U.S. Senate Rejects Lieberman-Warner Cap-and-Trade Bill

By Bonner R. Cohen

Supporters of a sweeping plan to address global warming by limiting use of fossil fuels suffered a stinging defeat June 6 when the U.S. Senate rejected a bill intended to create a cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) pulled the bill from the floor after it fell 12 votes shy of the 60 needed to overcome a Republican-led filibuster. The final tally was 48 to 36, with 16 senators, including presumptive presidential nominees Barack Obama (D) and John McCain (R), declining to cast a vote.

CAP-TRADE P. 8

Hansen Says GW Skeptics Should Be Tried

By James M. Taylor

NASA astronomer James Hansen, one of the most visible and vocal proponents of alarmist global warming theory, has called for criminal trials against scientists, corporate executives, and public policy advocates who disagree with him.

HANSEN p. 12

Congress Sees Energy Answer in Oil Shale

By James M. Taylor

Western congressmen, fully aware of rich oil shale resources concentrated in the Badlands of Wyoming, eastern Utah, and extreme western Colorado, are sup-

SHALE p. 6

Poll: Humans Don’t Cause Global Warming

By Cheryl K. Chumley

Fewer than half of Americans polled by the Pew Research Center believe humans are causing global warming, and a declining number even believe the
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For more information, including ways your organization can become a sponsor, or to reserve your place at this exciting event, contact Trevor Martin, vice president of government affairs, at 312-377-4000 or email tmartin@heartland.org.
Environmentalists Oppose New CO2 Scrubber Idea

By Krystle Russin

Scientists at Columbia University are developing a carbon dioxide (CO2) scrubber device that removes one ton of CO2 from the air every day.

While some see the scrubber as an efficient and economical way to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide, many environmentalists are opposing the technology because it allows people to use fossil fuels and emit carbon in the first place.

Mitigates Fossil Fuel Effects

Columbia University physicist Klaus Lackner, who is leading the research team, believes producing a large number of CO2 scrubbers can keep to a minimum any rise in atmospheric CO2 without the economically painful elimination of inexpensive energy sources.

“I’d rather have a technology that allows us to use fossil fuels without destroying the planet, because people are going to use them anyway,” Lackner told the June 1 London Telegraph.

Activists Target Coal

Environmental activist groups such as Greenpeace have consistently opposed similar technologies, such as carbon capture and sequestration, because they do not address what they see as the root of the problem.

On May 5, for example, the activist groups Students Promoting Environmental Action and Save Our Cumberland Mountains demonstrated in Knoxville, Tennessee against carbon sequestration. Repeatedly citing a Greenpeace position paper, they argued eliminating the use of coal, not reducing atmospheric CO2, should be society’s primary goal.

“Our position is we need to start phasing out coal as soon as possible,” said Cathie Bird of Save Our Cumberland Mountains.

“Carbon capture and storage does not make coal clean,” read a banner hoisted by protesters.

“I’d rather have a technology that allows us to use fossil fuels without destroying the planet, because people are going to use them anyway.”

KLAUS LACKNER
PHYSICIST
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Reveals Activists’ Real Motives

Leading energy analysts agreed with the scientists, rather than the protesters.

“If CO2 emission reduction is a goal, then investigating and investing in strategies for capitalizing on our existing infrastructure efficiently and effectively makes more sense than throwing away reasonable options simply because they don’t align with a political philosophy about our energy economy,” said Amy Kaleita, an environmental policy fellow at the Pacific Research Institute.

“This is just one more piece of evidence that environmentalists aren’t concerned about solving a problem,” said Sterling Burnett, a senior fellow at the National Center for Policy Analysis. “Every problem, as they see it, is one way to restrict people’s lifestyles, and if you come up with a technological fix that can solve a problem but doesn’t require sacrifice and lets us go about our business the way we were before, they’re not happy about it, even if it solves the problem.

“No, I don’t know about whether this technology will solve global warming,” said Burnett, “but let’s say it is cost-effective, and let’s assume for the sake of argument that global warming is a real, serious problem that needs to be solved. Then I would argue that this technology may be a good thing.”

Ultimate Goal at Issue

“I think the question is, what is the objective?” asked Erin Baker, an assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, in an interview for this article. “For me, the objective is reducing the harmful effects of climate change. It is going to be extremely challenging to reduce CO2 levels to the point where we can stabilize the stock of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at, say, 550 ppm (parts per million), and this is only a mild goal.

“Most environmentalists would like to see a much more stringent goal,” Baker added. “If we want to have a reasonable chance of achieving this goal, then we need to consider a portfolio of technologies in order to achieve this. This means keeping CCS (carbon capture and storage), nuclear, and biofuels, for instance, on the table.

“If we have some kind of major breakthrough in solar technologies and electricity storage technologies, then we won’t need to rely so heavily on these other technologies. But if we don’t have any breakthroughs and we refuse to use our full arsenal, we will most likely fail to combat climate change and cause economic hardships, especially for the most vulnerable.

“I am not necessarily advocating a full-scale implementation of any of these technologies, but rather that we continue to [research and develop] a wide range of technologies, and not flat-out reject any possibilities,” Baker said.

Krystle Russin (krystle@purepolitics.com) writes from Texas.
EPA Supports Cap-and-Trade at Senate Mercury Hearings

By John Dale Dunn, M.D., J.D.

R eductions in mercury emissions from U.S. power plants should be attained through cap-and-trade mechanisms, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials testified at May 13 hearings before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

During a full day of hearings on the topic, EPA received support from university researchers and power providers. Environmental activist groups opposed the agency’s position.

The committee held the hearings in conjunction with proposed legislation that would address mercury emissions through different strategies. The bills under consideration were S. 906, the Mercury Export Ban Act of 2007; S. 2643, the Mercury Emissions Control Act; and H.R. 1534, the Mercury Export Ban Act of 2007.

Courts Stepping In

In 2005 EPA promulgated rules allowing for a cap-and-trade system to achieve mercury reductions under the Clean Air Act. A February 2008 District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals opinion, Administrator Robert Meyers testified the agency is appealing the appellate court decision. Meyers said the court’s decision was wrong and that the Clean Air Act allows cap-and-trade mechanisms.

“Experts ... noted current environmental mercury levels are neither dangerous nor toxic to humans.”

New Jersey Rules Touted

Lisa Jackson, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, disagreed with the cap-and-trade approach. She described New Jersey’s mercury rules, which are more stringent than federal standards and implemented through command-and-control regulations. Jackson argued EPA should enact federal rules similar to those in New Jersey.

Jackson reported all New Jersey bodies of water are under a mercury advisory. She said the New Jersey rules, which require 90 percent removal of power plant emissions at all 10 New Jersey coal plants, are working. Representatives of the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Defense Fund echoed her sentiments about tightening all emissions and refusing to allow cap-and-trade mechanisms.

Technology Isn’t Ready

Michael Durham, an officer and board member of the Institute of Clean Air Companies; Steven Benson, senior research manager at the University of North Dakota Energy and Environment Research Center; Leonard Levin, technical executive of the Edison Electric Power Research Institute; and Arthur Dungan, president of the Chlorine Institute, all pointed out the advances and challenges of new emission control technologies. Their overall message was that technology cannot yet meet the strict standards the environmental activists seek to impose.

Experts also noted current environmental mercury levels are neither dangerous nor toxic to humans. Others pointed out much of the nation’s ambient mercury is carried here by wind currents from China and would thus be beyond the reach of U.S. rules.

Where’s the Science?

In testimony favoring tighter controls over mercury emissions, witnesses from environmental activist groups argued children and fetuses are put at risk due to mercury exposure. They presented no scientific evidence for this asserted connection.

The lack of evidence went largely unnoticed, as it appeared no one in the room was interested in vetting the science and toxicology behind the asserted health effects, which were the reason to be considering controls in the first place. Instead the focus remained on policy-making and technological advances in mercury emission controls.

Proponents of tougher mercury restrictions often point to two major episodes of extreme mercury exposure to support their argument. The Colex Plant at Oak Ridge, Tennessee released a large amount of mercury into the environment in the 1950s and 1960s, and the Chisso Corporation released a large amount of mercury from the Minamata Bay, Japan facility between 1932 and 1968. Those releases caused health impairments for roughly 3,000 people and resulted in some deaths.

Today, however, U.S. emission limits preclude mercury releases anywhere near what characterized those two major incidents, and the current standards are considered safe by toxicologists.

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Polls: Public Won’t Accept Higher Prices to Fight Warming

By Cheryl K. Chumley

The number of Americans willing to pay higher gas prices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has fallen dramatically in recent months, according to two polls conducted by the nonprofit National Center for Public Policy Research.

Fewer Willing to Pay

In February, the research group found 48 percent of 800 people surveyed would not accept the 50 cent gas tax hike favored by Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, in order to reduce vehicle use and carbon dioxide emissions.

Just three months later, in a May 28 poll conducted by the group, 65 percent of Americans objected to even a penny gas hike.

“Back then [in February], we had a strong plurality” of people opposing higher energy prices for the purpose of fighting global warming,” said David Ridenour, vice president of the National Center. “Now, it’s a clear majority, ... and it stands to reason, as gasoline prices have gone up a lot since February.”

Poor Hurt the Most

Minorities would likely suffer the greatest financial hit from energy policies that cater to global warming concerns, economists observe. That understanding was reflected in the poll findings: 72 percent of blacks and 72 percent of Hispanics opposed paying higher prices for gasoline as an offset for greenhouse gas emissions.

“Basically, when you go to the gas pump and make $100,000 a year, you may moan about the price,” Ridenour said. “But you can afford it. This is anecdotal, but I was at a gas station in a predominantly black neighborhood a couple weeks ago. I filled my tank. The guy right in front of me put in 2.2 gallons and paid $8. When you’re living in a cash economy, this really hurts.”

Other Polls Agree

The National Center poll confirms the results of other recent polls regarding energy prices and global warming. A recent Deloitte survey found only 36 percent of Americans would willingly pay 5 percent higher electric bills to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and only 17 percent of respondents would willingly pay 10 percent higher energy bills to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Deloitte also found 34 percent of Americans would be unwilling to pay even a single penny in higher electric bills to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

U.S. Rep. John Dingell supports a 50 cent federal gas tax hike to get Americans to stop driving.

Cheryl K. Chumley (ckchumley@aol.com) is a 2008-09 Phillips Foundation journalism fellow.
Invasive Milfoil Is Taking its Toll on Minnesota Lake Communities

By James M. Taylor

The Land of Ten Thousand Lakes is quickly becoming the Land of Aquatic Devastation as noxious Eurasian milfoil spreads rapidly across the state.

On June 18, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reported the invasive plant has been found in Upper Mission Lake, about 15 miles north of Brainerd. This brings the number of infested Minnesota lakes to 205 and growing.

Student Essay Describes Harm

Not only is milfoil despoiling Minnesota lakes, it is also having an unexpected effect on Minnesota’s culture. Todd Frie of Osakis won second place in the Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation District “water wisdom” essay contest by describing the negative effects of milfoil on area lakes and communities. Frie’s description of negative milfoil effects infest an entire lake within two years of introduction to the system.

Milfoil, observed Frie, “has many impacts on our lakes. It has less value as a food source for waterfowl than the native plants it replaces. Because it grows so quickly and becomes very dense, small fish have a very high survival rate. However, the larger fish cannot get through easily to get their prey. Thick growth of milfoil also degrades water quality by depleting oxygen levels. The thick beds also restrict recreational uses like swimming, boating, and fishing. They give the appearance that the lake is ‘dead,’” Frie noted. “These thick mats can also cause flooding and they create good habitats for mosquitoes. They can also clog water intakes and result in rotten mats that end up lying on the beaches, which takes away from the natural beauty of the beach.”

“Todd Frie of Osakis won second place in the Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation District ‘water wisdom’ essay contest by describing the negative effects of milfoil on area lakes and communities.”

Lesson from Idaho

As Minnesota communities search for answers to the rapidly spreading milfoil, communities in Idaho offer a roadmap of effective treatment.

Since 2006 the Idaho legislature has allocated funds to battle the milfoil that had been ruining state lakes. Aggressive chemical treatments have successfully eradicated milfoil while leaving native plant and animal species unaffected.

After two years of success with chemical treatments, Bonner County, Idaho launched its first treatments of the year on June 23. The targeted herbicides have dramatically reduced the extent of invasive milfoil. This summer some lakes in the county are being treated for the first time, while some that have been treated in the past will be given smaller amounts of the chemicals to prevent recurrence of the milfoil.

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

A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words...

This new Heartland Policy Study, by law professor Ronald Rychlak, explains how advocates of the alarmist perspective on global warming have manipulated the evidence with charts, graphs, and other visual exhibits designed to “misrepresent data, misleading the public and describing a ‘reality’ unsupported by science.”

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http://www.heartland.org
312/377-4000
‘Drill Now’ Program Catches Fire

By James M. Taylor

Tired of paying $4.00 for gasoline, more than one million people have signed a petition urging the government to allow Americans to “Drill Here, Drill Now, Pay Less.”

The petition, sponsored by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, notes the United States is a net importer of oil not because we don’t have enough oil to meet demand, but because the federal government has ruled off-limits a staggering amount of oil and natural gas reserves.

“The United States has the resources to create its own fuel,” Gingrich notes on his Web site. “For example, the largest domestic resource is oil shale, found in parts of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming in the Green River Formation. According to estimates, this reserve has over a trillion barrels of oil, with 800 billion barrels fully recoverable, or three times the current oil reserves as Saudi Arabia.

“Existing technology and current oil prices prove that extracting domestic oil from shale is both feasible and cost effective, but the Left is blocking attempts to take advantage of this resource,” Gingrich explains.

“Americans truly have a choice—a choice between the Pay More, Send More Money to Foreign Dictators and Cripple America Left and the Produce More, Enjoy More, Pay Less, Strengthen America Center-Right Majority. Make your choice by visiting AmericanSolutions.com,” Gingrich urges.

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Newt Gingrich (right) has launched a petition drive urging the federal government to allow oil drilling in the U.S.

Shale

Continued from page 1

porting legislation to remove federal prohibitions on oil shale recovery.

Energy experts have determined oil shale in the tri-state Badlands region can produce roughly 2 trillion barrels of crude oil. That would equal 500 years’ worth of U.S. oil imports from all countries combined.

Most of the oil shale is located beneath federal government lands, but the government currently does not allow oil shale recovery except in a few limited locations. The Badlands area is believed to be home to more than three-quarters of the world’s oil shale reserves.

Friendly to Environment

Roughly half-a-dozen companies have the technology to extract the oil from shale, and they are prepared to do so in an environmentally friendly manner, they say.

At the National Association of Counties Western Interstate Regional conference May 23 in St. George, Utah, Laura Nelson, Ph.D. described some of the latest environmentally friendly technology.

According to Nelson, a former energy advisor to Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman (R), new technology allows companies to heat the shale at relativelylow temperatures underground and thereby coax the oil to the surface without disturbing groundwater aquifers.

EcoShale, the company that developed the technology, is able to extract the oil and restore the land to its original state in much less time than can happen with conventional mining.

U.S. Sens. Ken Salazar and Mark Udall oppose oil shale exploration in the U.S.

Ban Blocks Recovery

In 2007, Sen. Ken Salazar (D-CO) and Rep. Mark Udall (D-CO) pushed through Congress a ban on federal oil shale development. Rep. Chris Cannon (R-UT) has introduced the Oil Shale Opportunity Act, which would cut through red tape and allow President George W. Bush or his successor to bypass administrative rulemaking and allow oil shale exploration and production on federal lands.

Other Western congressmen, including Sen. Wayne Allard (R-CO), also support efforts to tap the nation’s oil shale reserves, but their preferred approach is to free the federal government to undergo rulemaking regarding oil shale production.

Cannon is not shying away from taking on those in Congress who imposed the ban on oil shale production.

“We suspect the voters in their districts can put pressure on them to do something about high energy prices,” said Cannon in the June 10 Salt Lake Tribune. “And this is, by far, the best thing.”

Economic Arguments Refuted

In defending their ban on federal action, Salazar and Udall assert companies will not seek to produce oil shale unless oil prices remain more than $100 per barrel over an extended period of time.

“Even after $10 billion of research and development, nobody has figured an economical way to get it out,” said Salazar in the June 10 Salt Lake Tribune.

Nelson, who is vice president of energy and environmental development with EcoShale’s parent company, Red Leaf Resources, strongly disagrees.

She shied away from giving a precise crude oil price at which the company could make a profit, but she indicated oil prices are currently well above what is necessary for the company to begin large-scale oil shale recovery.

“We can produce oil from oil shale right now,” Nelson said in an interview for this article. “Our technologies are proven, and they work. We can produce oil economically and in an environmentally friendly manner. Our biggest hurdles are neither economical nor technological; they are policy hurdles.

“If the federal government will simply give us the green light, we can right now begin large-scale production of our vast oil shale resources with minimal impact on the environment,” Nelson continued.

“Energy experts have determined oil shale in the tri-state Badlands region can produce roughly 2 trillion barrels of crude oil. That would equal 500 years’ worth of U.S. oil imports from all countries combined.”

Captures Greenhouse Gases

Nelson also noted oil shale technology allows for very efficient capture and sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions.

“We have the potential to capture and sequester carbon dioxide in a much more economical and efficient manner than conventional oil production,” Nelson said.

James M. Taylor (Taylor@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.
Utility company moves forward to build two new power plants

By Aleks Karnick

The South Carolina Electric & Gas Co. (SCE&G), a South Carolina water and electricity provider, has entered into agreements with Westinghouse and the Shaw Group to build and maintain two new nuclear power plants. Westinghouse and the Shaw Group have submitted applications to the Nuclear Review Committee (NRC) to receive licenses to operate.

Approval of the proposed plants would mark only the second time in the past 30 years that new nuclear power plants have been approved to operate in the U.S., though early-stage plans for new plants are becoming relatively common.

All Options Considered

“We gave consideration to the various types of base-load generation, including natural gas-fired, coal-fired, and nuclear generation,” said SCE&G President Kevin Marsh in an interview for this article. “We evaluated our options based on a number of factors, including cost to build and operate, the importance of maintaining a balanced generation portfolio in terms of fuel diversity, and environmental impact, particularly as it relates to lowering emissions.”

“We determined that the best option for providing our customers with clean, non-emitting reliable energy to meet the growing demand for electricity was to pursue a license to build and operate two new nuclear units at the same location as V.C. Summer Nuclear Station, near Jenkinsville, South Carolina,” Marsh added.

Could Signify Trend

Environmentalists and energy experts are currently touting nuclear energy as a clean alternative to the use of fossil fuels for energy. This comes in the wake of concerns over carbon dioxide emissions and fears about global warming. While fossil fuels are commonly considered the main sources of manmade carbon dioxide emissions, nuclear power produces no carbon dioxide.

“The building of two new power plants in South Carolina may signify a trend in public opinion on nuclear power,” said Ronald Bailey, science correspondent for the Reason Foundation. “But the truth of the matter is that I have concerns about the economic viability of nuclear power.”

“We determined that the best option for providing our customers with clean, non-emitting reliable energy to meet the growing demand for electricity was to pursue a license to build and operate two new nuclear units ...”

KEVIN MARSH
PRESIDENT
SOUTH CAROLINA ELECTRIC & GAS CO.

Subsidies Distorting Market

It remains more expensive to produce nuclear power than it is to produce power from coal, Bailey noted.

With public opinion swinging in favor of nuclear power as a solution to the energy crisis, Bailey warns federal government subsidies hide some of the cost of nuclear power. Even so, nuclear power is significantly less expensive than other alternative power sources such as wind and solar power.

“There are no truly free markets in energy any more—every form of energy is bound up and distorted by a series of interlocking subsidies,” said Bailey. “Nuclear power is safe, from an environmental perspective, but I am not sure it is the cheapest energy source for the future.”

Aleks Karnick (akarnick@umail.iu.edu) writes from Indianapolis, Indiana.
Cap-Trade
Continued from page 1

Long Way to Go
With President George W. Bush threatening to veto the bill, there was no chance the American Climate Security Act would be enacted this year. Instead, debate on the bill was seen by people on both sides of the issue as a dress rehearsal for a renewed clash over global warming policy next year.

Supporters of greenhouse gas restrictions found it impossible to overcome concern over soaring energy prices across the United States and the additional costs a cap-and-trade system would impose on consumers and industry.

The chaotic circumstances surrounding the bill’s demise strongly suggest proponents of a far-reaching climate change bill still are a long way from reaching their goal, analysts say.

Introduced by Sens. Joe Lieberman (I-CT) and John Warner (R-VA), the bill would have established what its supporters say is a “market-based” system similar to the one adopted by the European Union a few years ago.

The legislation would have capped the amount of carbon dioxide that electric utilities, manufacturers, and other firms would be allowed to release into the air. If companies emitted more than their cap allowed, they would have to buy “carbon allowances” in a government-created market from companies that had extra ones to sell.

“Supporters of greenhouse gas restrictions found it impossible to overcome concern over soaring energy prices across the United States and the additional costs a cap-and-trade system would impose on consumers and industry.”

Plentiful Pork
Because such schemes inevitably create winners and losers among U.S. businesses, the bill’s sponsors loaded it up with goodies in the hope of gaining the support of affected industries and communities.

Those provisions included, but were not limited to, $802 billion in “relief” for low-income taxpayers, $190 billion for training for “green-collar jobs” to replace jobs lost in “losing” industries, $288 billion for “wildlife adaptation,” $342 billion for “international aid,” and $171 billion for mass transit.

Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, estimated the amount of taxpayer largesse the plan would spread throughout the U.S. economy allegedly to ease the cost of the transition would be a whopping $3.42 trillion over the next four decades.

Economic Disaster
Just as the Senate was preparing to consider the 150-page Lieberman-Warner bill, Boxer prevailed on Reid to replace it with her substitute measure, which ran to a staggering 491 pages. Minority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) then forced the clerk of the Senate to read out loud all 491 pages, an exercise that took nearly nine hours of the Senate’s time.

Boxer’s substitute bill mandated a 66 percent reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2050, a goal the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated would reduce the nation’s gross domestic product (GDP) by between $1 trillion and $2.8 trillion over the next 42 years.

EPA’s analysis confirmed an observation made by economist Robert Samuelson in the Washington Post on June 2. “If we suppress emissions,” he wrote, “we also suppress today’s energy sources, and because the economy needs energy, we suppress the economy.”

Democrats Defect
Fearing they might be blamed for massive economic disruptions resulting from a cap-and-trade system designed specifically to suppress emissions, a growing number of Democrats began expressing doubts about the Lieberman-Warner-Boxer legislation before the vote was called.


Brown was one of 10 Democratic senators who expressed opposition to the bill in a letter to Reid and Boxer. They pointed out they were “Democrats from regions of the country that will be most immediately affected by climate legislation.”

They explained they could not support the bill “in its present form” because it would impose “undue hardship on our states, key industrial sectors, and consumers.”

Lack of Global Burden
Brown’s reference to unilateral disarmament underscores a complaint lawmakers from both parties have expressed regarding Kyoto-style plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Developing countries, including such major emitters as China, the world’s leading emitter of greenhouse gases, and India, are exempt from any mandates to cut their emissions.

China and India, in particular, have been forthright in refusing to hurt their growing economies for the sake of combating global warming. On the day before the cap-and-trade bill collapsed, Namo Narain Meena, India’s minister of state for environment and forests, made his country’s position clear. “India is struggling to bring millions of people out of poverty,” he said. “We cannot accept binding commitments to cut down greenhouse gas emissions.”

Organizational Differences
Environmental activist groups spent millions of dollars on advertising promoting the cap-and-trade bill. And while its defeat in this session of Congress was not unexpected, the defection of a growing number of Democrats points to potential problems in the future. Democratic Senate staffers were unspiring in their criticism of Boxer’s handling of the bill, which, they grumbled, turned a defeat into a rout.

Opponents of the bill, by contrast, praised Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK), the ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, for having lawmakers on his side well prepared for the battle they ultimately won.

“When the defeat of the Lieberman-Warner bill was not unexpected, the margin of defeat was larger than expected,” said Sterling Burnett, a senior fellow at the National Center for Policy Analysis.

“Also, the margin of defeat would have been [even] larger if many Democrats had been forced to vote up or down on the actual bill. The margin of defeat shows global warming alarmists have actually lost ground since the Senate last addressed the issue.”

Unacceptable Costs
The economic climate surrounding the debate could hardly have been more unfavorable for the bill’s supporters. Unemployment in the United States reached 5.5 percent in May, up from 5.0 percent in April and 4.5 percent last June, and the price of regular gasoline at the pump rose above $4 per gallon in early June.

Further poisoning the atmosphere for aggressive action on global warming was a June 6 report issued by the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA), which concluded people around the world would have to invest $45 trillion in energy during the next 40 years and build 32 nuclear power plants every year and 17,500 wind turbines every year in order to reduce greenhouse gases by 50 percent by 2050.

The agency also said the cost of emissions, set by carbon taxes or cap-and-trade schemes, would have to rise to $200 a ton to make investments in technologies such as hydrogen-fueled vehicles commercially viable. The price of emissions in the European Union’s trading scheme is currently $43.

Unwilling to ask their constituents to bear additional energy-related burdens in an election year, lawmakers chose to put off a decision on climate change to next year—at the earliest.

Bonner R. Cohen (bonnercohen@comcast.net) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.
Global Warming Game Tells Children They Should Die

By Maureen Martin and Aleks Karnick

Are global warming alarmists encouraging children to commit suicide because their carbon footprints supposedly are harming the planet?

It certainly appears so in a children’s game concocted by the state-funded Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s Science Department, available online.

‘Pigs’ Should Die Young

The game is called Planet Slayer. Using it, children can calculate their carbon footprint—how much impact their carbon emissions allegedly have on global warming. The purpose for doing so, children were told in a version of the game that was online in early June, is so they can “find out what age you should die at so you don’t use more than your fair share of Earth’s resources.” The game now asks only, “are you a carbon hog?”

After answering 11 lifestyle questions, children click on a skull and crossbones. If a child is an “average” greenhouse “pig” or worse, the cartoon pig explodes into pieces, and its blood drains from its body and pools on the floor. Average “pigs,” according to the site, should die at 9.3 years old. The worst possible “pigs” should die at 1.3 years old.

“It is an insensitive game. It implies that it is better for the planet that children die before they can grow up to harm the environment.”

RONALD BAILEY
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT
REASON FOUNDATION

“It is an insensitive game,” said Ronald Bailey, science correspondent for the Reason Foundation. “It implies that it is better for the planet that children die before they can grow up to harm the environment.”

Sends ‘Cruel’ Message

Skaidra Smith-Heisters, environmental policy analyst for the Reason Foundation, says the game is a failure at educating children about the environment.

“Planet Slayer’s greenhouse gas calculator reflects a morbid egalitarianism that is disturbing enough when it is applied uncritically in adult audiences,” said Smith-Heisters.

“The Planet Slayer Web site’s message to children is cruel and unhelpful,” Smith-Heisters continued. “I hate to imagine what the long-term lesson for a 10- or 11-year-old is if they’re told they should have died when they were nine. Making people feel powerless and worthless is certainly not a productive social strategy.

“Rather than trying to scare children, who don’t make either policy decisions or even household economic decisions in the first place, we should be teaching them basic science and principles of fair play,” Smith-Heisters concluded.

Better Message Available

Bailey says this manner of teaching children about the environment is ill-advised. Instead, he recommends people invest in teaching children about how the environment can be improved through the millions of individual consumer choices that make up a free market.

“Instead of encouraging kids to commit suicide as a way to protect the environment, we should teach them that the natural environment in rich countries is actually improving,” Bailey said.

“For example, the air and water are getting cleaner, and forests are expanding,” said Bailey. “[We should] teach kids that free markets increase productivity and spur technological progress so that people can use less and thus spare more land and water for nature. The prosperity that comes from economic growth reduces the size of people’s environmental footprints.”

This isn’t the first time global warming alarmists have used children to spread fear about the future. A California sixth-grade teacher recently force-fed his class a stack of articles predicting a variety of catastrophes if human carbon dioxide emissions are not reduced radically. The children wrote angry letters to The Heartland Institute, fretting they would all be dead in 10 years.

Both the sixth-graders’ teacher and the Planet Slayer game have been paid for by taxpayers.

Maureen Martin (martin@heartland.org) is senior fellow for legal affairs at The Heartland Institute. Aleks Karnick (akarnick@umail.iu.edu) writes from Indianapolis, Indiana.

INTERNET INFO

More Global Cooling Ahead, Study Says

By Bonner R. Cohen

Natural variations in climate, driven by shifting ocean currents, could lead to another decade of cooling global temperatures, according to a peer-reviewed study in the scientific journal Nature.

“The cooling temperatures would add to an ongoing cooling trend that has held sway for the past decade. Researchers at the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences in Kiel, Germany believe the average temperature of the sea around Europe and North America will cool slightly over the next decade while the tropical Pacific will remain unchanged.”


“Our prediction is that there will be no warming until 2015 but it will pick up after that,” Keenlyside told the London Daily Telegraph for an April 30 story.

Keenlyside and his fellow researchers acknowledge the lack of adequate subsurface ocean temperature data continues to constrain the ability of scientists to make reliable predictions of future trends. To overcome this disadvantage, his group used only sea surface temperatures (SST) and performed retrospective decadal predictions using a new climate model.

That approach, they believe, enables them to make routine decadal climate predictions.

“(Oliver) the next decade,” Keenlyside and his colleagues write, “the current Atlantic meridional overturning circulation will weaken to its long-term mean; moreover, North Atlantic SST and European and North American surface temperatures will cool slightly, whereas tropical Pacific SST will remain almost unchanged. Our results suggest that global surface temperature may not increase over the next decade, as natural climate variations in the North Atlantic and tropicalPacific temporarily offset the projected anthropogenic warming.”

Cooling Trend Continues

The overall global temperature has been gradually decreasing since 1998, which was the warmest year since the end of the Little Ice Age a little more than 100 years ago. If the Keenlyside study is correct, the ongoing cooling will have lasted for roughly 20 years by the time it ends. Global temperatures also cooled between 1945 and 1977, a period of 30 years.

Thus Keenlyside’s study indicates cooling temperatures will have dominated 50 of the 70 years since 1945, once the current cooling trend comes to an end.

Scientists have known for some time currents in the North Atlantic move warm water north and carry cooled water south, but they do so in fluctuations. The mechanisms driving this circulation, particularly the subsurface ones, are still poorly understood, the report pointed out.

Computer Model Questioned

Although the influence of ocean currents on the climate is a promising field of research, the Nature study may amount to less than meets the eye, some analysts say. Far from breaking new ground, the study is yet another computer-model-driven exercise, which skeptics consider to be of questionable scientific value.

“It looks like all the authors did was look at predicted temperature changes over a smaller time scale—one decade—without questioning, undermining, or changing any of the basic relationships between greenhouse gas concentrations and average global temperatures used to support anthropogenic activities as the overriding force behind global warming,” said David Lewis, director of the Georgia-Oklahoma Center for Environmental Research and visiting scientist with the Department of Marine Sciences at the University of Georgia.

“The study is just saying that ocean currents over the next decade are not going to move as much heat away from the equator,” Lewis added. “That’s not the same as saying that not as much heat will be trapped in the oceans and the atmosphere as predicted by the greenhouse gas effect—which would mean that some other mechanism is more important.”

Bonner R. Cohen (bonnercohen@comcast.net) is a senior fellow with the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

INTERNET INFO


Cold Temperatures Continue to Batter United States

By James M. Taylor

Cooling temperatures sent the United States into a deep freeze during the first half of 2008, resulting in some extraordinary weather events.

On June 10, snow blanketed the campus of Washington State University at Pullman, Washington, calling to mind the infamous “Year Without a Summer” in 1816, when occasional snow hit the United States well into summer, resulting in major crop failures.

Aspen, Colorado decided to reopen its ski resort slopes in mid-June, reporting a snow base up to three feet deep well after the resort normally closes for the season.

A mid-June snowstorm also hit the suburbs of Seattle, with snowfall reported at elevations as low as 3,000 feet.

“Seattle just experienced the coldest first week of June, according to climate records dating to 1891,” the Seattle Times reported on June 9. “Just wait until tomorrow,” when the temperatures would be even colder, the Times quoted a local meteorologist as saying.

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Cold Temperatures Continue to Batter United States

Persistent Cold Across Nation

The unusual snow and cold in Pullman, Aspen, and Seattle were part of a pattern of atypical snow and cold that has persisted throughout 2008.

Meteorologist Joe D’Aleo, executive director of the International Climate and Environmental Change Assessment Project (ICECAP), reports the nation’s march through May snowfall temperatures were the 36th coldest since records were taken in the 1800s.

The cold spring followed an even colder winter, during which January and February temperatures were more than half a degree Celsius colder than in the same period in 2007. Over the 100 years of the twentieth century, global temperatures rose only 0.6 degrees Celsius.

James M. Taylor (taylor@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for The Heartland Institute and managing editor of Environment & Climate News.
Scientists Predict Fewer Hurricanes as a Result of Global Warming

By John Dale Dunn, M.D., J.D.

Global warming is likely to reduce the number of hurricanes that occur each year, according to two new studies by forecasters who previously claimed global warming would cause more hurricanes.

Knutson: Fewer Hurricanes

Global warming is not to blame for the spike in hurricanes that occurred earlier this decade, research meteorologist Tom Knutson reported in the June issue of Nature Geoscience. Knutson also reported global warming will likely reduce the number of future hurricanes.

According to Knutson, the number of Atlantic Ocean hurricanes will decline by 18 percent by the end of the century, and the number of those making North American landfall will decline by 30 percent. The number of the most powerful storms—those with winds over 110 miles per hour—will decline by 8 percent.

The study further predicts hurricanes and tropical storms will become somewhat wetter, which may be welcome news to southeastern states that endure periodic droughts, particularly during the summer/fall hurricane season.

Emanuel: Atlantic Reprieve

The Emanuel study follows one published by prominent global warming alarmist Kerry Emanuel and two other scientists.

The Emanuel study, published in the March 2008 issue of the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, concluded, “A new technique for deriving hurricane climatologies from global data, applied to climate models, indicates that global warming should reduce the global frequency of hurricanes, though their intensity may increase in some locations.”

The study comes as a tremendous reprieve for those who otherwise would be stoked media fears of global warming causing more hurricanes.

Emanuel ran several computer models designed to recreate past hurricane activity. He then used that past hurricane behavior, along with global warming computer models developed by the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to predict future hurricane activity.

According to the study, “The model consensus has slightly decreased frequency of events in the Caribbean and in the western portion of the Atlantic main development region.”

Regarding the intensity of future storms, Emanuel reports the models are split. Some indicate hurricane and tropical storm intensity will remain stable or decline, whereas others predict the storms’ overall intensity will increase somewhat. Emanuel sided with the models suggesting more intensity, but he acknowledged large uncertainties remain.

Municipal Wireless Scuttled in California City Amid ‘Misplaced’ Public Health Concerns

By Aleks Karnick

Plans for a municipal wireless network in Sebastopol, California have been abandoned amid growing concern in the community over wi-fi as a public health danger.

Sebastopol had contracted with Sonicnet to provide wi-fi across the city, but the city council unanimously voted in late March to rescind the agreement. Many Sebastopol residents expressed fears about the health effects of wi-fi signals, prompting the city council’s decision.

Concerns Groundless

Sonic.net says the concerns are groundless.

“The city council has left the door open to further dialog on the topic at a later date,” Jasper said. “Now that the more moderate portion of the populace has found its voice, I am presuming that they feel they have more support for a wi-fi network.”

Agreeing with Jasper, Sebastopol City Councilman Larry Robinson said he hopes to continue negotiations at some point.

“I take seriously the fears of some of our citizens and respect their concerns, although I believe that their fears regarding wi-fi are misplaced,” Robinson said. “I have seen no peer-reviewed scientific studies that indicate a health hazard.”

“This August I will reintroduce a resolution approving a contract with Sonic.net to provide free wi-fi access in our downtown,” Robinson continued. “If at some point in the future evidence emerges of a health hazard, we will certainly reconsider. Until then, free access for those who otherwise would not be able to afford it is my overriding interest.”

Scholars Say No Threat

Policy analysts say the health risks associated with wi-fi are not an important consideration when crafting policy about municipal wi-fi systems.

“These risks don’t exist,” said Steven Titch, a policy analyst at the Reason Foundation. “Although a study purporting to link health risks to wi-fi received substantial play in the UK press, it was soon exposed for the junk science it was. Aside from that, no study has ever shown there is potential for harm from exposure to the radio frequencies that cellular phones and wi-fi Internet connections use.”

INTERNET INFO


Aleksandrs Karnick (akarnick@umail.iu.edu) writes from Indianapolis, Indiana.
Saying skeptics of global warming alarmism are guilty of “crimes against humanity”—the same charge leveled against notorious mass murderers Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein, and high-ranking Nazis in the Nuremberg trials—Hansen bemoaned the “natural skepticism and debates embedded in the scientific process.”

Hansen made his remarks, quoted in the UK Register, a day before he appeared at an informal Capitol Hill briefing and addressed a media event hosted by the Worldwatch Institute, an environmental activist group.

At the June 23 Worldwatch Institute event commemorating the 20-year anniversary of his first appearance before Congress, Hansen made several scientifically dubious predictions he alleged were more than 99 percent certain to happen. Disagreeing with Hansen on any of these would apparently justify criminal prosecution and a potential death sentence.

**Dubious Predictions**

Hansen claimed immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is necessary to prevent “the climate system from passing tipping points that lead to disastrous climate changes that spiral dramatically out of humanity’s control.”

The world’s leading climate scientists disagree.

According to a 2005 survey of more than 500 of the world’s leading climate scientists, by German scientists Dennis Bray and Hans von Storch, only a minority believe “assuming climate change will occur, it will occur so suddenly that a lack of preparation could result in devastation of some areas of the world.”

Hansen asserted the Western Antarctic represents an “ominous tipping point” for global warming because its ice sheets are vulnerable to melting. In its most recent climate assessment, however, the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicted Antarctica will gain ice this century.

“The effective public policy outcome being urged by [James Hansen and Al Gore], in the name of a contrived ‘planetary emergency,’ boils down to the criminalization of the American Dream and the deaths of millions in the underdeveloped nations.”

ROBERT FERGUSON, PRESIDENT
SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Hansen repeated his assertion, first made 20 years ago, that global warming is causing more droughts. Numerous peer-reviewed scientific studies have come to the opposite conclusion.

For example, the May 25, 2006 Geophysical Research Letters reports for twentieth century soil moisture trends, “An increasing trend is apparent in both model soil moisture and runoff over much of the U.S.” The study adds, “This wetting trend is consistent with the general increase in precipitation in the latter half of the 20th century. Droughts have, for the most part, become shorter, less frequent, and cover a smaller portion of the country over the last century.”

**Where’s the Warming?**

Hansen’s global warming alarmism has been further undermined by real-world temperature data, measured by NASA satellites, showing essentially no warming in the 20 years since his initial testimony. Meteorologist Joe D’Aleo, executive director of the International Climate and Environmental Change Assessment Project (ICECAP), published the accompanying chart of the Earth’s temperature, measured by NASA.

**Criminalizing Prosperity**

“James Hansen, like Al Gore, is in the forefront of seeking for the first time in U.S. history a public policy of denying future generations the prosperity, personal liberties, and lifespan of the current generation,” said Robert Ferguson, president of the Science and Public Policy Institute.

“The effective public policy outcome being urged by those two, in the name of a contrived ‘planetary emergency,’ boils down to the criminalization of the American Dream and the deaths of millions in the underdeveloped nations.

“Not just our economy but our entire civilization is based on abundant, inexpensive energy,” Ferguson added. “Currently, only fossil fuels can safely provide this, and Hansen advocates criminalization of it all.”

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

**INTERNET INFO**


Scientific Consensus on Global Warming, The Heartland Institute: http://heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=20731
By John Dale Dunn, M.D., J.D.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R) has vetoed a bill that would have banned the chemical bisphenol-A from products that come into contact with children.

Proponents of the ban claim the chemical causes reproductive harm in laboratory rats, but numerous scientific studies show no such adverse health harms if the chemical is somehow digested by humans.

**Bisphenol-A Benefits**

Bisphenol-A is an important component in plastic products because it provides desired texture and flexibility. It is a common component of baby bottles and other infant products, giving parents an alternative to glass items that might break and expose a child to harm from glass shards.

In addition to baby products, plastics now take the place of metals, paper, wood products, and other less safe and less durable materials for the packaging of grocery purchases and consumer goods. In the medical field, doctors and nurses no longer use glass syringes and bottles, instead using disposable plastic products that reduce infections, failures, and breakage.

“The American Council on Science and Health published an extensive study of bisphenol-A in 2004, reaffirming the safety of the product. Studies by the European Union’s Food Safety Authority, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and others have similarly found no significant adverse health risks associated with bisphenol-A.”

**No Harm to Humans**

Research shows laboratory rats forced to consume extremely high amounts of bisphenol-A have developed some reproductive difficulties. On this basis, proponents of the chemical are seeking to ban it, especially in products that come into contact with children.

However, scientists note humans do not consume bisphenol-A. Moreover, even if a person does somehow digest the chemical, humans process it in a very different and more efficient manner than rats do, cleansing it from the human body within a day.

Numerous scientific studies show no significant correlations between bisphenol-A and any alleged human health problems.

The American Council on Science and Health published an extensive study of bisphenol-A in 2004, reaffirming the safety of the product. Studies by the European Union’s Food Safety Authority, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and others have similarly found no significant adverse health risks associated with bisphenol-A.

**Politics Take Over**

Despite these analyses, bisphenol-A opponents are not giving up their crusade to ban the product. A small group of U.S. senators is attempting to impose national restrictions on the use of the chemical. Sens. Charles Schumer (D-NY), John Dingell (D-MI), and Bart Stupak (D-MI) have announced plans to bring the issue to a head in the Senate, even though the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other scientific bodies have extensively studied the chemical and found no significant human health risks.

Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, president of the American Council on Science and Health, praised Pawlenty for his May veto.

“We at the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) wish to express our admiration for your sound, science-based decision to veto the bill that would have banned certain chemicals from children’s products and consumer goods in Minnesota,” wrote Whelan in a May 15 letter to Pawlenty. “Of course, we also offer our support of your efforts to prevent this counterproductive ban, which has absolutely no basis in scientific evidence, from being passed over your veto.”

“There is no evidence at all—none—that human beings of any age or developmental stage have been harmed in any way by common exposure to [bisphenol-A],” said Dr. Gilbert Ross, medical director for ACSH. “Even workers using the chemical in manufacturing have not been shown to have suffered any harm. The fact that rodents suffer at high doses of the chemical has nothing to do with human health: The same animal tests performed on natural chemicals we eat and drink every day give the same ‘toxicity’ results.”

“If we consistently banned substances based on these tests, we’d be left with nothing at all, natural or manmade,” Ross noted.

**Is Your Child Being Educated or Indoctrinated?**

The British High Court has ruled that Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* is partisan propaganda and contains at least 11 scientific errors. It ruled the film should not be shown in classrooms unless accompanied by a document pointing out the scientific errors. The Court also ruled classroom time should be given for presenting an alternative view.

Is your child being forced to watch Al Gore’s propaganda film? If so, you should:

- Call 312/377-4000 and request a free copy of *Education or Indoctrination? Al Gore in the Classroom*, a collection of background readings produced by The Heartland Institute.
- Talk to your child’s teacher, and if necessary the principal, and ask them to remove Gore from the classroom or provide students an alternative view.
- If your child’s teacher or principal isn’t responsive, contact Maureen Martin, senior fellow for legal affairs for The Heartland Institute, at martin@heartland.org, for free legal assistance.

Because schools are for learning, not politics.

John Dale Dunn, M.D., J.D. (jddmdjd@web-access.net) is a member of the civilian emergency medicine faculty at the Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood Texas, and a policy advisor for The Heartland Institute and the American Council on Science and Health.

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*By John Dale Dunn, M.D., J.D.*

Minneapolis Gov. Tim Pawlenty vetoed a controversial ban on the chemical bisphenol-A. Research has consistently shown the chemical poses no threat to human health.
Despite what many global warming alarmists assert in the media, there are many articles in the world’s leading science publications contradicting the assertion that “the debate is over” about global warming. These articles destroy the illusion that there is a “consensus” among scientists about the causes of global warming. The following is the second of a three-part list of many such articles.

Compiled by Peter Risdon.

**’Hockey Stick’**
Proxy climatic and environmental changes of the past 1000 years (Climate Research, vol. 23, 89-110, January 2003) - Willie Soon, Sallie Baliunas


The M&M Critique of the MBH98 Northern Hemisphere Climate Index: Update and Implications (Energy & Environment, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 69-100, January 2005) - Stephen McIntyre, Ross McKitrick


Reply to comment by Huybers on “Hockey sticks, principal components, and spurious significance” (Geophysical Research Letters, vol. 32, October 2005) - Stephen McIntyre, Ross McKitrick

Reply to comment by von Storch and Zorita on “Hockey sticks, principal components, and spurious significance” (Geophysical Research Letters, vol. 32, October 2005) - Stephen McIntyre, Ross McKitrick

Highly variable Northern Hemisphere temperatures reconstructed from low- and high-resolution proxy data (Nature 433, 613-617, February 2005) - Anders Moberg, Dmitry M. Sonechkin, Karin Holmgren, Nina M. Dansen and Wibjorn Karlén

Comment on “The Spatial Extent of 20th-Century Warmth in the Context of the Past 1200 Years” (Science, vol. 316, no. 5835, p. 1844, June 2007) - Gerd Bürger

A 2000-year global temperature reconstruction based on non-tree-ring proxies (Energy & Environment, vol. 18, nos. 7-8, pp. 1049-1058, December 2007) - C. Loehle

**Hurricanes**


Comments on “Impacts of CO2-Induced Warming on Simulated Hurricane Intensity and Precipitation: Sensitivity to the Choice of Climate Model and Convective Scheme” (Journal of Climate, vol. 18, issue 23, December 2005) - Patrick J. Michaels, Paul C. Knappenberger, Christopher Landsea

Counting Atlantic Tropical Cyclones Back to 1900 (Transactions of the American Geophysical Union, vol. 88, no. 18, p. 197, 2007) - Christopher W. Landsea


**Kyoto**
Time to ditch Kyoto (Nature 449, 973-975, 25 October 2007) - Gwyn Prins, Steve Rayner

**Medieval Warm Period/Little Ice Age**

Coherent High- and Low-Latitude Climate Variability During the Holocene Warm Period (Science, vol. 288, no. 5474, pp. 2198 - 2202, 23 June 2000) - Peter deMenocal, Joseph Ortiz, Tom Guilderson, Michael Sarnthein


Evidence for the existence of the medieval warm period in China (Climate Change, vol. 26, nos. 2-3, March, 1994) - De’Er Zhang

Glacial geological evidence for the medieval warm period (Climate Change, vol. 26, nos. 2-3, March, 1994) - Jean M. Grove, Roy Switsur

Late Holocene surface ocean conditions of the Norwegian Sea (Voring Plateau) (Paleoceanography, vol. 18, no. 2, 1044, 2003) - Carin Andersson, Bjørn Risebrobakken, Eystein Jansen, Svein Olaf Dahl


Medieval Warm Period, Little Ice Age and 20th century temperature variability from Chesapeake Bay (Global and Planetary Change, vol. 36, issues 1-2, March 2003, Pages 17-29) - T. M. Cronin, G. S. Dwyer, T. Kamiya, S. Schwede, D. A. Willard

The Little Ice Age and Medieval Warm Period in the Sargasso Sea (Science, vol. 274, no. 5292, pp. 1503 - 1508, 29 November 1996) - Lloyd D. Keigwin


The ‘Medieval Warm Period’ drought recorded in Lake Huguanuyan, tropical South China (Holocene, vol. 12, no. 5, pp. 511-516, 2002) - Guoqiang Chu, Jiqiu Liu, Qing Sun, Houyuan Lu, Zhaoyan Gu, Wenyyuan Wang, Tungsheng Liu


Torneträsk tree-ring width and density ad 500-2004: a test of climatic sensitivity and a new 1500-year reconstruction of north Fennoscandia

CONTINUED on right
Celestial driver of Phanerozoic climate?

A mechanism for sun-climate connection (Geophysical Research Letters, vol. 32, 2005) - Sultan Hameed, Jae N. Lee


Celestial Climate Driver: A Perspective from Four Billion Years of the Carbon Cycle (Geoscience Canada, vol. 32, no. 1, March 2005) - Ján Veizer


Phenomenological solar signature in 400 years of reconstructed Northern Hemisphere temperature record (Geophysical Research Letters, vol. 33, L17718, 2006) - N. Scafetta, B. J. West

Possible solar forcing of century-scale drought frequency in the northern Great Plains (Geology, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 263-266, Mar 1999) - Zicheng Yu, Emi Itô


Peter Risdon (prisdon@gmail.com) blogs at http://freebornjohn.blogspot.com.
Debunking Persistent Global Warming Myths

The Politically Incorrect Guide to Global Warming and Environmentalism
By Christopher Horner
Regnery, 2007, 366 pages, $19.95

Review by Jay Lehr, Ph.D.

Comprehensive and persuasive story of how mankind is being fooled by an army of political socialists, anti-capitalist economists, and environmental zealots.

Excuse for Bigger Government

Horner tells us, “Global warming hysteria is truly the environmentalist’s dream come true. It is the perfect storm of demons and perils, and the ideal scare campaign for those who would establish global governance.”

He’s right. Horner shows how, following the spectacular fall of communism, ecology offered liberal-minded people what they longed for: a safe, rational, and peaceful excuse for remaking society and developing a stronger central state. Environmentalism became the anti-freedom vehicle of choice, drawing cash and adoration from leftists in business, Hollywood, media, social elites, and the government. Environmental activism today is one of America’s biggest industries. No longer is David fighting Goliath; David now is the Goliath.

Most pollution issues are local, however, and thus the effects of policies regarding them are relatively confined. Global warming possesses no such weakness—it can link alleged problems in Ohio to those in Paris, thereby demanding global solutions and bypassing sovereignty and democratic practices.

That’s how environmental activists get away with telling us worldwide de-industrialization is critical if we are to live with declining energy consumption.

We are daily told of an alleged “consensus” on the issue—a concept actually foreign to science—and global warming alarmists want to put disbelievers on trial. They want to control our lifestyles without anyone being allowed to question their cause. This book will give you the details about the issue and convey the debate they want to hide from you.

“Horner combines an unusually clear, concise, and humorous writing style with the keen eye and analytical mind of a scientist, enabling him to tell a comprehensive and persuasive story of how mankind is being fooled by an army of political socialists, anti-capitalist economists, and environmental zealots.”

‘People Are Pollution’

Horner shows how the demands placed on business extend from the broadest business decisions to the smallest minutiae, while the green groups operate in a world free from accountability.

Their senior leadership, despite all evidence to the contrary, deeply believes human economic activity is enormously destructive to our planet. Horner observes, “It is important not to glaze over the green antipathy toward people. In the eyes of an environmentalist, people are pollution.”

That is why you must read and distribute this book. Those who consider themselves “environmental activists” sincerely believe human development and prosperity hurt the environment in general and the climate in particular. Busy people relying on superficial, breathless media stories about these issues can hardly help succumbing to this view.

Fortunately, with books such as this, their education and experience will enable them to understand that wealthier is indeed both healthier and cleaner. Despite this correlation between wealth, health, and a clean environment, the greens worship from afar the primitive lifestyle, while those mired in such poverty would do anything to escape it.

Science Under Attack

Nowhere is Horner more brilliant than in convincing the reader of the odious concept of consensus taking root regarding climate science, where alarmists and the rest of the global warming industry assail scientists and other experts with ad hominem campaigns to discredit them.

History, Horner reminds us, is “full of efforts to stifle innovation by reference to unchallengeable authority of consensus.” Galileo and Copernicus come quickly to mind.

Science requires observation—not just selectively pointing to compliant clients or to computer models whose outcomes are directly dictated by the assumptions behind them. Science requires the testing of hypotheses. In other words, science is skepticism; it is the practice of holding out a hypothesis for others to challenge. Real scientists welcome that challenge.

Science Bringing Optimism

Horner repeatedly shows the amusing sides of global warming alarmism, but he also points out with great gravity the alarmists’ desire to use government and law at every level to restrict our freedoms and raise our cost of living with obvious and significant human consequences, all of which are ignored by the prophets of doom. Despite the short-term profits envisioned by the green enablers, we all stand to lose big from their policies.

As the curtain descends on the remnants of scientific inquiry, while governments seek to expand their power further, and while businesses move to profit from people’s gullibility, Horner remains optimistic.

“The future does not have to be like the recent past,” Horner concludes. “Simply opening the debate and holding it in the open air moves the ball from the alarmists’ court—no time for questions, we must act now—to the skeptics’ court.”

“(S)Science is skepticism; it is the practice of holding out a hypothesis for others to challenge. Real scientists welcome that challenge.”

Horner explains how to do that: “Exercise your rights... indeed your duties of inquiry and speech, and demand that the future remain free, and full of energy.”

MIT atmospheric scientist Richard Lindzen, in praising this book, said, “Future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early 21st 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 exaggeration of highly uncertain computer projections combining implausible chains of inference, proceeded to contemplate a rollback of the industrial age.”

Through both the laughter and tears provoked by this book, it can arm a large army to fight our way back to sanity.

Jay Lehr, Ph.D. (lehr@heartland.org) is science director of The Heartland Institute.
CO2 Science DVD Debunks Global Warming Myths

By James M. Taylor

When concerned citizens ask me where they can find the best scientific information on global warming—information the media refuses to report—co2science.org is always near the top of my recommended Web sites.

The Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change (known as CO2Science), which hosts the co2science.org Web site, is Al Gore’s worst nightmare. With three Ph.D. scientists summarizing the latest global warming research reported in the world’s leading scientific journals, co2science.org provides interested laypersons with easily digested information regarding the latest global warming science.

Real Scientists, Real Science

Sherwood Idso, Craig Idso, and Keith Idso, all Ph.D.s, are the father-and-sons combination that comprises CO2Science. They have recently added another weapon to the arsenal of “skeptics” who refuse to believe speculative computer models and their history of failed climate predictions when compared to real-world scientific observations.

In Carbon Dioxide and the “Climate Crisis,” CO2Science has produced a 53-minute DVD that summarizes the science of climate change and critically examines many of the global warming scares presented by the media. And, unlike a famous movie made by a former vice president, CO2Science has real scientists presenting the findings of objective scientific studies.

“The film makes it clear we should not put our faith in computer models that have failed even to reproduce current climate conditions.”

In the DVD, Ph.D. scientists explain how climate models work. With so many variables and uncertainties involved, these models actually have a dismal record of predicting future climate or even simply recreating past climate trends, the scientists note.

Computer models for the past 20 years have predicted an imminent, dramatic increase in global temperatures, and yet the real-world climate continues to defy their speculations. The film makes it clear we should not put our faith in computer models that have failed even to reproduce current climate conditions.

Carbon Dioxide and the “Climate Crisis” tells us what scientific observation has to say about our most likely future climate—and it’s far from what the panicky descriptions based on unreliable computer models say.

Ph.D. scientists shown in the film also present the hard science contradicting alarmists’ assertions that global warming is causing or will soon cause a dramatic increase in extreme weather events, that the polar ice sheets are about to disappear, and that the oceans will soon inundate coastal cities.

Science vs. Hollywood

Without the enormous funds and Hollywood expertise bestowed on the global warming alarmists, it is a daunting task to present a crisp, compelling, cinematic rebuttal to such movies as An Inconvenient Truth. However, if you are looking for a concise, visually appealing rebuttal that presents science and scientists instead of myths and power-hungry politicians, Carbon Dioxide and the “Climate Crisis” is for you.

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

INTERNET INFO

To order Carbon Dioxide and the “Climate Crisis”: http://www.co2science.org/

Warming Poll

Continued from page 1

Earth is experiencing a warming trend.

The survey, conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, finds “roughly half, or 47 percent, of Americans say the Earth is warming because of human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels.”

Nearly as many, 45 percent of respondents, contend the higher Earth temperatures are due to “natural environment patterns,” that no global warming exists, or that causes cannot be scientifically determined.

Seventy-one percent of Americans believe the Earth is warming, down from 77 percent of Americans who held that belief last year. The six percentage point drop parallels falling, and in some parts of the country, record-low, temperatures over the past year that continued a decade-long trend of temperatures remaining flat or falling.

Political Divide

The survey confirmed wide discrepancies in belief between Americans identifying themselves as Democrat or Republican.

Only 27 percent of Republicans surveyed believe humans are causing global warming. By contrast, 58 percent of Democrats blame global warming on humans. Among Republicans, higher education brings even more skepticism. Pew reports “only 19 percent of Republican college graduates say that there is solid evidence that the Earth is warming and it is caused by human activity.” Higher education has the opposite effect on Democrats: 75 percent of Democrats with a higher education believe global warming is caused mostly by humans.

Big Government a Factor

Tom Kilgannon, president of the nonprofit Freedom Alliance, says the reasons for this partisan divide are simple.

“Those on the left are more likely to accept the global warming theory for two reasons,” Kilgannon said. “First, they tend to make public policy decisions based on emotion as a first reaction.”

And second, Kilgannon continued, global warming fits the usual Democrat call for bigger government.

“If they can convince the public that global warming exists, then the left can more easily further its mission of creating more government, particularly at the international level,” Kilgannon said. “What they want are more treaties, more international bureaucracy, and more authority in the hands of the United Nations.”

Science in Dispute

Republicans, meanwhile, are still asking some basic questions that were long ago dismissed by Democrats, such as determining whether “significant global warming [is] actually happening,” and if so, whether “climate changes [are] inherently bad,” noted Paul Teller, deputy director of the U.S. House Republican Study Committee, in an October 2007 policy brief, “Cap-and-Trade Proposals for Greenhouse Gas Emissions.”

“The alarmists have overplayed their hand,” explained Marlo Lewis, senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. “They have warned that the sky is falling too many times, and people look around and see that all these ‘imminent’ crises are not materializing. It is the ‘boy who cried wolf’ syndrome. Now the alarmists are paying the price for too-often misrepresenting the effects of global warming.

“Perhaps the assertion that global warming was causing hurricanes seemed believable in 2005, but taking a step back from the immediacy of Katrina, people now realize the science says it isn’t true,” said Lewis. “In order to sell the global warming agenda, people like Al Gore have had to delve into science fiction. People don’t believe that small increases in global temperature are going to bring on a new global ice age or a wall of water inundating the coastlines.”

Lewis added, “There are many real problems that people face in the world on a daily basis. Higher gasoline prices is one of them, and people realize that not only do the alarmists habitually misrepresent the effects of global warming, but that their proposed solutions will merely make their gasoline prices even higher.”

Cheryl K. Chumley (ckchumley@aol.com) is a 2008-09 Phillips Foundation journalism fellow.

INTERNET INFO

BOOK REVIEW

Author Makes the Case for Urban Life as Environmental Choice

Hybrid Neighborhoods
By John L. Gann Jr.
CarpeHoram, 2007, 38 pages, $9.95

Review by James M. Taylor

I love living where the suburbs meet the country—quiet mornings and evenings, a good-sized backyard in which to play with my children. I see a stand of trees, rather than somebody else’s back porch and trash can, from my bedroom window. How can you top that?

Inducement, Not Coercion

Every so often, activist groups and would-be social planners try to force people like me to move to the city to reduce the number of vehicle miles we travel (although most of my neighbors don’t work in the city anyway) and to create a more concentrated ecological footprint. Always, it seems, their pining for a more concentrated populace is supported more by the threat of laws and regulations than by reason and constructive discourse.

A refreshing departure from such heavy-handed mandates is presented by John L. Gann Jr. in his short book Hybrid Neighborhoods. Gann, an urban development consultant for older communities, presents his case for a more urban society by highlighting the benefits of more concentrated communities and noting how this can translate into financial savings for individuals who undertake the change.

As for me, I still prefer to stay on the rural edge of extended suburbia. But Gann presents his case for more concentrated communities while explicitly respecting the right of Americans to choose for themselves where they want to live, which is rare and commendable.

By not pursuing an underlying agenda to take away my freedom, Gann succeeds where nobody else has—he induced me to read his concentrated-community pitch from cover to cover.

He didn’t convince me to sell my half-acre of bliss, but he does make some observations that might appeal to many readers. After all, we are all unique, and what appeals to me might not appeal to someone else (and vice versa).

“[Author John L.] Gann presents his case for more concentrated communities while explicitly respecting the right of Americans to choose for themselves where they want to live, which is rare and commendable.”

Urban Advantages

Gann begins by stating the obvious: Gasoline prices have risen dramatically in the past few years. A 30-mile drive to work that used to cost you a dollar or two in gas now costs about six dollars each way. And that’s if you are traveling by car, instead of SUV.

Additionally, if you live in or closer to the city, your trips to the grocery store and other destinations are likely to be much shorter, perhaps even within walking distance. Down go your gasoline costs still further.

Yes, houses and yards are smaller in the city, but Gann argues access to public parks makes up for much of this. According to Gann, other benefits are more close-knit communities, more opportunities for your children to make good friends and play with them on a daily basis, and a greater likelihood of exercising and staying in shape via more frequent walks for daily errands and the close proximity of basketball courts and other attractive alternatives to the X-Box.

To Each His Own

Personally, I don’t buy it. I grew up in apartment complexes in or very close to large cities, and while there are some advantages, they’re far from idyllic.

I like being able to fire up a cigar and not have my next-door neighbor gripe about the smoke wafting into his window 10 feet from my back porch. I like having enough distance between my house and the neighbors that I don’t have to listen to somebody else’s kids screaming or the parents yelling back at them. I like the peace and serenity of seeing a fox trot through my backyard at dusk.

“By not pursuing an underlying agenda to take away my freedom, Gann succeeds where nobody else has—he induced me to read his concentrated-community pitch from cover to cover.”

Regardless of the differences in our individual tastes, however, Hybrid Neighborhoods presents strong arguments for urban living in a manner that is not an affront to our personal liberty to decide to live where and how we please.

As such, it is worth reading with an open mind—regardless of whether you consider yourself a city mouse or a country mouse.

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

INTERNET INFO

Hybrid Neighborhoods can be ordered for $9.95 each directly from Carpe Horam, 135 South Hancock Street #201, Madison, WI 53703; phone 866-61-HORAM, email citykid@uwalumni.com.
In March 2008, 500 hundred scientists, engineers, and scholars from the U.S. and around the world converged on New York City to discuss the science and economics of global climate change. Presenters at this unprecedented conference suggest the modern warming is moderate and partly or even mostly a natural recovery from the Little Ice Age; that the consequences of moderate warming are positive for humanity and wildlife; that predictions of future warming are wildly unreliable; and that the costs of trying to “stop global warming” exceed hypothetical benefits by a factor of 10 or more.

And the entire conference is now available online!

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Global Satellite Temperatures

How Much Global Warming?

Each month, Environment & Climate News updates the global averaged satellite measurements of the Earth’s temperature. These numbers are important because they are real—not projections, forecasts, or guesses. Global satellite measurements are made from a series of orbiting platforms that sense the average temperature in various atmospheric layers. Here, we present the lowest level, which climate models say should be warming. The satellite measurements are considered accurate to within 0.01°C. The data used to create these graphs can be found on the Internet at http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/public/msu/t2lt/tltglhmam_5.2

MAY 2008

Global Average

The global average temperature for August was 0.18°C below normal.

Northern Hemisphere

The Northern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.05°C below normal.

Southern Hemisphere

The Southern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.31°C below normal.

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