

**The Week That Was: 2017-09-02 (September 2, 2017)**  
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**The Science and Environmental Policy Project**

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**Quote of the Week.** *“In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours.”*— Mark Twain

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**Number of the Week:** 4326 Days

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**THIS WEEK:**

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

**Houston Flooding – Resilience Needed:** America’s great fortune of no major hurricanes (category 3 or above) making landfall ended after almost 12 years. As stated in last week’s TWTW, Hurricane Harvey made landfall on the Texas coast, between Port Aransas and Port O’Connor (east of Corpus Christi) on Friday night. It was a category 4 hurricane with wind speeds of 130-156 mph (113-136 kt; 209-251 km/h). National Weather Service had predicted a storm surge up to 9 to 13 feet (2.7 to 4 meters) and heavy rainfall of 15 to 30 inches (38 to 76 cm) with up to 40 inches (102 cm) in some locations. Later, it degraded to a tropical storm.

What the National Weather Service did not predict at that time was that the storm would stall over the Houston area, go back to the Gulf of Mexico, and return. By staying in the Houston area, with moisture being replenished from the Gulf, Harvey dropped a total of about 50 inches (125 cm) of rain on the fifth most populated metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in the country, and, probably, the most industrialized one. (According to 2016 statistics from the Census Bureau, New York MSA had a population of 20.1 million; Los Angeles MSA a population of 13.3 million; Chicago MSA a population of 9.5 million; Dallas MSA a population of 7.2 million; and Houston MSA a population of 6.8 million.) The Houston metropolitan area is 10,062 square miles (26,000 sq. km.) and is the fastest growing in population of MSAs the US.

As the rainfall statistics highlighted by Paul Homewood demonstrate, Harvey was not the most intense rain storm recorded in the world, or the US; but, it was significant for the Houston area. Fortunately, the people living in the area demonstrated a great resilience in helping each other to handle the flooding. With one noticeable glitch, the Federal, State, and local officials worked well together, demonstrating that the officials responsible learned from Katrina. The primary responsibility for coordination of relief efforts is local, then state, then federal. Solid coordination and communications are needed among the many individuals, private organizations, and government entities that become involved.

The glitch came early, when the mayor of Houston recommended that people stay in their homes, but the governor recommended evacuation. As the storm continued, a number of communities had to be evacuated because the gateways of flood control dams had to be opened to prevent bursting of the dams. The last-minute evacuation caused hardships for the residents.

As all too common in today’s weather disasters, news media tend to broadcast the claims of climate alarmists. The “go-to” expert for the UK *Guardian* was Mr. Michael Mann. As expected, he made vague pronouncements of global warming causing the problems. Similar

pronouncements were carried by other news groups. The implied assumption is that such weather events would be as severe, if we limited carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.

Roy Spencer was trained as a meteorologist under Verner Suomi, whom many consider the father of satellite meteorology. As typical for him, Spencer countered these vague generalizations with facts and data. Spencer pointed out that there have been many floods of Houston, dating to the mid-1800s. The worst previous one was in December 1935, when the Buffalo Bayou in downtown topped at 54.4 feet (16.6 meters), long before the fear of CO<sub>2</sub>-caused global warming. (Buffalo Bayou is a slow-moving river flowing through downtown Houston.) Several years ago, when this observer toured Buffalo Bayou on boat, the guide pointed out high water marks on buildings some 50 feet above the deck of the boat. According to state statistics, the 1930 population of Houston was 292,000 and the 1940 population was 385,000, roughly 5% of the population today.

According to the soil survey of Harris County, Texas (which includes Houston) by the USDA Soil Conservation Service, mostly, the soils in the Houston area are nearly level, clayey and loamy prairie soils, with clayey underlying layers. They drain poorly with low to moderate permeability and have a high shrink-swell potential. They are not ideal for building a city and flood easily, but paving them does not greatly decrease their ability to absorb water.

Following the flood of 1935, and the prior one of 1929, the US Corps of Engineers built Addicks and Barker dams under US Rivers and Harbors Act of 1938, creating reservoirs. The purpose was to control flooding of the Buffalo Bayou and its tributaries. It was the fear that the rains from Harvey would overwhelm the dams that prompted the Corps to release of water from these reservoirs. The issue of storm water management in this relatively flat basin with impervious soils was addressed, addressed, but not adequately for the amount of rain over the short time period in which it occurred with Harvey. Despite the releases from the Addicks dam, the reservoir overflowed for the first time and compounded the flooding.

Spencer addresses the question: Are Texas major hurricanes dependent on an unusually warm Gulf? Spencer shows a plot of Texas major hurricane landfalls and western Gulf of Mexico sea surface temperatures from 1870 to today. No discernable trend. He concludes:

*“The Gulf of Mexico is warm enough every summer to produce a major hurricane. But you also usually need a pre-existing cyclonic circulation or wave, which almost always can be traced back to the coast of Africa. Also, the reasons why some systems intensify and others don’t are not well understood.”*

Obviously, there is no discernable warming trend for the flood of December 1935. Spencer addresses several other issues such as was the rainfall total unprecedented, it was not; was the intensity unprecedented, no; did global warming make it worse, no. Spencer shows a plot of surface temperature anomalies around North America for August 2017 (through Aug. 28) and asks anyone to show him what pattern is due to global warming. Mr. Mann implied that global warming caused a shift in the jet stream. Spencer concludes:

*“There is coastal lake sediment evidence of catastrophic hurricanes which struck the Florida panhandle over 1,000 years ago, events which became less frequent in the most recent 1,000 years.”*

*“Weather disasters happen, with or without the help of humans.”*

See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Changing Weather, Changing Weather – We Know, Changing Weather – We Do Not Know, and

[https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_MANUSCRIPTS/texas/harrisTX1976/harris.pdf](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/texas/harrisTX1976/harris.pdf)

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**Similar Conclusions:** Writing in his *Weather and Climate Blog*, Cliff Mass independently reaches conclusions similar to those of Spencer. Previously, Mass has written that he believes that CO2 emissions are causing global warming. On the subject of Hurricane Harvey being caused by man, namely CO2 emissions, or significantly intensified by emissions, Mass writes:

*“Most of the stories [of CO2 cause] were not based on data or any kind of quantitative analysis, but a hand-waving argument that a warming earth will put more water vapor into the atmosphere and thus precipitation will increase. A few suggesting that a warming atmosphere will cause hurricanes to move more slowly.*

*“This blog will provide a careful analysis of the possible impacts of global warming on Hurricane Harvey. And the results are clear: human-induced global warming played an inconsequential role in this disaster.”*

To paraphrase Alan Carlin’s essay, CO2 management will not provide stormwater management. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and Changing Weather – We Do Not Know

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**Long Range Forecasts:** Writing in *Climate Etc.* Judith Curry analyses the forecasts of Hurricane Harvey made by models the National Hurricane Center (NHC), NOAA, and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). Such analyses are important and hopefully will lead to refinements in the various models resulting in accurate forecasts 10 to 15 days in advance.

Curry explains that her company, Climate Forecast Applications Network (CFAN), calibrated the ECMWF and NOAA-GEFS forecasts to evaluate long-range (beyond 5 days) capabilities, given the enormous uncertainties involved. To her, “the challenge is forecast interpretation and uncertainty assessment.” This is complicated by the various scales of the models from mesoscale (20 km or more) to global. See link under Changing Weather.

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**More on the Way?** In his Saturday Summary, Joe Bastardi of WeatherBELL LLC presented the possibility that Hurricane Irma may brush the Atlantic Coast. This is a category 3 hurricane east of the Caribbean, and about mid-way between Africa and Florida. The forecast is it will intensify to a category 5 and it may hit the Carolina coast as a category 4. Many model forecasts have it hitting the US southeast coast. See link under Changing Weather.

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**Multi-Layered Resilience:** One of the distractions that occurs when a hurricane hits is people insisting that they predicted it, if only others had listened. For example, when Katrina hit east of New Orleans in 2005, the Federal government was blamed. Certainly, the coordination between Federal and local authorities was poor. But, after Hurricane Betsy hit in 1965, following Audrey in 1957, the Corps of Engineers planned a barrier-gate system along I-10, similar to the movable barrier system used by the Dutch and the English. The US District Court for Eastern Louisiana stopped it under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Had the system been built, it should have stopped the storm surge from Katrina entering New Orleans through Lake Pontchartrain, killing many people and causing most of the damage in New Orleans. The storm surge overwhelmed the levy system, which was shoddily constructed, with significant funds diverted for political purposes. Fittingly, the mayor, who did not order the evacuation of New Orleans, was later convicted for his role in diversion of funds.

However, this barrier-gate system would not have stopped the recent flooding of lower parts of New Orleans because the flooding was a result of heavy rain and an electrical failure caused by fire. The pumps used to expel water from lower parts of New Orleans were built about the 1920s and use an electrical frequency of about 28 hertz, not 60 hertz common to the electrical grid. For resilience, a complete upgrade of defenses is needed.

Following Hurricane Ike, a large category 2 storm (not category 3) which made landfall near Galveston on September 13, 2008 and had a major storm surge of 20 feet (6.1 m) some researchers modeled a system to protect the Houston – Galveston Area from a similar hurricane hitting about 30 miles to the southeast, more directly impacting the Houston ship channel. The system included: 1) a barrier gate structure for the Houston ship channel similar to Rotterdam; 2) elevate Highway 146 to protect those who live west of Houston; and 3) protection of historic and industrial areas of Galveston.

At this time, it appears that a storm surge was not a major cause of damage in the Houston area, though it may have been to Galveston. The Houston ship channel, which was closed for eight months after the 1935 storm, was open on a limited basis one week after Harvey hit – daytime and for ships with a draft of less than 33 feet (10 meters). Thus, the modeled system did not address the demands of Harvey, though it may be desirable for future storms. This example illustrates that a complete system of resilience for hurricanes must be multi-layered, addressing multiple threats. See links under Changing Weather – We Do Not Know.

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**Social Benefits of Carbon Dioxide:** Among the foolish arguments advanced by those who claim that damage is being done by CO<sub>2</sub>, including the authors of the US National Assessment, are the calculations involved in the Social Cost of Carbon. Craig Idso brings up an important concept the National Assessment writers fail to recognize: the increases in Net Primary Production (NPP) which represents “*the net carbon that is fixed (sequestered) by a given plant community or ecosystem. It is the combined product of climatic, geochemical, ecological, and human effects. In recent years, many have expressed concerns that global terrestrial NPP should be falling due to the many real (and imagined) assaults on Earth’s vegetation that have occurred over the past several decades—including wildfires, disease, pest outbreaks, and deforestation, as well as overly-hyped changes in temperature and precipitation.*”

*“The second ‘National Assessment’ of the effects of climate change on the United States warns that rising temperatures will necessarily result in the reduced productivity of major crops, such as corn and soybeans, and that crops and livestock will be ‘increasingly challenged.’ Looking to the future, the National Assessment suggests that the situation will only get worse, unless drastic steps are taken to reduce the ongoing rise in the air’s CO<sub>2</sub> content (e.g., scaling back on the use of fossil fuels that, when burned, produce water and CO<sub>2</sub>).*”

As Idso has reported almost weekly, the benefits of additional CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere on crop yields and nutritional value are enormous. As Bjørn Lomborg writes, better nutrition for infants

and young children is the best investment. The world is getting part of it for free! Yet, bureaucratic calculators are calling it a cost. See links under Social Benefits of Carbon  
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**Number of the Week: 4326 Days** (almost 12 years). The last major storm to make landfall on the US was Wilma in October of 2005. The previous record lull was around 8 years in the 1860s. [H/t Joe D'Aleo]. Will those who claim that intensity of Harvey was caused by CO2 also claim that the almost 12-year lull was also caused by CO2?

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### **NEWS YOU CAN USE:**

#### ***Suppressing Scientific Inquiry***

##### **Professor Peter Ridd facing misconduct charges for not selling peer review as sacred unquestionable testimony**

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Aug 29, 2017

<http://joannenova.com.au/2017/08/professor-peter-ridd-facing-misconduct-charges-for-not-selling-peer-review-as/>

#### ***Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC***

##### **Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science**

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

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

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

##### **Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts**

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

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

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

##### **Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming**

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

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

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge

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

##### **Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate**

S. Fred Singer, Editor, NIPCC, 2008

[http://www.sepp.org/publications/nipcc\\_final.pdf](http://www.sepp.org/publications/nipcc_final.pdf)

#### ***Challenging the Orthodoxy***

##### **Texas Major Hurricane Intensity Not Related to Gulf Water Temperatures**

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 29, 2017

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2017/08/texas-major-hurricane-intensity-not-related-to-gulf-water-temperatures/>

##### **Why Houston Flooding Isn't a Sign of Climate Change**

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 28, 2017

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2017/08/why-houston-flooding-isnt-a-sign-of-climate-change/>

Link to paper: Holocene History of Catastrophic Hurricane Landfalls along the Gulf of Mexico Coast Reconstructed from Coastal Lake and Marsh Sediments

By Liu and Fearn, Coast and Development, No date

[http://coastandenvironment.lsu.edu/docs/faculty/liu/paleoecology\\_web/index\\_files/marsh.pdf](http://coastandenvironment.lsu.edu/docs/faculty/liu/paleoecology_web/index_files/marsh.pdf)

### **Scientists Expose Data Manipulation, ‘Hide The Decline’, And The Post-1940s Hockey Stick Temperature Myth**

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Aug 31, 2017

<http://notrickszone.com/2017/08/31/scientists-expose-data-manipulation-hide-the-decline-and-the-post-1940s-hockey-stick-temperature-myth/#sthash.2x5Ld9TW.dpbs>

*[SEPP Comment: Discussed in last week’s TWTW, with more evidence supporting the contention by Fred Singer that the late 20<sup>th</sup> century warming is artificial, as reported by the surface temperature measurements.]*

### **New Study Confirms Medieval Warm Period Was Indeed Global, And As Warm As Today China: Warm phase of the 20th century was not unusual in context of the last 2000 years**

By Dr. Sebastian Lüning and Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt (German text translated by P. Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, Aug 29, 2017

<http://notrickszone.com/2017/08/29/new-study-confirms-medieval-warm-period-was-indeed-global-and-as-warm-as-today/#sthash.F0IISuiY.dpbs>

*[SEPP Comment: Presented in Aug ??? TWTW.]*

### **Reducing CO2 Emissions Is Not a Useful Substitute for Effective Stormwater Management**

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Aug 31, 2017

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/3825>

### **Why do 100-year events happen so often?**

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Sep 1, 2017

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2017/09/01/why-do-100-year-events-happen-so-often/>

### **UK Flooding Events and Fake Science**

By Euan Mearns, Energy Matters, Aug 28, 2017

<http://euanmearns.com/uk-flooding-events-and-fake-science/>

Link to paper: Changing climate shifts timing of European floods

By Günter Blöschl, et al. Science, Aug 11, 2017

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/357/6351/588>

“Concluding Thoughts

A group of 46 workers from 35 countries and 35 institutions led by Professor Guenter Bloeschl and supported by the ERC “FloodChange,” project no. 291152 (budget €2.2 million) published a paper in Science [1] claiming that there are changes to the pattern of European Floods 1960 to 2010, linked to man-made climate change. Putting their findings on the UK under the microscope I find that reality is close to the exact opposite of the claims made and published in Science. Either the 46 scientists associated with this work, the reviewers and editors at Science are wrong or my analysis of their findings is wrong. In the former case I will press for a full retraction of the paper from Science and for this retraction to be published by the BBC and FT at the very least, both of whom covered the story and who may have inadvertently misled the public and the financial markets.”

*[SEPP Comment: Debunking the claim that “climate change” is causing changes in flood timing in Europe. “Figure 5 The geomagnetic activity of the Sun, as measured by sunspot number, was hyperactive during cycles 21, 22 and 23 (1976 – 2009) but has suddenly gone very quiet in the most recent cycle 24. The sudden change in the pattern of UK flooding (Figure 2) is coincident with this change to the Sun. Chart from SIDC.”]*

### **CONSENSUS: Still No Connection Between Global Warming And Floods**

By Michael Bastasch, Daily Caller, Aug 30, 2017

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/08/30/consensus-still-no-connection-between-global-warming-and-floods/>

Link to paper: Climate-driven variability in the occurrence of major floods across North America and Europe

By Glenn A. Hodgkins, et al., Journal of Hydrology, September 2017

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002216941730478X#%21>

From the article: “What they found was flooding was more correlated with decadal natural ocean cycles than long-term global climate change.”

### ***Defending the Orthodoxy***

#### **Weather-related disasters are increasing**

But the number of deaths caused by them is falling

By Staff Writers, The Economist, Aug 29, 2017

[https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/08/daily-chart-19?cid1=cust/ddnew/n/n/n/20170829n/owned/n/n/nw1/n/n/na/Daily\\_Dispatch/email&etear=dailydispatch](https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/08/daily-chart-19?cid1=cust/ddnew/n/n/n/20170829n/owned/n/n/nw1/n/n/na/Daily_Dispatch/email&etear=dailydispatch)

*[SEPP Comment: A reporting artifact? We have more reporters, therefore more reports?]*

### **Fossil Fuel Subsidies Deter Innovation**

By Josh Smith, Real Clear Energy, Aug 29, 2017

[http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2017/08/29/fossil\\_fuel\\_subsidies\\_deter\\_innovation\\_110243.html](http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2017/08/29/fossil_fuel_subsidies_deter_innovation_110243.html)

How Large Are Global Fossil Fuel Subsidies?

By Coady, Parry, Sears, and Shang, World Development, March 2017

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X16304867?via%3Dihub>

“Undercharging for global warming accounts for 22% of the subsidy in 2013, air pollution 46%, broader vehicle externalities 13%, supply costs 11%, and general consumer taxes 8%.”

“Eliminating subsidies would have reduced global carbon emissions in 2013 by 21% and **fossil fuel air pollution deaths** 55%, while raising revenue of 4%, and social welfare by 2.2%, of global GDP.” [Boldface added.]

*[SEPP Comment: More international non-science?]*

### ***Questioning the Orthodoxy***

#### **China lifts 13.9 million people out of poverty each year**

By Editor Yan, XinhuaNet, Aug 29, 2017 [H/t Willie Soon]

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-08/29/c\\_136566153.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-08/29/c_136566153.htm)

### **Video: Death of a Climate Icon, the polar bear’s demise as a useful poster child**

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Aug 31, 2017

<https://polarbearscience.com/2017/08/31/video-death-of-a-climate-icon-the-polar-bears-demise-as-a-useful-poster-child/>

“Last week I asked: “What’s causing the death of the polar bear as a climate change icon?”  
“I was echoing the conclusion of a commentator at the Arctic Institute (22 August 2017) who lamented: “The polar bear is dead, long live the polar bear” and climate scientist Michael Mann, who told a lecture audience a few months ago that polar bears are no longer useful for generating “action” on climate change.”

### **Hurricane Harvey and Climate Change**

Extreme weather events attribution science yields murky results

By Ronald Bailey, Reason.com, Aug 29, 2017

[http://reason.com/blog/2017/08/29/hurricane-harvey-and-climate-change?utm\\_medium=email](http://reason.com/blog/2017/08/29/hurricane-harvey-and-climate-change?utm_medium=email)

“A 2015 study in Nature Geoscience argued that some economic losses from hurricanes striking the United States are ‘**consistent with an influence of climate change.**’” [Boldface added]

[SEPP Comment: *Questioning thinking in Nature?*]

### **New Paper: At Least 80% Of The Warming Over The Last Century Due To ‘Natural Phenomena’**

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Aug 28, 2017

<http://notrickszone.com/2017/08/28/new-paper-at-least-80-of-the-warming-over-the-last-century-due-to-natural-phenomena/#sthash.14LiXtH.dpbs>

[SEPP Comment: *Further discussion on the Abbot and Marohasy paper presented in the August 26 TWTW.*]

### ***Change in US Administrations***

#### **First on CNN: Tillerson moves to ditch special envoys**

By Elise Labott, Nicole Gaouette and Jeremy Herb, CNN, August 29, 2017

<http://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/28/politics/tillerson-state-dept-envoys/index.html>

“The positions of the special envoy for climate change and the special representative for the Arctic region will be removed and their functions and staff placed under the Bureau of Oceans and International and Scientific Affairs.”

### **New Study on Electricity Grid Suggests the Need for Market Reforms**

By Nicolas Loris, Daily Signal, Aug 31, 2017

<http://dailysignal.com/2017/08/31/new-study-electricity-grid-suggests-need-market-reforms/>

Link to the report: Staff Report to the Secretary on Electricity Markets and Reliability

By Staff Writers, DOE, August 2017

[https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/08/f36/Staff%20Report%20on%20Electricity%20Markets%20and%20Reliability\\_0.pdf](https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/08/f36/Staff%20Report%20on%20Electricity%20Markets%20and%20Reliability_0.pdf)

[SEPP Comment: *Further review of the DOE report.*]

### ***Social Benefits of Carbon***

#### **A Half-Century Increase in Global Terrestrial Net Primary Production Driven Primarily by Rising Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>**

By Craig Idso, CATO, Aug 31, 2017

<https://www.cato.org/blog/half-century-increase-global-terrestrial-net-primary-production-driven-primarily-rising>

### **A Development Investment for the Ages**

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Aug 17, 2017



<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/malnutrition-development-spending-by-bjorn-lomborg-2017-08>

[SEPP Comment: Better nutrition for infants and young children is the best investment.]

### ***Seeking a Common Ground***

#### **Giovanni: The Bridge Between Data and Science**

By Zhong Liu and James Acker, NASA, Earth Observing System (EOS) Aug 24, 2017

[https://eos.org/project-updates/giovanni-the-bridge-between-data-and-science?utm\\_source=CPRE&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=this+week+from+AGU&utm\\_content=this+week+from+AGU+8%2f30%2f17](https://eos.org/project-updates/giovanni-the-bridge-between-data-and-science?utm_source=CPRE&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=this+week+from+AGU&utm_content=this+week+from+AGU+8%2f30%2f17)

“Using satellite remote sensing data sets can be a daunting task. Giovanni, a Web-based tool, facilitates access, visualization, and exploration for many of NASA’s Earth science data sets.”

#### **Taking politics out of climate science**

A red team, blue team match would test the assumptions of man-made global warming

By E. Calvin Beisner, The Washington Times, Aug 29, 2017 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/aug/29/taking-politics-out-of-climate-science/>

### ***Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO2 Science***

#### **Elevated CO2 and High Temperature Improve the Growth of Rice and Chinese Yam**

Thin, N.C., Shimono, H., Kumagai, E., and Kawasaki, M. 2017. Effects of elevated CO2 concentration on growth and photosynthesis of Chinese yam under different temperature regimes.

*Plant Production Science* 20: 227-236. Sep 1, 2017

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V20/sep/a1.php>

#### **The Resilience of a Mediterranean Seagrass Community to Ocean Acidification**

Cox, T.E., Nash, M., Gazeau, F., Déniel, M., Legrand, E., Alliouane, S., Mahacek, P., Le Fur, A.,

Gattuso, J.-P. and Martin, S. 2017. Effects of in situ CO2 enrichment on *Posidonia oceanica* epiphytic community composition and mineralogy. *Marine Biology* 164: 103, DOI

10.1007/s00227-017-3136-7. Aug 30, 2017

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V20/aug/a18.php>

“...the team of ten scientists conducted a Free Ocean Carbon Dioxide Enrichment (FOCE) experiment wherein they manipulated the pH of small enclosures deployed in seagrass meadows in the Bay of Villefranche, NW Mediterranean Sea, France (43.68°N, 7.32°E) for a period of four months. Oceanic pH values in the acidified treatment chambers were kept at a mean value of 0.26 unit below that in the ambient or control chambers.”

“Cox *et al.* write that ‘the present study outcome adds to the growing literature which suggests that calcified communities in their natural settings can be little affected by minimal changes in surrounding carbonate chemistry,’ i.e., ocean acidification, and they cite several additional studies in support of this statement.”

#### **Another Reason to Reject Wind Farms**

Tang, B., Wu, D., Zhao, X., Zhou, T., Zhao, W. and Wei, H. 2017. The observed impacts of wind farms on local vegetation growth in northern China. *Remote Sensing* 9: 332,

doi:10.3390/rs9040332.

[SEPP Comment: Wind farms inhibit vegetation growth by elevating both daytime and nighttime temperatures, thereby increasing water stress?]

### ***Changing Weather***

### **Roger Pielke Jr.: The Hurricane Lull Couldn't Last**

By Roger Pielke Jr. WSJ, Via GWPF, Sep 1, 2017

<https://www.thegwpf.com/roger-pielke-jr-the-hurricane-lull-couldnt-last/>

### **Resilience, not devastation, is the real story of the Texas floods**

Houston's response to Hurricane Harvey is a lesson for the world

By Rupert Darwall and Fraser Nelson, The Spectator, Sep 2, 2017 [H/t GWPF]

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/2017/09/resilience-not-devastation-is-the-real-story-of-the-texas-floods/>

### **Hurricane Harvey: long-range forecasts**

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Aug 27, 2017

<https://judithcurry.com/2017/08/27/hurricane-harvey-long-range-forecasts/>

### **U.S. Major Hurricane Drought Ends at Record 4,323 Days**

By Susan Jones, CNS News, Aug 26, 2017

<https://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/susan-jones/major-us-hurricane-drought-ends-after-record-4323-days>

### **Record Rainfalls A Thing Of The Past**

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Aug 30, 2017

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2017/08/30/record-rainfalls-a-thing-of-the-past/>

### **Houston Area Flooding Seen from Space**

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Aug 31, 2017

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2017/08/houston-area-flooding-seen-from-space/>

*[SEPP Comment: Click on the image to more fully understand what it shows.]*

### **Major Hurricane US Strikes Over Past 57 Years Plummet, Far Below That Of 60 To 120 Years Ago!**

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Aug 27, 2017

<http://notrickszone.com/2017/08/27/major-hurricane-us-strikes-over-past-57-years-plummet-far-below-that-of-60-to-120-years-ago/#sthash.Jg81fE65.dpbs>

“At Twitter here hurricane expert Philip Klotzbach has posted some interesting historical data on hurricanes amid all the new hype surrounding Category 4 hurricane Harvey.”

### **Major Hurricane Forecast for Sep 10, possibly hitting the US**

By Joe Bastardi, WeatherBELL LLC, Sep 2, 2017

<https://www.weatherbell.com/>

### **Texas chemical plant could explode amid Harvey flooding**

As chemicals heat up in a Crosby manufacturing plant, a large-scale fire or explosion looks increasingly likely.

By Emma Platoff, The Texas Tribune, Aug 30, 2017

<https://www.texastribune.org/2017/08/30/crosby-chemical-plant-could-explode-due-harvey-flooding/>

“The organic peroxides used in the site's manufacturing process have begun to heat up after the plant lost its primary source of power, then the power from its back-up generators. Without

electricity to power refrigeration, the chemicals could degrade, ultimately leading to some type of explosion or fire.”

### ***Changing Weather – We Know***

#### **It's a fact: climate change made Hurricane Harvey more deadly**

By Michael E Mann, The Guardian, Aug 28, 2017

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/28/climate-change-hurricane-harvey-more-deadly>

“We can't say that Hurricane Harvey was caused by climate change. But it was certainly worsened by it.”

#### **Conservative groups shrug off link between tropical storm Harvey and climate change**

Myron Ebell, who headed the EPA's transition team when Trump became president, said the last decade has been a period of 'low hurricane activity'

By Oliver Milman, The Guardian, Aug 30, 2017

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/30/tropical-storm-harvey-climate-change-conservatives-donald-trump>

#### **A Texas newsroom predicted a disaster. Now it's close to coming true.**

By Karen Ho, Columbia Journalism Review, Aug 25, 2017

[https://www.cjr.org/local\\_news/texas-tribune-hurricane-harvey.php](https://www.cjr.org/local_news/texas-tribune-hurricane-harvey.php)

#### **CBS Blames Climate Change and Houston for Harvey Devastation**

By Nicholas Fondacaro, NewsBusters, Aug 30, 2017 [H/t Cooler Heads]

[https://www.newsbusters.org/blogs/nb/nicholas-fondacaro/2017/08/30/cbs-blames-climate-change-and-houston-harvey-devastation?mkt\\_tok=eyJpIjoiWxpFNE5qTmlZamsyWIRGaiIsInQiOiJcL3pETXFsWG5uVkJzNGJ5THkrMysxNHQ1Vk51TVE4NU5aZWVhUSRkR0N0Y3SDVvTFI3V3Z0MURtdXQrZXIEYXcr](https://www.newsbusters.org/blogs/nb/nicholas-fondacaro/2017/08/30/cbs-blames-climate-change-and-houston-harvey-devastation?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWxpFNE5qTmlZamsyWIRGaiIsInQiOiJcL3pETXFsWG5uVkJzNGJ5THkrMysxNHQ1Vk51TVE4NU5aZWVhUSRkR0N0Y3SDVvTFI3V3Z0MURtdXQrZXIEYXcr)

#### **Brian Greene's man-made hurricanes**

By Luboš Motl. The Reference Frame, Aug 30, 2017

<https://motls.blogspot.com/2017/08/brian-greene-s-man-made-hurricanes.html#more>

### ***Changing Weather – We Do Not Know***

#### **Global Warming and Hurricane Harvey**

By Cliff Mass, Weather and Climate Blog, Aug 31, 2017

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2017/08/global-warming-and-hurricane-harvey.html>

#### **Harvey downgraded but flooding rains to continue for days as it meanders**

By Joseph D'Aleo, CCM, WeatherBELL Analytics LLC Meteorologist, ICECAP, Aug 26, 2017

[http://icecap.us/index.php/go/political-climate/harvey\\_downgraded\\_but\\_flooding\\_rains\\_to\\_continue\\_for\\_days\\_as\\_it\\_meanders1/](http://icecap.us/index.php/go/political-climate/harvey_downgraded_but_flooding_rains_to_continue_for_days_as_it_meanders1/)

#### **Harvey makes second landfall and heads northeast**

By Joseph D'Aleo, WeatherBELL Analytics, LLC, ICECAP, Aug 30, 2017

[http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/harvey\\_makes\\_second\\_landfall\\_and\\_heads\\_northeast2/](http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/harvey_makes_second_landfall_and_heads_northeast2/)

**As Terrible As Harvey Is, The Galveston Hurricane Of 1900 Was Much, Much Worse**

By Kevin Murnane, Forbes, Aug 27, 2017

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinmurnane/2017/08/27/as-terrible-as-harvey-is-the-galveston-hurricane-of-1900-was-much-much-worse/#137b66cf2594>

### **Was the Houston Disaster Man-Made?**

By John Hinderaker, Power Line, Aug 29, 2017

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2017/08/was-the-houston-disaster-man-made.php>

### **Hurricane Expert's Forecast Spot On...Says "It's all Cyclical" ..."Nothing To Do With Global Warming"**

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Sep 1, 2017

<http://notrickszone.com/2017/09/01/hurricane-experts-forecast-spot-on-says-its-all-cyclical-nothing-to-do-with-global-warming/#sthash.cNgWVRUE.dpbs>

### **Hurricane Harvey In Perspective**

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Aug 31, 2017

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2017/08/31/hurricane-harvey-in-perspective/>

### **Partying in Paris instead of Preparing in Houston**

By Ron Clutz, Science Matters, Aug 26, 2017 [H/t GWPF]

<https://rclutz.wordpress.com/2017/08/26/partying-in-paris-instead-preparing-in-houston/>

*[SEPP Comment: See Video at end of article.]*

### ***Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice***

**Arctic Climate Explorers give up sailing to the 'melting' North Pole because – there's too much ice!**

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Aug 31, 2017

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2017/08/31/arctic-climate-explorers-give-up-sailing-to-the-north-pole-because-theres-too-much-ice/>

“Arctic Mission’s northernmost position was 590 nautical miles (678.5 statute miles) from the North Pole.”

### **Arctic Refuses To Melt As Predicted**

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Aug 31, 2017

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2017/08/31/arctic-refuses-to-melt-as-predicted/>

### **Persistent August Arctic Ice**

By Ron Clutz, Science Matters, Aug 28, 2017

<https://rclutz.wordpress.com/2017/08/28/persistent-august-arctic-ice/>

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

**Shame on the eco-ghouls exploiting Hurricane Harvey**

By Brendan O'Neill, The Spectator, Aug 31, 2017 [H/t GWPF]

<https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2017/08/shame-on-the-eco-ghouls-exploiting-hurricane-harvey/>

“This echoes the bizarre phrase ‘Weather of Mass Destruction’, promiscuously used by greens, which treats weather events almost as sentient, as seeking to teach us mortals a lesson about our wickedness.”

## **University of Tampa professor fired after tweeting Hurricane Harvey is 'karma' for Texas voting Republican**

By Brian Lisi, New York Daily News, Aug 29, 2017

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/professor-fired-calling-harvey-karma-texas-voting-gop-article-1.3452105>

“Ironically, Harris County, which includes the devastated city of Houston, went for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, along with the counties of Dallas, Bexar, Travis, El Paso, Hidalgo and Fort Bend.”

### ***Communicating Better to the Public – Go Personal.***

#### **Jeffrey Sachs’s Hurricane Harvey Hate Speech (Houstonians, Texans should be offended)**

By Robert Bradley Jr. Master Resource, Aug 30, 2017

<https://www.masterresource.org/climate-hate-speech/jeffrey-sachs-hurricane-harvey-hate-speech/>

### ***Questioning European Green***

#### **Is the European Commission Waking Up to Electricity Consumer Pain?**

By John Constable, GWPF, Aug 25, 2017

<https://www.thegwpf.com/is-the-european-commission-waking-up-to-electricity-consumer-pain/>

### ***Questioning Green Elsewhere***

#### **New York denies gas pipeline permit for CPV power plant over climate concerns**

By Robert Walton, Utility Dive, Sep 1, 2017

<http://www.utilitydive.com/news/new-york-denies-gas-pipeline-permit-for-cpv-power-plant-over-climate-concer/504071/>

### ***Funding Issues***

#### **Should The Federal Government Just Write A Blank Check To Cover The Flooding In Houston?**

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Aug 31, 2017

<http://manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2017/8/31/should-the-federal-government-just-write-a-blank-check-to-cover-the-flooding-in-houston>

### ***Subsidies and Mandates Forever***

#### **New York's Clean Energy Programs: The High Cost of Symbolic Environmentalism**

By Jonathan A. Lesser, Manhattan Institute, Aug 22, 2017

<https://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/new-yorks-clean-energy-programs-high-cost-symbolic-environmentalism-10565.html>

Link to report: New York's Clean Energy Programs: The High Cost of Symbolic Environmentalism

By Jonathan Lesser, Continental Economics, August 2017

<https://www.manhattan-institute.org/sites/default/files/R-JL-0817.pdf>

“Given existing technology, the CES’s [clean energy standard of] 80[%] by [20]50 mandate is unrealistic, unobtainable, and unaffordable. Attempting to meet the mandate could easily cost New York consumers and businesses more than \$1 trillion by 2050.”

*[SEPP Comment: The wisdom of modern politicians: mandate technology that does not exist, then blame others when it does not appear!]*

### **Renewable Fuels Are Toxic DC Swamp Water**

By Patrick Hedger, Real Clear Energy, August 29, 2017

[http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2017/08/29/renewable\\_fuels\\_are\\_toxic\\_dc\\_swamp\\_water\\_110244.html](http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2017/08/29/renewable_fuels_are_toxic_dc_swamp_water_110244.html)

### ***EPA and other Regulators on the March***

#### **Trump's EPA Chief Investigated For Taking Weekend Trips Home**

By Michael Bastsch, Washington Examiner, Aug 28, 2017 [H/t WUWT]

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/08/28/trumps-epa-chief-investigated-for-taking-weekend-trips-home/>

#### **EPA taps climate change doubter to lead Midwest office**

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Aug 29, 2017

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/348440-epa-taps-wisconsin-official-to-lead-midwest-office>

### ***Energy Issues – Non-US***

#### **Electricity consumption in Europe will shift under climate change**

By Charles the moderator, WUWT, Aug 29, 2017

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2017/08/29/electricity-consumption-in-europe-will-shift-under-climate-change/>

Link to paper: North–south polarization of European electricity consumption under future warming

By Wienz, Levemann, and Auffhammer, PNAS, July 27, 2017

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2017/08/22/1704339114>

[SEPP Comment: According to the paper, with warming, peak loads will shift away from heating.]

### ***Energy Issues – Australia***

#### **An initial look at the Australian electricity grid data**

By Roger Andrews, Energy Matters, Aug 30, 2017

<http://euanmearns.com/an-initial-look-at-the-australian-electricity-grid-data/#more-19400>

[SEPP Comment: The National Electricity Market (NEM) covers east Australia. Western Australia is an electricity “island”. No data are available for Northern Territory.]

#### **The Cost of Going Green: Australian Taxpayers Hit With a \$60BN Power Bill**

By Staff Writers, The Australian, Via GWPF, Sep 1, 2017

<https://www.thegwpf.com/the-cost-of-going-green-australian-taxpayers-hit-with-a-60bn-power-bill/>

[SEPP Comment: Subsidies and high prices. Changing the old political argument for subsidies alone!]

### ***Energy Issues -- US***

#### **Frack This**

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, Aug 27, 2017

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2017/08/frack-this-2.php>

Link to report: Health Impacts of Unconventional Oil and Gas Development

By Alan J. Krupnick and Isabel Echarte, Resources for the Future, June 2017

[http://www.rff.org/files/document/file/RFF-Rpt-ShaleReviews\\_Health\\_0.pdf](http://www.rff.org/files/document/file/RFF-Rpt-ShaleReviews_Health_0.pdf)

#### **Katrina, Rita And Harvey Tell Shale's Story**

By Liam Denning, Bloomberg, Aug 28, 2017 [H/t GWPF]

<https://www.bloomberg.com/gadfly/articles/2017-08-28/hurricane-harvey-energy-impact-dulled-by-shale-s-rise>

“Natural gas illustrates the point. When Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf, natural gas prices spiked into double digits, versus today's price of just less than \$3 per million BTU.”

### **Texas Spared Worst of Blackouts as Harvey Brings Rain, Not Wind**

By Jim Poison, Bloomberg, Aug 29, 2017

[https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-29/harvey-blackouts-miss-estimates-even-as-storm-devastates-houston?utm\\_content=energy&utm\\_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social&cmpid%3D=socialflow-twitter-energy](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-29/harvey-blackouts-miss-estimates-even-as-storm-devastates-houston?utm_content=energy&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&cmpid%3D=socialflow-twitter-energy)

### ***Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?***

#### **Can Oil Sands Pay Off at Just \$50 a Barrel?**

New technologies are helping Canadian oil producers cut costs.

By Kevin Orland, Bloomberg, Aug 24, 2017

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-24/can-oil-sands-pay-off-at-just-50-a-barrel>

### **Alaskan Oil Returns With A Vengeance**

By Haley Zaremba, Oil Price.com, Aug 29, 2017

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Crude-Oil/Alaskan-Oil>Returns-With-A-Vengeance.html>

### **China Becomes World’s Third-Largest Shale Gas Producer**

By Irina Slav, Oil Price.com, Aug 29, 2017

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Crude-Oil/China-Becomes-Worlds-Third-Largest-Shale-Gas-Producer.html>

### ***Return of King Coal?***

#### **The Future of Energy Is Still ... Coal**

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, Aug 29, 2017

<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2017/08/the-future-of-energy-is-still-coal.php>

### **Xcel Energy plans to retire two coal-fired plants in Pueblo, increase renewables**

Consumers should come out ahead long term, utility says

By Aldo Svaldi, Denver Post, Aug 30, 2017

<http://www.denverpost.com/2017/08/29/xcel-energy-pueblo-coal-plants-retiring/>

### ***Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind***

#### **Bonackers vs. Big Wind**

Governor Andrew Cuomo’s preposterous renewable-energy plan threatens Long Island’s fishing industry.

By Robert Bryce, City Journal, Summer 2017

<https://www.city-journal.org/html/bonackers-vs-big-wind-15333.html>

“Offshore wind energy has been hyped nearly as much as a Kardashian wedding.”

### **World’s Biggest Wind Turbine Maker Waves Goodbye to Oil Industry**

Sale of oil assets is fueling Denmark’s green transition

By Peter Levring, Bloomberg, Aug 29, 2017

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-29/world-s-biggest-wind-turbine-maker-waves-oil-industry-goodbye>

### ***Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles***

#### **Are Battery Powered Vehicles the Future?**

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Sep 1, 2017

<http://www.powerforusa.com/2017/09/01/are-battery-powered-vehicles-the-future/>

*[SEPP Comment: Comparing the eight-year cost of a battery powered vehicles with an internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle.]*

### ***Carbon Schemes***

#### **Potential Carbon Capture Game Changer Nears Completion**

If it works as expected, the Net Power natural gas demonstration plant will capture carbon at nearly no cost.

By James Temple, Technology Review, Aug 30, 2017

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/608755/potential-carbon-capture-game-changer-nears-completion/>

“Eventually, Net Power expects to produce electricity for around \$42 per megawatt-hour, on par with combined cycle natural gas without carbon capture.”

*[SEPP Comment: Will Allam Cycle technology work? Or will it need government energy policies such as carbon taxes, cap and trade systems, and emissions standards to survive?]*

### ***Environmental Industry***

#### **Environmentalists Can Be Their Own Worst Enemies**

By Merrill Matthews, IBD, Aug 29, 2017

<http://www.investors.com/politics/commentary/environmentalists-can-be-their-own-worst-enemies/>

### ***Other Scientific News***

#### **Arsenic in Pakistan groundwater 'alarming high': study**

By Staff Writers, Miami (AFP), Aug 23, 2017 [No link to study!]

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Arsenic\\_in\\_Pakistan\\_groundwater\\_alarming\\_high\\_study\\_999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Arsenic_in_Pakistan_groundwater_alarming_high_study_999.html)

*[SEPP Comment: The problem has been known for over a decade and an engineer at George Mason University designed a low cost, simple solution, using local materials.]*

#### **NASA Should Continue its Large Strategic Missions to Maintain United States’ Global Leadership in Space**

Press Release, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, Aug 24, 2017 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

[http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=24857&\\_ga=2.112770116.1791954214.1504013758-1882785162.1477072253](http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=24857&_ga=2.112770116.1791954214.1504013758-1882785162.1477072253)

Link to report sponsored by NASA: Powering Science: NASA's Large Strategic Science Missions  
By Staff Writers, Multiple Agencies, National Academies Press, 2017

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/24857/powering-science-nasas-large-strategic-science-missions>

### ***Other News that May Be of Interest***

#### **Low Fat consensus was wrong: High carb diets increase death rates**

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Sep 1, 2017

<http://joannenova.com.au/2017/09/low-fat-consensus-was-wrong-high-carb-diets-increase-death-rates/>



Link to report: Moderate consumption of fats, carbohydrates best for health, international study shows

By Staff Writers, McMaster University, Aug 29, 2017

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/08/170829091027.htm>

Link to paper: Fruit, vegetable, and legume intake, and cardiovascular disease and deaths in 18 countries (PURE): a prospective cohort study

By Victoria Miller, et al. The Lancet, Aug 29, 2017

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32253-5/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32253-5/fulltext)

“The association between intake of fruits, vegetables, and legumes with cardiovascular disease and deaths has been investigated extensively in Europe, the USA, Japan, and China, but little or no data are available from the Middle East, South America, Africa, or south Asia.” From Summary

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**BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:**

**Ban outdoor heaters!**

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Aug 28, 2017

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/8894>

“A call for a ban on outdoor heaters has been backed by the European Parliament. MEPs voted to endorse a report that says a timetable should be set to phase out patio heaters, as well as standby modes on televisions.

“Report author Fiona Hall – a British MEP – says significant steps have to be taken to cut CO2 emissions, and a ban should at least be considered.

“Many people are already aware that patio heaters produce significant amounts of carbon dioxide, she said. It’s important that we at least look into taking them off the market.”

[BBCNews, 31 Jan 2008](#)

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**ARTICLES:**

**1. Texas, Thou Hast Sinned**

Progressives blame Houston’s success for the hurricane disaster.

Editorial, WSJ, Aug 31, 2017

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/texas-thou-hast-sinned-1504221194>

SUMMARY: The editorial states:

*“Who says progressives don’t believe in religion? They may not believe in Jehovah or Jesus, but they certainly believe in Old Testament-style wrath against sinners. Real Noah and the Ark stuff. Witness the emerging theme on the media left that Texas, and especially Houston, are at fault for the devastation of Hurricane Harvey.*

*“This has happened even faster than usual, perhaps because the Katrina II scenario of emergency mismanagement didn’t pan out. The state, local and federal governments have done a competent job under terrible conditions, and stories about neighborly charity, racial goodwill, the heroism of rescuers, and Big Business donating money and goods don’t fit into any agenda. Whining over Melania’s heels also lacks political legs.*

*“So our friends on the left have had to look elsewhere to score ideological points, and they believe they’ve found the right target in the political economy of those greedy Texans. Specifically, Houston is a global hub of the oil and gas industry, and it has allowed “laissez-faire”*

*development without zoning laws. This has brought the righteous wrath of Harvey down on their own heads.*

*“‘Harvey, the Storm That Humans Helped Cause,’ said a headline in one progressive bellwether as the storm raged. An overseas columnist was less subtle if more clichéd: ‘Houston, you have a problem, and some of it of your own making’” In this telling, Houston is the Sodom and Gomorrah of fossil fuels, which cause global warming, which is producing more hurricanes.*

*“The problem is that this argument is fact-free. As Roger Pielke Jr. has noted, the link between global warming and recent hurricanes and extreme weather events is “unsupportable based on research and evidence.” Mr. Pielke, who is no climate-change denier, has shown with data that hurricanes hitting the U.S. have not increased in frequency or intensity since 1900, there is no notable trend up or down in global tropical cyclone landfalls since 1970, and floods have not increased in frequency or intensity in the U.S. since 1950.*

*“The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recently said that ‘it is premature to conclude that human activities—and particularly greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming—have already had a detectable impact on Atlantic hurricane or global tropical cyclone activity.’*

*“No less than the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says it lacks evidence to show that global warming is making storms and flooding worse. But climate scolds still blame Harvey on climate change because, well, this is what the climate models say should happen as the climate warms.*

*“In other words, Houstonians, you’d better go to climate confession, mend your sinful ways, and give up all of those high-paying oil-and-gas jobs. Maybe all those drillers and refiners can work for Google or Facebook .*

*“Then there’s the political assault on Houston’s pro-growth development policies. ‘Harvey Wasn’t Just Bad Weather. It Was Bad City Planning’ shouts a piece in Bloomberg Businessweek: ‘Sprawling Houston is a can-do city whose attitude is grow first, ask questions later. It’s the only major U.S. city without a zoning code saying what types of buildings can go where, so skyscrapers sometimes sprout next to split-levels. Voters have repeatedly opposed enacting a zoning law.’*

*“How dare those Texas hicks reject the political controls over building that zoning laws represent. How dare they prefer lower construction costs and affordable housing. The average rent on a one-bedroom home in Houston is 60% lower than in San Jose, Calif., in part because the city issues permits once builders satisfy a health and safety checklist. They don’t have many mandates that raise costs. Tens of thousands of people move to Houston and its swampy climate because they can get good jobs and afford to live there.*

*“Zoning also has little or nothing to do with flooding. Some on the left blame roads built over wetlands. But according to Joel Kotkin’s Center for Opportunity Urbanism, the main problem is Houston’s topography. Its clay soil doesn’t absorb water well and the flat city doesn’t drain well. In the 1800s when there were no highways or parking lots, parts of the city were often flooded.*

*“The loss of wetlands since the early 1990s has reduced Houston’s capacity to absorb water by some four billion gallons, but Harvey dropped trillions of gallons of rain. Harris County which surrounds Houston has expanded storm-water retention ponds. But no amount of flood control could have prevented damage from a once-in-500-years storm.*

As noted above in the discussion of soils in the commentary section of TWTW, paving impervious, or largely impervious, soils do not greatly reduce their ability to absorb water.

*New York City has plenty of zoning and building limits, yet it suffered \$19 billion in damage from Hurricane Sandy that dropped only a half inch of rain. Fifty-one square miles of New York were flooded by Sandy’s storm surge, 300,000 homes and 23,400 businesses were inundated. “Smart growth” plans didn’t prevent that.*

*All of this shows the folly of trying to force-feed natural disasters into neat ideological categories. Major storms cause major damage, and sometimes even the best mitigation plans can’t prevent it. No doubt Houston will learn lessons from Harvey about drainage and building that might reduce the damage the next time. Risk-based insurance for property would also help reduce taxpayer losses.*

*Texans are used to being sneered at by coastal elites, and we trust they’ll reject this attempt at their moral improvement too. Their rebuilding will be that much faster, and cheaper, because they have a resilient economy built on energy and zoning laws that make housing affordable. They also know the difference between an act of nature and progressive political opportunism.*

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## **2. The Coming Global Car Wreck**

Dieselgate is not the fruit of an industry cartel but of politicians ignoring cost and benefit.

By Holman W. Jenkins, Jr., WSJ, Aug 25, 2017

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coming-global-car-wreck-1503695929>

SUMMARY: Jenkins writes:

*“German Chancellor Angela Merkel was tactfully on vacation but came back earlier this month to add her voice to the latest ‘dieselgate’ scandal involving her country’s car makers. The industry threw away “incredible public trust,” she declared at a rally kicking off her re-election campaign, and the job falls exclusively on auto makers to “win it back.”*

*Thus did Ms. Merkel create the required cosmetic distance between herself and an industry whose problems are entirely manufactured by politicians.*

*The prominent German magazine Der Spiegel has spent much of the summer hoarsely condemning VW, BMW, Audi, Mercedes and Porsche. First it accused them of running an illegal cartel because they cooperated in meeting certain technical obligations related to Europe’s mandated insistence on diesel vehicles. In installment two, the magazine accused them of besmirching the reputation of “Made in Germany” in the eyes of the world.*

*Never mind that such besmirching is hardly obvious from record global sales lately of BMW and Mercedes cars. Also missing from the magazine’s 9,000-word diatribe is a recognition that Germany’s dieselgate and associated scandals arise entirely from European politicians’ politically-correct pursuit of meaningless reductions in CO2.*

*Switching to diesel from gasoline, the monumental regulatory effort launched by the European Union in the late 1990s, ended up delivering only thimbles-full of avoided greenhouse pollution compared to competing gasoline engines. But it also made the air in European cities significantly less breathable thanks to diesel particulates and nitrogen oxides.*

*Yet there has been no inclination to question the cost-benefit basis of the anticarbon crusade. Instead, Europe is doubling down by forcing car makers to build electric cars, while Der Spiegel is trying to shift the blame for the diesel experiment's failure to alleged anticompetitive actions by German car makers.*

*In meetings that began decades earlier under the auspices of a national auto trade group, car makers agreed on the need to avoid using up excessive space for large AdBlue tanks (a fluid to mitigate diesel emissions) to save room for occupants and golf bags—i.e., to make sure their cars remained salable.*

*They also agreed on the need to avoid annoying owners by requiring frequent AdBlue fill-ups—so their cars would remain salable.*

[AdBlue is a diesel exhaust fluid made up of urea and deionized water.]

*We're told this was tantamount to a group decision to cheat on emissions controls. Except it wasn't. BMW, for one, developed a secondary means to clean its exhaust in addition to AdBlue. It was expensive but it worked.*

*In fact, German car companies compete fiercely with each other on price, features, performance and marketing jazz. They also compete with Lexus, Acura, Cadillac, Jaguar, Infiniti, etc., etc.*

*These other companies were free to crowd out passengers and luggage to make room for AdBlue if that's what customers wanted. (They didn't.) Red herrings make good distractions. The distraction here is from the folly of the underlying CO2 policy.*

*What the scandal really teaches is the remarkable political paradox of today's global car industry. It delivers complex products that meet the high standards of consumers, yet it bears a burden of political meddling that should make its competitive existence impossible.*

*How is this miracle achieved? Dieseltgate explains all: Once politicians and regulators decided to make diesel the star of their fake climate show, they turned to providing loopholes to ensure their cars remained marketable. VW's behavior (as uncovered by U.S. regulators) was egregious, programming its engine software to draw on the AdBlue tank only when its car was on a test-bed for regulators seeking to confirm (wink, wink) that its emissions were OK. Except it has now become clear that other car makers engaged in similar cheating, including some that could not be part of any German cartel because they weren't German.*

*All this, we repeat, so Europe's politicians could pretend to be doing something about global warming.*

*Now comes a new chapter. How will the public-relations damage be apportioned between car makers and the political class over a grotesque boondoggle? Don't be surprised when this*

*scandal is swept imperceptibly toward the memory hole once Ms. Merkel has been safely returned to office, as every poll suggest she will.*

*Why? Because, from Berlin to Beijing to Sacramento, Calif., governments are already engaged in a new and even more implausible magic act: How to preserve their car industries and jobs while simultaneously mandating that car makers produce electric vehicles that can only be sold to the public at a steep loss in a world where oil is \$50 a barrel and gasoline engines continue to make impressive efficiency gains.*

*In short, a car wreck is coming that will make dieselgate look like a fender bender.*

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