors has sufficient income to buy the professional legal assistance needed to bear the paperwork burden.

Of course, giant corporations retain specialists in Washington, DC to inform them of potential new regulations. Occasionally, awareness of impending changes gives them valuable lead time over smaller competitors in developing a response.

We do not mean here to criticize bigness, but rather the artificial, government-erected barriers that punish smaller businesses.

“The combination of wealthy environmental activist groups, their willing mouthpieces in the left-leaning media, and a government with endless resources dedicating to gaining and maintaining power present an all too formidable adversary.”

Even when large companies are justifiably inclined to fight unnecessary regulation, there is a limit to how much time and money an industry can be expected to devote to defend a principle. The combination of wealthy environmental activist groups, their willing mouthpieces in the left-leaning media, and a government with endless resources dedicated to gaining and maintaining power present an all too formidable adversary.

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Nuclear
Continued from page 1

at a central depository. With the proposed Yucca Mountain facility unlikely to begin accepting spent fuel for at least another decade, the 1976 law effectively serves as a moratorium against new nuclear power plant construction in the state.

Assembly Leaders Say No
Viewing nuclear power as a more cost-effective means than solar or wind power to meet California’s stringent greenhouse gas reduction laws, DeVore has tried in vain during the past year to have the California Assembly readdress the 1976 law. Although the Public Policy Institute of California reports the state’s voters are evenly split on the construction of new nuclear power plants, Assembly leadership has thwarted any serious consideration of revising the moratorium.

“I came to the conclusion that the Legislature doesn’t want an honest discussion about nuclear power,” said DeVore in the July 17 San Luis Obispo Tribune. DeVore added, “I’m confident we can embark on a vigorous debate about this.”

Taking it to the People
DeVore has begun taking his case straight to the people. California law requires approximately 500,000 signatures to put the initiative on the ballot. DeVore vows to meet the requirement and let voters decide the future of the state’s energy choices.

“We have a myriad of legislation and mandates in this state,” DeVore said in an interview for this article. “We have renewable energy mandates that are not close to being met right now. The same applies for greenhouse gas mandates.

“If you look at the mandates for renewable energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and the mandate to eliminate coal-based power by 2027, you find that the only way to meet these requirements without shutting off the power for California citizens and bankrupting them in the process is to allow for the construction of nuclear power plants,” DeVore continued.

Lower Cost, Emissions
DeVore is quick to answer arguments that nuclear power plants are prohibitively expensive. While real-world data show nuclear power is more expensive than coal-fired power, the current energy mix in California is more expensive than both coal and nuclear.

“Nuclear power is slightly cost-positive relative to California’s current energy mix. If we went all nuclear, we would actually reduce energy costs for California citizens. Even now, California’s energy costs are increasing due to expensive natural gas and solar power comprising more and more of the state’s energy portfolio,” DeVore said.

Tom Tanton, vice president of the Institute for Energy Research, agrees nuclear power is slightly cost-positive. “Nuclear technology is cost-competitive even compared to new coal plants, especially with California’s greenhouse gas statutes,” Tanton said.

“While solar is nice, it remains the single highest cost [source] and cannot supply enough to meet California’s growing demand. Natural gas is also expensive, with potential continued price increases. Nuclear has known costs once the plants are built, adding further to the economically rational choice of nuclear,” Tanton added.

“The great irony in this debate is that if we went all nuclear, we would actually meet our Kyoto Treaty limits for carbon dioxide emissions,” Tanton noted. “Thankfully, California voters are now evenly divided on the question of more nuclear power.”

Optimistic About Success
DeVore realizes he faces an arduous task, but he is eager to take his case directly to the people of California.

“You may see this become the most high-profile fight in the country in the mid-year political battles next year,” DeVore said.

“We are getting support from organized labor. I am encouraged by some of the public comments from Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Dianne Feinstein, and Nancy Pelosi regarding nuclear power. That has not yet translated into support at the local California level, but I am expecting that you will see some legislators from working-class districts come around and support this when they see that support is more widespread and less partisan than people may think,” DeVore added.

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June 2007

Global Average

The global average temperature for June was 0.21°C above normal.

Northern Hemisphere

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Southern Hemisphere

The Southern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.02°C above normal.

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