

The Week That Was: 2010-11-06 (November 6, 2010)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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PLEASE NOTE: The complete TWTW, including the articles, can be downloaded in an easily printable form at the web site: <http://www.haapala.com/sepp/the-week-that-was.cfm>

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Quote of the Week:

If an honest man is wrong, after demonstrating that he is wrong, he either stops being wrong or he stops being honest. – Anonymous

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Number of the Week: 20.1 GWe to 0 GWe

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THIS WEEK:

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

The US news this week was dominated by the elections during which the Republicans won convincing control of the House of Representatives. By the Constitution, the House controls the purse strings of the US government. To a large part, the election was driven by middle class voters who appear to feel disenfranchised by Washington. Because many of the supporters of the “tea party” are not committed to the Republican Party, the Republican hold may be temporary. Nonetheless, we can expect changes in Washington that may have a significant bearing on the scientific and environmental policies of the Federal government.

The general view is that cap-and-trade and energy taxes have no hope in the new Congress. However, there is concern that in spite of the significant losses of energy control politicians, the current Congress may pass a Renewable Electricity Standard (RES). The current Congress will reconvene on November 15 in what is called a “lame duck session” and the new Congress does not assume power until January 3, 2011.

Some members of the science establishment have resorted to denouncing many of the winners as “anti-science” because they do not accept the claim that man’s emissions of carbon dioxide are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming. The accusers often claim that these politicians are misguided by a cabal of deniers funded by the fossil fuel industry. An example of an extreme article is “Professional climate change deniers’ crusade” by Michael Mann, published in *New Scientist*, who declares any challenge to his work is an attack on science. Mr. Mann still does not admit that his “hockey stick” model fails a basic test for verification – it produces a “hockey stick” from white noise. Please see Oh, Mann! below.

Another attack on human caused global warming skeptics is “A New Kind of Crime Against Humanity?” by Donald Brown, an Associate Professor of Climate Ethics at Penn State University. As with similar attacks, Brown is strongly *ad hominem* and weak on facts. That certain entities in the scientific establishment publish such unsubstantiated attacks does not serve the interest of science or the public. Please see the reference to Brown’s web site at Penn State under Defending the Orthodoxy.

California, where the environmental groups won, will continue to exemplify the consequences the energy schemes created by the environmental industry, and their political enablers. Voters defeated a proposal not to implement a massive cap-and-trade scheme until the California unemployment rate falls to 5.5%. The current unemployment rate in California is about 12.4%. During past recessions, California unemployment rate usually was well below the U.S. rate. But in this recession it is well above the US rate of 9.6% -- the highest US sustained rate since the Great Depression.

The American founding fathers believed that states would provide excellent laboratories to test what policies succeed and what do not. The environmental industry told the voters of California that the renewable energy industry (“clean energy”) will lead the state out of its recession. It would be well for other states and the Federal government to wait to see if the experiment is successful.

In spite of the election, bureaucrats in New Mexico approved aggressive cap-and-trade regulations for New Mexico even though voters elected a new governor opposed to such measures. No doubt, there will be major issues when the new governor assumes office.

On a more positive note, according to a publication on its website, the American Physical Society (APS) is planning to form a new Topical Group on the physics of climate. This is largely in response to a petition, organized by APS Fellow Roger Cohen and a few others, and signed by 200 members. A poll of the membership drew some 800 members in support of such a group. At this time it appears that the organizing chair will be Nobel laureate Jerome Friedman of MIT, one of the signers of the Cohen petition. All are to be congratulated for opening up a forum to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the physics of global warming and climate change. Please see Article # 1 below.

Litigation involving SEPP opposing the EPA Endangerment Finding that carbon dioxide endangers public health and welfare is proceeding with glacial speed. However, there are several other litigation issues of interest.

According to a *Washington Post* article, a Federal judge has set December 23 as a deadline for the Interior Department to explain why polar bears were listed as “threatened” and not “endangered.” Of course, polar bear populations are increasing and there is no scientific reason to list them as either. But by obtaining a listing as “threatened” the environmental industry was able to claim that vast areas off the north coast of Alaska should be off limits to oil and natural gas exploration. As suggested in the article, a listing of “endangered” could be used as another means for the Federal government to control carbon dioxide emissions.

According to the *Houston Chronicle*, Texas is the only state that is not establishing regulations for greenhouse gases or allowing EPA to establish them, as EPA asserts it has the power to do under its Endangerment Finding. This may lead to a Texas showdown. Please see referenced articles under EPA and other Regulators.

The Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) is following up its litigation against NASA for the failure of NASA to release information CEI demanded as early as 2007 under the Freedom Of Information Act. These requests include explanation of changes NASA made to the historic temperature record, work by NASA scientists for private blogs while working at NASA, and some 3500 emails relating to this work. The changing of the historic temperature record may have significant bearing on the EPA Endangerment Finding as well as claim that the NASA-GISS data set is not independent as EPA asserted. Unfortunately, the inappropriate actions of NASA-GISS may reflect on NASA itself. Please see Article # 5 below.

Roy Spencer has posted the latest University of Alabama, Huntsville (UAH) Globally Averaged Satellite Based Temperature Anomaly of the Lower Atmosphere for October: +0.42 deg. C – the lowest of 2010. Comparing 2010 with 1998, from January to October, 2010 is slightly below 1998 but not statistically significantly so. Sea surface temperatures continue to fall dramatically. Please see the web site: drroyspencer.com.

THE NUMBER OF THE WEEK: 20.1 GWe to 0 GWe. According to the World Nuclear Association (cited in TWTW last week), China added 20.1 GWe of hydroelectric generating capacity in 2008. According to the US Energy Information Administration the US added 0 GWe of hydroelectric generating capacity in 2008. [Please note: that due to heavy spring rains in the southeast, total generation in the US

went up in 2008 compared to 2007, but there was no increase in actual capacity. The environmental industry long ago successfully shut down any major increase in US capacity.]

Renewable energy advocates fail to mention the giant steps China is making in the expansion of hydroelectric power, which expansion the US has stopped. Instead, the advocates mention only solar and wind. Yet in 2008, China expanded wind power capacity by only 4.7 GWe – less than one-quarter of its expansion of hydroelectric capacity. [Effective capacities of each type were not identified, but the dispatchable (reliable) capacity of wind is tiny compared to hydro.]

What is a supreme irony in environmental industry policies is that some of the increase in China's hydroelectric capacity is being financed by carbon credits from Europe that are imposed by green policies. According to the NYT's article "A Carbon Trading System ..." referenced below, the U.N. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows companies in industrialized countries to sponsor a greenhouse gas (GHG) reducing project in developing countries. The sponsoring country picks up carbon credits and the developing country gets the cash. As of 2008, the total cash transferred was close to \$7 Billion. No wonder China is closing old inefficient coal burning plants. It is getting cash from Europe for doing so and replacing these with hydro! (All the while opening up new coal fired plants at an amazing rate.)

According to a NYT article, the UN Environment Program's data base shows the executive board of CDM approved 1,668 hydroelectric power projects of which 1,060 are in China. Please see the article under Defending the Orthodoxy.

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SEPP SCIENCE EDITORIAL #33-2010 (Nov 6, 2010)

S Fred Singer Chairman, and President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)

American Thinker, Nov 3, 2010

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/11/the_french_academy_lays_an_egg.html

The French Academy Lays an Egg

The august French Academy has spoken. After a cursory examination of the climate issue, a day of selected testimonies, and some internal discussion among admitted non-experts, their Oct. 28 report to the French science minister concluded that global warming is "real and anthropogenic." Too bad; this report will remain as a stain on the Academy's reputation for years to come -- once the true scientific facts gain acceptance.

How could the Academy reach such a conclusion? Simply by ignoring any contrary evidence -- all published in peer-reviewed journals and readily available. So another interesting question is: Why did they ignore contrary evidence? For the answer, we would have to turn to psychologists or sociologists. On the other hand, the French Academy should be praised for organizing a debate on climate, however imperfect. I cannot imagine that the U.S. National Academy would even consider such an idea.

The global climate indeed warmed between 1910 and 1940, but due to natural causes, and at a time when the level of atmospheric greenhouse gases was relatively low. There is little dispute about the reality of this rise in temperature and about the subsequent cooling from 1940 to 1975, which was also seen in proxy records (such as ice cores, tree rings, etc.) independent of thermometers. The Academy, following the U.N.-supported IPCC, then reports a sudden climate jump around 1977-1978, followed by a steady increase in temperature until at least 1997. It is this steady increase that is in doubt; it cannot be seen in the proxy records.

Even more important, weather satellite data, which furnish the best global temperature data for the atmosphere, show essentially no warming between 1979 and 1997. According to well-established

textbook theories of the atmosphere, the surface warming must be smaller than the atmospheric trend by roughly a factor of two. But one half of zero is still zero. It suggests that the surface warming reported by the IPCC, based on weather-station data that had been processed by the Climate Research Unit of East Anglia University (CRU-EAU) may not exist. How could this have come about? We will get the answer once we learn how the CRU selected particular weather stations (from some thousands worldwide) to use for their global product and how they then corrected the actual data (to remove urban influences and other effects). So far, none of the several investigations of "Climategate" has delved into these all-important details. Nor have they established the exact nature of the "trick" used by the CRU and fellow conspirators to "hide the decline" (of temperature) -- referred to in the leaked Climategate e-mails.

The disparity between surface trends and atmospheric data as measured by satellites (and independently also by radiosondes in weather balloons) has been known for more than a decade. Yet it has been steadfastly ignored by the IPCC's Summary for Policymakers and also by the French Academy. Evidently, it is not a subject they wish to discuss. In my book, *Hot Talk, Cold Science*, published in 1997, I show a graph that clearly delineates the difference between surface and atmospheric trends in the tropical region. In 2000, the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences even published a study called "Reconciling Observations of Global Temperature Change"; this work tried to account for the discrepancy between atmospheric and surface trends (between 1979 and 1997) and concluded that they could not. A federal report of 2006 by the Climate Change Science Program (CCSP-SAP-1.1) shows again the same disparity. Yet an obvious way to solve the puzzle is to conclude that the surface trends are vastly exaggerated and may even be close to zero.

Of course, it is also necessary to deal with sea surface temperatures, since oceans cover 71% of the earth's surface. An analysis of the available data shows again no appreciable warming trend after appropriate corrections have been made. As suggested in studies published in 2005, the reported warming trend of SST may be based on an artifact and is not real. So it becomes clear that the French Academy's conclusion (that global warming is "real and anthropogenic") does not accord with observed facts.

An obvious question is why these facts were not publicized earlier. I can say only that any such claim of "no global warming in the 1980s and 1990s" would have been shouted down and discounted by the scientific community and the public. However, "Climategate" and the subsequent discovery of many errors and shortcomings by the IPCC have changed the situation drastically. It is now OK to express what previously might have been considered heretical.

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see: www.haapala.com/sepp/the-week-that-was.cfm.

1. Plans Afoot for Topical Group On the Physics of Climate

By Michael Lucibella, APS Physics website, Oct 2010 [H/t Moorad Alexanian]

<http://aps.org/publications/apsnews/201010/climatechange.cfm>

2. The Green Bubble Is about to Burst

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Nov 5, 2010

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/11/the_green_bubble_is_about_to_b.html

3. U.S. Weighs Funding for Renewable Energy Projects

By Stephen Power, WSJ, Nov 3, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703506904575592843603174132.html?mod=WSJ_Energy_leftHeadlines

4. Skinning the Carbon Cat With EPA

Editorial, IBD, Nov 4, 21010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/552801/201011041852/Skinning-The-Carbon-Cat-With-EPA.htm>

5. Not the Last You Will See of “Climate” Oversight

By Chris Horner, American Spectator blog, Nov 4, 2010, [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://spectator.org/blog/2010/11/04/not-the-last-you-will-see-of-c>

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Who are the deniers now?

By Roger Helmer, MEP, Oct 31, 2010 [H/t Joe Bast]

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/centreright/2010/10/who-are-the-deniers-now-asks-rogerhelmermep.html>

Australia’s High Quality Data: 12-year-sites used for “long term” trends

By Joanne Nova, Nov 6, 2010

<http://joannenova.com.au/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Atlantic through the AMO drives apparent “global warming”

By Joseph D’Aleo, ICECAP, Nov 1, 2010

<http://www.icecap.us/>

Diminishing Returns From Multi-Decadal Global Climate Model Simulations

By Roger Pielke Sr., Pielke Research Group, Nov 5, 2010 [H/t Anthony Watts]

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2010/11/05/diminishing-returns-from-multi-decadal-global-climate-model-simulations/>

It’s Time To Pardon Carbon

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Oct 28, 2010 [H/t Joe Bast]

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/28/climate-change-carbon-epa-opinions-contributors-larry-bell.html?partner=email>

US election narrows climate agenda

By Shaun Tandon, Sydney Morning Herald, Nov 4, 2010

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/us-election-narrows-climate-agenda-20101104-17eim.html>

Defending the Orthodoxy

A Carbon Trading System Draws Environmental Skeptics

By Patricia Brett, NYT, Oct 12, 2010 [H/t Willis Eschenbach, WUWT]

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/13/business/energy-environment/13iht-rencarbon.html?_r=2&ref=globalwarming&pagewanted=all

A New Kind of Crime Against Humanity?: The Fossil Fuel Industry’s Disinformation Campaign On Climate Change

By Donald Brown, Penn State University, Climate Ethics, Oct 24, 2010

<http://rockblogs.psu.edu/climate/2010/10/a-new-kind-of-vicious-crime-against-humanity-the-fossil-fuel-industrys-disinformation-campaign-on-cl.html>

[SEPP Comment: No wonder Penn State gave Michael Mann a pass.]

A stormy forecast for climate change reporting

By Margot O'Neill, ABC, AU, Nov 3, 2010 [H/t Anthony Watts, WUWT]

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2010/11/03/3056199.htm>

Weather Extremes

2009/10 Winter El Nino Very Different than 1997/98; Look at US Winter 2010/11

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Nov 2, 2010

<http://www.icecap.us/>

BP Oil Spill and Aftermath

Columbia = The Gulf

Editorial, IBD, Nov 2, 2010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=552532>

[SEPP Comment: The country of Colombia is willing to go forward where the US administration prohibits.]

Energy Issues

Scarcity of new energy minerals will trigger trade wars

By Christa Strantton, Geological Society of America, Nov 1, 2010

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2010-11/gsoa-son103110.php

Deregulation, Not Renewable Energy Mandates, Will Best Protect Both Economy and Environment

By Joseph Bast, American Thinker, Oct 31, 2010

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/10/deregulation_not_renewable_ene.html

EPA and other Regulators On the March

Texas is the only state ignoring federal greenhouse gas deadline

By Ramit Plushnick-Masti, Houston Chronicle, Oct 29, 2010 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/health/7269317.html>

Judge sets deadlines in polar bear listing case

By Dan Joling, Washington Post, Nov 4, 2010

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/11/04/AR2010110405239.html>

New Mexico regulators approve cap-and-trade plan

By Susan Montoya Bryan, Bloomberg Businessweek, Nov 2, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9J8CB2O1.htm>

EPA's Regs for Rigs – Fuel Economy Fetish Goes Diesel

By Marlo Lewis, Master Resource, Nov 5, 2010

<http://www.masterresource.org/2010/11/epa-regs-for-rigs-fuel-economy-fetish/#respond>

[SEPP Comment: Apparently EPA believes it better understands profit centers for the trucking industry than the CFO's of trucking firms.]

EPA policy chief steps down

By Robin Bravender, Politico, Nov 4, 2010 [H/t Bud Bromley]]

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1110/44708.html>

California Dreaming

Tuesday's environmental impact

The Republican takeover of the House puts an end to hopes for a federal bill. But headway will still be made at the state level.

Editorial, Los Angeles Times, Nov 5, 2010 [H/t Real Clear Politics]

<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/editorials/la-ed-climate-20101105,0,3301004.story>

Calif. Rail project is high-speed pork

By Robert J. Samuelson, Nov 1, 2010 [H/t David Manuta]

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/31/AR2010103104260.html?referrer=emailarticle>

Oh, Mann!

Professional climate change deniers' crusade

By Michael Mann, New Scientist, Nov 2, 2010

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20827840.100-professional-climate-change-deniers-crusade-continues.html>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

The Ups and Downs of Tropical Cyclone Activity in the Western Hemisphere

Reference: Wang, C. and Lee, S.-K. 2009. Co-variability of tropical cyclones in the North Atlantic and the eastern North Pacific. *Geophysical Research Letters* **36**: 10.1029/2009GL041469.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/nov/03nov2010a3.html>

Surviving the Perfect Storm

Reference: Godfray, H.C.J., Beddington, J.R., Crute, I.R., Haddad, L., Lawrence, D., Muir, J.F., Pretty, J., Robinson, S., Thomas, S.M. and Toulmin, C. 2010. Food security: The challenge of feeding 9 billion people. *Science* **327**: 812-818.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/nov/03nov2010a5.html>

The Medieval Warm Period in China's Tarim Basin

Reference: Ma, C-M., Wang, F-B., Cao, Q-Y., Xia, X-C., Li, S-F. and Li, X-S. 2008. Climate and environment reconstruction during the Medieval Warm Period in Lop Nur of Xinjiang, China. *Chinese Science Bulletin* **53**: 3016-3027.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/nov/03nov2010a6.html>

Coral Calcification on the great Barrier Reef

Reference: De'ath, G., Lough, J.M. and Fabricius, K.E. 2009. Declining coral calcification on the Great Barrier Reef. *Science* **323**: 116-119.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/nov/04nov2010a2.html>

Other Scientific Issues

Gravity Field Satellites Observe Antarctic Ice Mass Fluctuations Due to El Niño

Science Daily, Oct 29, 2010 [H/t Jeff Braswell]

<http://scinewsblog.blogspot.com/2010/10/gravity-field-satellites-observe.html>

Other Issues that May Be Of Interest

Goodbye Global Warming, Hello Biodiversity

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Oct 30, 2010 [H/t Joe Bast]

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2010/10/goodbye-global-warming-hello.html>

House Science Chair Enters Debate Over Biodiversity Pact's Bar on Climate Engineering

By Eli Kintisch, Science Insider, Oct 29, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
<http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2010/10/house-science-chair-enters-debat.html>

The German Ecological-Industrial Complex

By Malte Lehming, WSJ, Nov 4, 2010
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704141104575588121224451544.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopBucket

Obama's electric-car cult

By Charles Lane, Washington Post, Oct 30, 2010 [H/t Deke Forbes]
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/29/AR2010102905959.html>

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

UNH scientists to study cow burps ... and more

By Clynton Namuo, New Hampshire Union Leader, Nov 3, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]
<http://www.unionleader.com/article.aspx?headline=UNH%20scientists%20to%20study%20cow%20burps%20.%20.%20.%20and%20more&articleId=c43c3680-3551-47ed-be8a-0b5b87880d6e>

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ARTICLES:

1. Plans Afoot for Topical Group On the Physics of Climate

By Michael Lucibella, APS Physics website, Oct 2010 [H/t Moorad Alexanian]
<http://aps.org/publications/apsnews/201010/climatechange.cfm>

During the summer, APS received two independent requests for the formation of a topical group focusing on the physics of climate. One was presented by APS Fellow Roger Cohen, who had privately circulated a petition to that effect and obtained the 200 member signatures needed to bring it to Council. The other came as an initiative of Council itself, which at its April meeting had authorized APS President Curtis Callan to poll the membership on their support for such a group; an email petition sent by him to the members of DCP, DBP, DCOMP, DAMOP and DFD in early August quickly received almost 800 signatures.

“It’s clear that there is a great deal of enthusiasm among the APS membership for the formation of a topical group on the physics of climate,” said Kate Kirby, APS Executive Officer. “There are a number of opportunities for the physics community to make substantial contributions to science in this area.”

Although the language of the two petitions differs in detail, with the Callan proposal defining the scope as the physics of “climate and the environment”, and the Cohen petition emphasizing that the topical group should not be concerned with “matters of policy, legislation and regulation”, both expressed a common goal (quoting the Cohen petition) of providing “a mechanism for physicists ... to learn about and exchange views on the science, and to generally advance the physical understanding, of terrestrial climate.”. Since Council would certainly not approve two separate topical groups on this topic, the leadership decided that it would be best to attempt to form a “joint” topical group, focusing just on the physics issues inherent in climate science. According to Callan “We wanted to address what is obviously the core concern of our members. I also have no problem with leaving the policy issues for another venue: the science is challenging enough, and worthy of our undivided attention.”

A topical group is like a mini-division: it organizes sessions at the March and April general meetings of the society and often puts out a newsletter for its members. It has a governance structure similar to that of a typical APS unit and its officers are elected by the topical group membership. The next step in the creation of the new topical group is to constitute an organizing committee whose charge will be to define the precise “area of interest” (and name) of the topical group, draft its bylaws and determine how it will

initiate its activities. Once these plans have been approved by Council, APS members will be invited to join (upon payment of dues of \$8!) and once there are at least 200 paid-up members, elections for officers can take place and the new topical group can commence its independent existence.

Callan said that his first step in constituting an organizing committee was to recruit a distinguished and effective chair, and that he was fortunate in having been able to convince Nobel laureate and former APS President Jerome Friedman of MIT, one of the signers of the Cohen petition, to serve in this important capacity. With this key element in place, Callan proceeded to ask other signers of the two petitions to serve as members of the committee. The response has been very positive and he expects to have a committee of about eight members in place, representing a range of APS units.

Committee chair Friedman says that he is hopeful that it will be possible to submit bylaws for approval at the November meeting of APS Council. Given the enthusiasm for this initiative that has been expressed by APS membership, a new topical group on the physics of climate could be open for business sometime early in 2011. Callan commented that he hoped this TG would go a long way toward reducing the tensions that had been raised within the society by the climate issue and also that its services would no longer be needed by the time the year 2111 rolled around!

2. The Green Bubble Is about to Burst

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Nov 5, 2010

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/11/the_green_bubble_is_about_to_b.html

There is a revolution coming that is likely to burst the green global warming bubble: the temperature trend used by the IPCC (the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) to support their conclusion about anthropogenic global warming (AGW) is likely to turn out to be fake. The situation will become clear once Virginia's attorney general, Kenneth Cuccinelli, obtains information now buried in e-mails at the University of Virginia. Or Hearings on Climategate by the U.S. Congress may uncover the "smoking gun" that demonstrates that the warming trend used by the IPCC does not really exist.

It has become increasingly clear that any observed warming during the past century is of natural origin and that the human contribution is insignificant. It is doubtful that any significant warming is attributable to greenhouse gases at all.

Once the public accepts these scientific conclusions, it should have immense consequences for policy. It will mean that the impact of rising CO₂ levels is negligibly small, as has already been concluded by the NIPCC (Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change), a group of scientists skeptical of the U.N.-supported IPCC. It would also mean that wind energy, solar energy, and other "non-carbon" energy sources are not needed and are in fact counterproductive. It would remove the need for alternative fuels such as ethanol (which might please many true environmentalists). It would also mean that carbon trading, cap and trade, and fanciful schemes for carbon capture and sequestration would all end up in the dustbin of history.

One may expect a huge outcry and serious and protracted opposition from those who have built their careers on global warming hype and who have made investments in alternative energy or are looking for immense profits from carbon trading. Yet the scientific facts must win out in the long run -- even against the financial interests of favored groups, wind farm profiteers, ethanol refiners, carbon traders, and the investment firms and banks that have placed hundreds of billions of dollars of their clients' money into green projects.

Nothing has been learned from European disastrous experiences, it seems. As Bjorn Lomborg (a firm believer in AGW) reports, Germany led the world in putting up solar panels, funded by €47 billion in subsidies. The lasting legacy is a massive debt and lots of inefficient solar technology sitting on rooftops

throughout a fairly cloudy country, delivering a trivial 0.1% of its total energy supply. Denmark's wind industry is almost completely dependent on taxpayer subsidies, and Danes pay the highest electricity rates of any industrialized nation. Spain has finally discontinued its solar subsidies as too costly; as Prof. Gabriel Calzada reports, the program actually caused a net loss of jobs.

Having successfully exploited domestic subsidies, Europeans are now looking at the United States as the new "land of opportunity." A recent example (described in the Wall Street Journal of Oct. 26, 2010) is the world's largest solar-thermal power plant, on 7,000 acres of Federal land in the desert of southern California. The \$6-billion project is a venture by two German companies, and it may be eligible for a cash subsidy of nearly one billion dollars in taxpayer money. Even after these subsidies, the cost of the electricity generated will be 30 to 70 percent more expensive than electricity generated by natural gas, the dominant electricity-generating fuel in California.

In addition to direct subsidies, the companies are seeking federal loan guarantees and, no doubt, an array of benefits from the State of California. Solar Trust of America, a joint venture between Germany's Solar Millennium AG and privately held (mostly by Arab oil money) Ferrostaal AG, is awaiting approval from the Energy Department for a federal loan guarantee for the first two of its four planned units. Deutsche Bank AG and Citigroup Inc. are working with Solar Trust to obtain project-equity and tax-equity investment.

The White House claims that the federal cash subsidy will create three hundred permanent jobs (at about \$3 million per job!). The nature of the jobs is not specified, but one may assume that there will be much need for sweepers to remove dust and dirt from about 7,000 acres of solar mirrors. Not exactly "high-tech," is it?

3. U.S. Weighs Funding for Renewable Energy Projects

By Stephen Power, WSJ, Nov 3, 2010

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703506904575592843603174132.html?mod=WSJ_Energy_leftHeadlines

President Obama's top advisers recommended cutting off funding for a federal loan-guarantee program meant to spur the construction of wind and solar farms and other alternative energy projects, saying taxpayer dollars might be better spent elsewhere.

But the advisers, including Mr. Obama's outgoing National Economic Council Director Lawrence Summers, energy policy czar Carol Browner and Ron Klain, chief of staff to Vice President Joe Biden, warned Mr. Obama that pulling money from the program would risk antagonizing powerful allies in Congress, and would "signal the failure of a Recovery Act program that has been featured prominently by the administration," according to an Oct. 25 memorandum viewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The memo questions the logic behind subsidizing a big wind farm project in Oregon that Energy Secretary Steven Chu praised last month as "part of the administration's commitment to doubling our renewable energy generation by 2012." Mr. Chu said the federal government would provide, subject to conditions, a partial guarantee for a \$1.3 billion loan for the project.

But Mr. Obama's senior advisers wrote in their memo that the wind farm—sponsored by Caithness Energy LLC and General Electric Co.—"would likely move without the loan guarantee."

"The economics are favorable for wind investment given tax credits" and state regulations that require electric companies to boost their use of renewable power, they wrote.

The memo adds that the project's corporate backers "would provide little skin in the game (equity about 10%)," while the government would provide "a significant subsidy (65+%)."

The memorandum also questions the project's environmental benefits, saying carbon dioxide emissions "would have to be valued at nearly \$130 per ton for CO2 for the climate benefits to equal the subsidies (more than six times the primary estimate used by the government in evaluating rules)."

GE defended the project Wednesday. "This project, already under construction, is generating a significant number of jobs in an area of Oregon that has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state," the company said in a written statement.

White House officials said Wednesday that the project was brought up in the memo only as way to illustrate that some renewable energy projects could move forward without a federal loan guarantee, and that the comments in the memo should not be viewed as signaling a final decision by the administration on the project. A spokeswoman for Dr. Chu didn't respond to a request for comment.

The memorandum provides a rare glimpse of the administration's internal debates over energy subsidies and Recovery Act spending.

White House officials said Wednesday that the administration has no intention of cutting off funding for the program, and that the options outlined in the document were simply meant to frame a discussion within the administration over the program's future.

"We are taking steps to streamline the [loan guarantee] process while still protecting taxpayers who, ultimately, are the ones investing in these projects," a White House spokesman said.

The loan guarantee program at issue allows the Energy Department to help finance certain renewable energy projects, electric transmission systems and bio-fuels projects that begin construction no later than September 30, 2011.

But Congress has slashed the loan guarantee program's budget to pay for other priorities, such as last year's "Cash for Clunkers" program to boost auto sales. The renewable energy loan guarantee program's budget is now \$2.5 billion, less than half the \$6 billion Congress appropriated for it in early 2009.

The memo written by Mr. Obama's senior advisers suggests the president "consider working with Congress to reprogram" the remaining \$2.5 billion to pay for an extension of a separate federal program that allows renewable energy developers to convert the tax credits they get for such projects into cash grants.

The memo says the grant program "has been much more effective" and is "likely to have a more significant impact on renewable energy investment" than the loan guarantees. The grant program expires at the end of the year.

But the memo warns that "failing to make progress on renewables [sic] loan guarantees could upset the Hill (Sen. Bingaman, Speaker Pelosi)"—a reference to Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D., N.M.) and the outgoing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D., Calif.). Both have strongly championed the use of federal loan guarantees to boost alternative energy projects.

Mr. Bingaman "views [the program] as 'his program,' [and] would strongly oppose" taking money away from it, the memo says.

A spokesman for Mr. Bingaman said the senator would "not be happy" if the administration tried to take money out of the loan guarantee program, but added that Mr. Bingaman isn't the only lawmaker who strongly supports the program.

"We've been frustrated and a little disappointed that the administration has used this program as an ATM machine," the spokesman added.

A spokesman for Ms. Pelosi said the Speaker's "longstanding support for this initiative is well known."

4. Skinning the Carbon Cat With EPA

Editorial, IBD, Nov 4, 21010

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/552801/201011041852/Skinning-The-Carbon-Cat-With-EPA.htm>

Standing amid the smoking ruins of Tuesday's defeat, President Obama indicates he's backing away from a cap-and-trade law. But as great as that news is, someone still needs to watch the backdoor.

It's been said that a socialist thrown out the window will come back through the front door as an environmentalist. This reminds us of something we noticed in the president's day-after concession speech.

Though acknowledging the cap-and-trade law is no longer a legislative priority, Obama also said he's not giving up on the idea of restricting Americans' output of carbon dioxide.

"Cap-and-trade was just one way of skinning the cat," he said at Tuesday's news conference. "It was a means, not an end. I'm going to be looking for other means to address this problem."

In moonwalking away from cap-and-trade, the president was simply admitting that, with a Republican-controlled House, the bill is going nowhere in the next two years.

Unfortunately, Obama is still a believer, if not in man-made global warming, then in what he believes to be his right to meddle in private lives. If he can't supervise the clingers, enemies and the rest of bitter America through cap-and-trade, he'll settle for some other way to put limits on the masses. He suggested the EPA could beef up its police powers to rein in CO2 emissions.

Obama also implied that he could skin the cat through schemes that redistribute wealth into renewable energy programs. Though not as burdensome as a cap-and-trade law, government green energy initiatives tend to be black holes for taxpayers' money.

For example, on the day Obama was holding his news conference, Solyndra, a California manufacturer of solar panels that the president visited in May and which was given a half-billion-dollar federal loan guarantee, announced it is closing one of its plants, laying off 40 employees and allowing the contracts of 100 more temporary workers to expire.

Solyndra has also dropped plans for an initial public offering. Private investors who've already poured \$1 billion into the company must be wondering if they put their money in the right place.

Democrats have been promising for more than two years now that it would be companies such as Solyndra that pull the country out of its slump and create much-needed jobs.

All they've done is demonstrate they don't understand that green energy is not ready for prime time. If it were, entrepreneurs and investors would be establishing a viable market that doesn't require federal subsidies.

Contrary to what Vice President Joe Biden said last week, government has not been responsible for every great innovation since the 19th century. (We're still shaking our heads at that one.) More typically, government misses badly when allowed to pick and choose industries of the future. Green energy is an example of how politics skews free enterprise.

As much as we'd like to think the president's abandonment of cap-and-trade legislation is a sign that he gets it, he really doesn't. But then, he's hardly alone. Tuesday's results from California show that voters there haven't lost their religion either. Proposition 23, which would have frozen implementation of the state's global warming law until the state's jobless rate fell to 5.5% or less for four straight quarters, was crushed 61% to 39%.

If Tuesday's midterms didn't do it, another presidential election and more losses in Congress may be necessary to get Obama and his fellow Democrats to fully comprehend that their agenda has been rejected.

Dropping cap-and-trade is an awfully good place to start. But the fact that Obama still sees CO2 emissions as a problem means that the new House majority will have to keep a close eye on him.

5. Not the Last You Will See of “Climate” Oversight

By Chris Horner, American Spectator blog, Nov 4, 2010, [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]
<http://spectator.org/blog/2010/11/04/not-the-last-you-will-see-of-c>

Last night the Competitive Enterprise Institute, through its outside counsel Gibson Dunn, filed its brief arguing against NASA's rather scattershot and contradictory effort to dismiss our lawsuit requesting certain documents under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)(press release available here).

Our suit, CEI vs. NASA (U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia), followed on the heels of ClimateGate, and a December 2009 Notice of Intent to Sue if NASA did not turn over certain records withheld since CEI sought them in August 2007 and January 2008 requests. That Notice was eleven months ago and, despite NASA offering some documents and admitting -- temporarily -- that certain others relating to the advocacy site used by NASA scientists, RealClimate.org were "agency records", NASA then ceased its brief steps to comply with the transparency statute FOIA.

Despite NASA stonewalling CEI has already learned, for example, that NASA does not, contrary to widespread media and pressure group claims, have an independent temperature data set. Instead, as NASA told *USA Today* in an email, despite its serial, breathless press releases trumpeting some new temperature high, it actually is just a modeling office, which also (for unknown reasons, possibly extra attention and importance, or mere advocacy) cobbles together some US data from the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) with that of the Climatic Research Unit's temperature history. You may recall how CRU withdrew its claim to a temperature history data set after ClimateGate led to an admission it actually lost its data.

Specifically, CEI's FOIA suit seeks documents and emails relating to NASA's temperature record, which NASA was forced to correct in response to criticism from a leading climate watchdog, Steve McIntyre. Those corrections destroyed NASA's stance that U.S. temperatures have been steadily rising in recent years and returned 1934, not 1998, to being the warmest year on record. NASA refuses to give CEI the computer file they used to make these changes, whose title includes "Steve" and "alternate cleaning."

CEI also seeks emails from NASA scientists using Real Climate.org on official time using official resources, often to advance what NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (its climate activist office) has decided is appropriate public advocacy.

In addition to uncovering the "Steve"/"cleaning" file, a few of the more interesting pieces of evidence expounded upon in CEI's brief include:

* After CEI filed the FOIA seeking RealClimate emails, administrators at Real Climate deleted all timestamps on all of their postings, making it impossible to show they were made during work hours. But we kept color copies of the original posts.

* NASA admits that it discovered 3,500 emails on Dr. Schmidt's NASA computer related to his work on RealClimate but won't produce them.

* NASA did not ask Dr. Schmidt to look for responsive records until 22 months after we sent them the FOIA and threatened to sue. It is highly likely relevant emails were destroyed during this period.

* NASA's delay in responding to CEI's FOIA requests was extraordinary, far outside its normal or even most egregious examples of delay or non-compliance. For instance:

- o NASA took more than 900 days to produce documents pursuant to CEI's two 2007 requests. The agency took more than 700 days to produce records in response to CEI's 2008 request. NASA does not explain these delays. FOIA requires that an agency produce responsive records within 20 days. Although agencies rarely meet that deadline, even for "complex" FOIA requests, NASA's average processing time is under 100 days. In 2008, NASA processed complex requests in 82 days, on average. In 2009, it processed such requests in 89 days, on average.

- o Prompted by congressional inquiries, the NASA Inspector General investigated the delay associated with these FOIA Requests. The Inspector General determined that the delays were caused by "inadequate direction" as to what documents were requested; "inadequate communication between NASA personnel; and "inadequate staffing" at the Goddard FOIA office. In reality, one of the primary reasons for the delay was that NASA did not inform GISS officials about one of the requests and inexplicably held documents for years instead of producing them on a rolling basis, as requested.

We should argue this within the month. CEI requests the court allow it to proceed to the discovery stage next, examining records and deposing relevant witnesses.

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