

SEPP Science Editorial #11-2009 (4/4/09)

On Causes and Mechanisms of the 1500-Year Climate Cycles

The existence of a (roughly) 1500-year climate cycle of abrupt warming and cooling, first noted in Greenland ice cores by Dansgaard and Oeschger, is well established from a multitude of geological data [Singer and Avery. *Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1500 Years*. Rowman & Littlefield Publ. 2007]. The cycle appears to extend into the Holocene and can account for the Medieval Warm Period (MWP) and Little Ice Age (LIA) [Loehle and Singer 2009]. Its synchronicity seems to be preserved. Early on, Bond [2001] suggested a solar cause; but we do not know of any solar phenomenon with such a period. Nor do we know the mechanism by which the Sun could cause such abrupt climate changes.

In view of the fairly precise timing of the cycle, we speculate that purely internal oscillations of the ocean-atmosphere system are unlikely to be the principal or only cause. We also note that the amplitude of D-O events was much larger during the period of glaciation than during the current warm period of the Holocene. We therefore favor a quasi-periodic internal oscillation synchronized by a solar trigger; the mechanism resembles 'stochastic resonance.' This would also account for the occurrence of missing cycles. As to the actual mechanism, we favor changes in solar activity modulating the energy spectrum of Galactic Cosmic Rays [Singer 1958] and thereby the flux of GCR impinging on the Earth's atmosphere. The most reasonable way this could affect the climate is by changes in cloudiness [Svensmark 2007]. The large amplitude of the D-O events suggests a positive feedback, perhaps a greenhouse effect, ultimately limited by a negative feedback inherent in the atmosphere-ocean system. Although many puzzles still remain, the observations suggest that large-amplitude abrupt changes become less likely in a warmer climate [NRC 2002].

Why is that? (1) One reason might be that a colder ocean mixed-layer contains more dissolved CO₂ and therefore releases more CO₂ into the atmosphere when warmed – compared to a warmer Holocene ocean. (2) Further, this released CO₂ produces a stronger GH forcing when added to the low CO₂ levels of the ice ages -- because of the well-accepted logarithmic dependence of CO₂ forcing on CO₂ concentration. (3) Even more important, the ice-age atmosphere is extremely dry; there is little evaporation from the cold ocean surface and ice cover. Hence there will be little or no 'negative feedback' from WV or from clouds. (I am assuming here that such a feedback exists now -- reducing the GH effects of CO₂). So one can see the full GH effect of CO₂. (4) Finally, we don't see 'run-away warming' because the amount of CO₂ released from the mixed layer is limited. (At much higher temperatures, of course, the 'thermostat' effect of Ramanathan would operate.)

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

The Huff Post http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ann-carlson/new-york-times-climate-sk_b_182591.html

is worried about the NYT publicity given to climate skeptic Freeman Dyson

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/29/magazine/29Dyson-t.html> [Do read it; long but well worth it].

Among those he considers true believers, Dyson has been particularly dismissive of Al Gore, whom Dyson calls climate change chief propagandist, and James Hansen, the head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York and an adviser to Gore's film, An Inconvenient Truth. Dyson accuses them of relying too heavily on computer-generated climate models that foresee a Grand Guignol of imminent world devastation as icecaps melt, oceans rise and storms and plagues sweep the earth, and he blames the pair's lousy science for distracting public attention from more serious and more immediate dangers to the planet.

Floor speech by Congressman Dana Rohrabacher

http://rohrbacher.house.gov/UploadedFiles/Rohrabacher_Global_Warming_SO_18march2009.pdf

Another Ice Age? Read the full alarming story

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,944914,00.html>

TIME, Jun. 24, 1974: In Africa, drought continues for the sixth consecutive year, adding terribly to the toll of famine victims. During 1972 record rains in parts of the U.S., Pakistan and Japan caused some of the worst flooding in centuries. In Canada's wheat belt, a particularly chilly and rainy spring has delayed planting and may well bring a disappointingly small harvest. Rainy Britain, on the other hand, has suffered from uncharacteristic dry spells the past few Springs. A series of unusually cold winters has gripped the American Far West, while New England and northern Europe have recently experienced the mildest winters within anyone's recollection.

As they review the bizarre and unpredictable weather pattern of the past several years, a growing number of scientists are beginning to suspect that many seemingly contradictory meteorological fluctuations are actually part of a global climatic upheaval. However widely the weather varies from place to place and time to time, when meteorologists take an average of temperatures around the globe they find that the atmosphere has been growing gradually cooler for the past three decades. The trend shows no indication of reversing. Climatological Cassandras are becoming increasingly apprehensive, for the weather aberrations they are studying may be the harbinger of another ice age.

Concerned about 'galloping glaciers'? Dr Tim Ball recalls the influx of glaciologists from all over the world when the Donjek glacier near Whitehorse (Canada) began galloping back in the early 1960s –during the period of global cooling. Usually these surges occur on glaciers in volcanically active regions and there is a distinct possibility that the increased basal slip due to more water between the base of the glaciers and the rock is due to geothermal heat. All ice below a certain depth, defined as the brittle layer, is plastic and in that zone ice is always flowing down slope. The snout of the glacier only advances or retreats as the rate at which the flowing ice reaches the snout increases or decreases. This is determined by the amount of snowfall and ice accumulation above the 'firn line.' Usually an advancing glacier is due to increased snowfall and therefore ice accumulation above the firn line unless there is an increase in basal slip. The emphasis on temperature when talking about glacier development and movement is generally misplaced.

Steve Milloy's new book: *Green Hell: How Environmentalists Plan to Control Your Life and What You Can Do to Stop Them* [Get Green Hell at Amazon.com!](http://www.amazon.com)

From the inside flap... Big Brother Has Turned Green: The environmental movement has cultivated a warm and fuzzy public image, but behind the smiley-face rhetoric of "sustainability" and "conservation" lies a dark agenda. The Greens aim to regulate your behavior, downsize your lifestyle, and invade the most intimate aspects of your personal life.

http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/04/thirty_years_after_three_mile.html

Thirty years ago, the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station had a partial meltdown. The Enviros in America had a total breakdown. We know today that nuclear power is very safe, very clean, and can provide a true "alternative energy" to fossil fuels, but the whipped up hysteria surrounding Three Mile Island has prevented America from using ending much of our dependence on foreign oil.

UNDER THE BOTTOM LINE

Marching on to Copenhagen: IPCC was not scary enough, so 'scientists' invent new scares

<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/323/5921/1546>

Green jobs in Spain go mainly down the drain

<http://greenhellblog.wordpress.com/2009/03/20/green-collar-job-bubble-bursts-in-spain/>



1. WARNING OVER RENEWABLES AS ECONOMIC CRISIS LEAVES FUNDING GAP

Scant aid, too much hype and unrealistic targets threaten climate-change pledges

By Terry Macalister and David Adam, The Guardian, 21 March 2009

Green power companies are heading for "crisis" and Britain should no longer rely on them to meet its energy security and climate change obligations, some industry experts are warning. The difficulties - triggered by the credit crunch, recession and a collapse in the carbon price - have led to new demands this weekend to ministers from companies warning that their renewables schemes are at risk without more financial aid.

Over the past week alone, the previously fast-growing renewable energy sector has seen Shell decide to stop building wind and solar schemes worldwide, the wave company Pelamis hit by technical and financial troubles, and EDF Energy warn that UK renewables targets would not be realised and should be scaled back to achievable levels. In addition, a group of more than 40 businesses has taken the unique step of writing collectively to Joan Ruddock, the energy and climate change minister, warning her of the threats to a host of projects unless something is done.

"I think it's heading towards a crisis," said Andrew Mill, who sits on the government's Renewables Advisory Board. "The government has done a lot in terms of policies and targets, but the reality is that it was always going to take a lot of money to make it happen. And that money is not coming through quickly enough." The situation could be worse because green industry figures often suggest that everything is fine, argues Mill. "A lot of the [renewable companies] can't afford to talk about it as they need to be seen as a good investment. If they don't give out a good story, then they can't raise money."

The problems stretch across the industry, he said, from small marine energy companies to large-scale investments in offshore wind farms that are expected to form the cornerstone of ambitious plans to generate 15% of Britain's energy from renewable sources by 2020. "The big utilities are struggling to raise project finance for inshore wind farms, and they were supposed to be the easy projects."

"There is a serious problem," agrees John Constable, head of policy at the Renewable Energy Foundation (REF). "I warned a year ago that the industry was being set up for a fall and now it has happened. There has been too much hype and the government was always far too unrealistic about what could be achieved."

The British Wind Energy Association, which usually paints an unfailingly upbeat picture and which has just wrung a series of new subsidy concessions from ministers, will demand in a budget submission to be unveiled in two weeks' time more help for an industry hit by a shortage of bank finance, the plunging value of the pound and mounting equipment costs.

The London Array, potentially the biggest offshore wind farm in the world, is already known to be under threat because of the changed economic conditions. Shell pulled out last year and Centrica and E.ON have both voiced major concerns about the prospects for big wind schemes, which are essential if the UK is to meet its targets for renewable power.

The Carbon Capture & Storage Association has also written to the chancellor, Alistair Darling, saying government hopes of meeting carbon-reduction targets using CCS are doomed "without a serious and urgent commitment to funding from the UK government".

Constable also believes that Britain could be left having to use more gas or even coal plants to keep the lights on, accepting that even the "super-critical new efficient coal plants like the one E.ON wants to construct at Kingsnorth would leave us breaching our carbon-emission targets".

2. CHRIS MOONEY-GEORGE WILL FLAP

S Fred Singer, Letter to Editor, WashPost. Submitted 3/22/2009

Chris Mooney, author of "The Republican War on Science," is a journalist with a well-known bias -- and certainly no scientist. His op-ed ("Climate Change: Myths and Facts", March 21) attacking columnist George Will is mostly myth. But he is right about one fact: There are indeed "contradictory claims about climate science," which unfortunately has become a "contentious or politicized topic" -- in no small measure because of propagandists like Mooney.

Let's see how he distorts the facts:

- According to thermometer records, the global climate (and US climate as well) cooled between about 1940 and 1976. Scientific opinions then about future climate were divided -- as they are again today. Climate modelers generally thought it would warm, but many respected climatologists, like Reid Bryson, thought it would continue to cool.***

Mooney cleverly conflates scientists and media. He refers to an article titled "The Myth of the 1970s Global Cooling *Scientific* Consensus," but doesn't mention that most books and media, including TIME and Newsweek, were hyping cooling and warning of a coming ice age.

- He next appeals to authority -- the IPCC, UN's climate panel, and assorted groups that simply regurgitate the IPCC -- while ignoring equally competent scientific groups that disagree with the IPCC. We need only note that neither IPCC nor any of its echo chambers predicted the current cooling -- since 1998.
- Mooney claims that cooling started only in 2005, basing it on the analysis of the NASA group of James Hansen. But every other analysis -- by the World Meteorological Organization, IPCC, UK Hadley Centre, and US-NOAA Climate Center -- shows 1998 as the warmest year in the past 11 years. Further, a majority of scientists now foresee continued cooling for at least a decade or two; I myself am agnostic.
- Finally, I take exception to dragging in the issue of sea ice. Why? Because it cannot tell you anything about the single most important question: Is warming caused by anthropogenic emission of greenhouse gases or by natural factors, such as solar activity? Logic tells us that any kind of warming will cause ice to melt -- no matter what the source. Shrinking sea ice, melting glaciers, even complaints from polar bear aficionados, cannot provide such crucial information. Determining the cause requires sophisticated analysis of records from thermometers.

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Footnote (for editor):

*** I know this for a fact because I organized a major scientific conference in 1968 and edited the book "Global Effects of Environmental Pollution." The participants were sharply divided about the direction of future climate. Was the next ice age about to start? The government's chief climatologist Murray Mitchell was agnostic -- and so was I. Roger Revelle, the 'father' of greenhouse warming, who had been measuring the rise of atmospheric carbon dioxide, thought of potential climate warming as an "interesting geophysical

experiment;" Al Gore's climate guru was simply curious about the impact of CO2 but not concerned.

3. WHO PAYS FOR CAP AND TRADE – AND HOW MUCH?

By S. Fred Singer, Letter to Editor, WSJ. Submitted 3/15/2009

There is no question at all that the cost of the C&T program will be borne by consumers. Further, it is a regressive energy tax that hits the poorest of the poor hardest. And as your editorials (March 9 and 13) demonstrate, coal-producing and consuming Mid-Western and Central states will bear the greatest burden. But what about the actual cost of the program to consumers? The White House budget estimates a tax revenue of \$650 billion but other estimates are much higher. Of course, the price of carbon permits depends on where Congress sets the caps for future CO2 emissions. Restricting emissions drastically can raise the price to truly unacceptable levels.

But never fear. The folks at *Resources for the Future* have proposed a truly bright idea: a "soft cap" that politicians can "adjust" to moderate the price of permits. Industries that buy permits to hedge future price increases can see their investment wiped out by political action. Too bad for them, but what a perfect playground for Congress – and what rewarding jobs for lobbyists. To make sure that C&T dies peacefully, I suggest we call it the "Lobbyists Full Employment Act of 2009."

4. YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE HEARTLAND

<http://spectator.org/archives/2009/03/18/youve-got-to-have-heartland>

By Peter Ferrara, on 3.18.09

The chief source of hysteria over possible man-made global warming has been the United Nations and its Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The panel's own climate models project that if man's emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) and other greenhouse gases were causing global warming, there would be a particular pattern of temperature distribution in the atmosphere, which scientists call "the fingerprint." Temperatures in the troposphere portion of the atmosphere above the tropics would increase with altitude, producing a "hotspot" near the top of the troposphere, about 6 miles above the earth's surface. Above that, in the stratosphere, there would be cooling.

All scientists, both the alarmist warm-mongers and the realist cooler heads, agree that this temperature pattern would result if man were causing global warming, reflecting the pattern of CO2 and other greenhouse gases that are increasing in the atmosphere. Warming due to solar variations or other natural causes would not leave such a fingerprint pattern. Higher-quality temperature data from weather balloons and satellites now enable us to settle the man-made global warming debate definitively.

The observed result is just the opposite of the modeled global-warming fingerprint pattern. The data from weather balloons shows no increasing warming with altitude, but rather a slight cooling, with no hotspot. The satellite data confirms this result: no increasing temperature with altitude, no hotspot, no fingerprint.

This was the most important point made by the brilliant scientists from around the world who attended the 2009 International Conference on Climate Change sponsored by the Heartland Institute in New York City last week. Those scientists included, among many others who deserve to be household names: S. Fred Singer, professor emeritus of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia, and the founder and first director of the National Weather Satellite Service; Richard Lindzen, Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Meteorology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, formerly a professor of dynamic meteorology and director of the Center for Earth and Planetary Physics at Harvard; Roy Spencer, principal research scientist at the University of Alabama at Huntsville, and U.S. Science Team Leader for the AMSR-E instrument flying on NASA's Aqua satellite; Patrick Michaels, research professor of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia, and past president of the American Association of State Climatologists; David Douglass, professor of physics at the University of Rochester, and winner of numerous prestigious Science awards; and Syun-ichi Akasofu, professor of physics and former director of the International Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska, winner of awards from the Royal Astronomical Society of London, Japan Academy of Sciences, American Geophysical Union, Japan's

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

There is no collection of scientists in the world smarter and better than these and the others who spoke at and attended the conference. Several argued further that the entire temperature pattern of the 20th century follows normal climate variations, rather than CO₂ emissions. Temperatures in the U.S., which has the most thorough and consistent temperature record and historically the most CO₂ emissions, were stable until 1920, increased some in the 1920s, and then soared to produce the hottest decade of the century during the 1930s. The climate then cooled during most of the period from 1940 until about 1977, except for a brief spike from about 1949 to 1953. Temperatures climbed upward from 1977 until 1998, except for a sharp downturn from about 1988 until about 1995. Temperatures are down over the past decade.

Yet CO₂ levels increased continuously throughout the century, which should have produced a trend of consistent temperature increases if it were causing global warming. Several presenters at the conference argued that the more complex actual temperature variations were fully explained by natural, long-term temperature patterns. The temperature increases until 1940 reflected mostly the continuing recovery from the Little Ice Age, which ran roughly from the early 1400s to the late 1800s. The pattern since then is consistent with the variations of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), a 20 to 30 year up and down variation in sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean produced by deep-sea ocean currents.

Moreover, several presenters argued that due to these natural variations we have already entered a period of long-term cooling that will last at least another 20 years, and maybe more. Indeed, satellite-measured temperatures show that the global atmosphere has cooled over the last 10 years, with the decline in temperatures accelerating over the last two years. As Lord Christopher Monckton, who also spoke at the conference, has said, "Global warming stopped 10 years ago. It hasn't gotten warmer since 1998. In fact in the last 7 years, there has been a downturn in global temperatures equivalent on average to about one degree Fahrenheit per decade. We're actually in a period of global cooling."

What portends longer-term cooling is that Pacific temperatures have now turned cold, which is likely to continue for another 15-20 years given past trends. Moreover, we have now experienced an extended period of minimal sun spot activity. If that continues, we may suffer an even longer cooling period, perhaps even a return to the Little Ice Age, as has happened in the past when sunspots declined for an extended period.

Just a couple of days ago, a separate, independent, peer reviewed study appeared in *Geophysical Research Letters* from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. It concluded as well that the temperature variations of the 20th century were all explained by natural causes rather than human CO₂ emissions. The study also concluded that the warming period of the late 20th century is over and an extended cooling period lasting another 20 years or so has begun.

Several other presenters at the Heartland conference went on to explain in detail why the models used by the UN to predict global warming and associated catastrophes are so wrong. As one explained, slight exaggerations in each of several variables when multiplied together add up to huge final errors. Another explained that the models assume that heat resulting from increased CO₂ reduces clouds, further increasing temperatures, but satellite data now show that the clouds sharply reduce heat produced by CO₂, resulting in a strong negative feedback, which leaves increased CO₂ too weak to produce significant global warming. Other variables expected to produce strong positive feedback effects increasing global warming resulting from CO₂ were shown to have little or no effect, or even a negative effect.

Other well-known facts further support the careful, logical, soft-spoken scientists at the Heartland conference, whose presentations should soon be available on video at www.heartland.org. Global temperatures were warmer than today during the Medieval Warm Period, a span of several hundred years around 1000 A.D. Even higher temperatures prevailed during a period known as the Holocene Climate Optimum, which ran roughly from 8,000 years ago (6000 B.C.) to 4,000 years ago (2000 B.C.). In fact, temperatures were higher than today during most of the period from 9000 B.C. to the birth of Christ.

Yet, there was no significant human burning of fossil fuels during these periods to cause these higher

temperatures, and none of the catastrophes ascribed to global warming occurred during these periods.

Moreover, atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ were much higher in the past than today. For hundreds of millions of years prior to 400 million years ago, atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were well over 30 times greater than today. But CO₂ concentrations have actually been in sharp decline since then. From roughly 50 million to 350 million years ago, fluctuating CO₂ concentrations were generally 3 to 15 times current levels. These much higher CO₂ concentrations did not cause any catastrophic effects. Quite to the contrary, more atmospheric CO₂ causes plants to grow far more rapidly, as plants need to take in CO₂ to live. Indeed, a recent report raises a concern that we are in a period of "CO₂ famine," involving the lowest CO₂ concentrations in history, and mankind and plant and animal life would all be greatly benefited by increased CO₂.

These and other basic scientific facts relating to global warming are discussed in detail in my article in the March issue of *The American Spectator* ("Why the World is Getting Warmer, Even Though It Is Getting Colder").

Brown Shirt Tactics

Environmentalists just respond to the arguments of these careful, logical, soft-spoken scientists with ridicule and derision, claiming quite wrongly that the scientific debate is over, and these "deniers" should just shut up, or be shut out. Quite to the contrary, what the scientists at the Heartland conference have demonstrated beyond dispute is that at a minimum the scientific debate is just warming up, so to speak. I think they have demonstrated quite clearly already that the alarmist warm-mongers are just wrong. No wonder the environmentalists don't want to debate.

These are brown-shirt tactics effectively just shouting down any opponents and preempting debate. What our congressional representatives of both parties and all ideologies owe the American people is a thorough demonstration in public hearings and floor debates as to why a trillion dollars or more in additional costs on our economy to fight global warming, as well as a sharp decline in the American standard of living, and losses of several million jobs and trillions in lost economic growth, are justified. If they can't do that, and they vote for such global warming regulation anyway, then they are betraying the American people.

Al Gore himself recently provided another example of these brown-shirt tactics. When Danish scientist Bjorn Lomborg, at the World Economics Forum in Davos, Switzerland, publicly challenged Gore to a debate on global warming a few days ago, Gore said, *"I want to be polite to you. But, no. [T]he scientific community has gone through this chapter and verse. We have long since passed the time when we as a civilization should pretend that this is an on-the-one hand/on-the-other hand situation. It is not a matter of theory or conjecture, for goodness sake."*

To think after inventing the Internet, all these years later, Gore would show up in a completely different profession, as a Drama Queen in his own performance of George Orwell's classic, *1984*. I say Drama Queen because even this self-deluded fool knows that his answer is just an act; he is just pretending that there is an overwhelming scientific consensus to preempt any debate, so he can go straight to GO and collect his \$200,000. His response to the scientists at the Heartland Institute conference is effectively, you don't exist, and nothing was said here over the last 3 days. It is all down the memory hole. He effectively provides the same response to the over 31,000 American scientists who signed a petition opposing the Kyoto accords because *"There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere."*

The same is true of everyone else who claims that the debate over global warming is over because of an overwhelming scientific consensus in its favor. They are all dishonorably engaged in an act, a game of pretend, effectively to shout down opponents and preempt any debate.

Even some of those associated with the UN global warming panel who purport to be real climate scientists, such as Michael Mann, just respond with ridicule and derision to those scientists who disagree with their

fevered global-warming fantasies. Mann himself produced a paper arguing that the historic temperature record follows the pattern of a hockey stick, with no significant change for centuries, and then a sudden upward spurt in the 20th century. That paper has been discredited by many because it denied the existence of the Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age, which are as firmly supported in the historical record as dinosaurs, maybe even more so.

The UN can't be trusted on global warming any more than the oil companies, because it has an enormous institutional interest in showing the theory to be true, thereby justifying enormous increases in its institutional powers. The same is true for environmental extremists, who are trying to take over the world based on this theory, with huge reserves of funds stored up to do it. Now several business groups believe they can use global warming to make fortunes as well, including some associated with Al Gore.

So global warming is not really a debate about science. It is a battle over money and power, as several at the Heartland Conference explicitly recognized. That is why the argument has been so dishonest until now. If you want to keep up with the true story, sign up at www.sepp.org for regular weekly reports from Fred Singer updating the battle.

Peter Ferrara is director of budget and entitlement policy at the [Institute for Policy Innovation](#) and general counsel for the American Civil Rights Union. He formerly served in President Reagan's White House Office of Policy Development, and as Associate Deputy Attorney General of the United States under the first President Bush. He is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School.

5. CAN OBAMA PULL OFF A GREEN RECOVERY?

by *Kenneth W. Chilton*

*Emeritus Director, Institute for the Study of Economics and the Environment, Lindenwood University
 Special to the Cornwall Alliance, March 4, 2009*

The province of economics is to study how individuals and societies choose to make use of the scarce resources provided by nature and future generations. In the area of resources applied to environmental problems, the question asked (and answered) by economists is, "How clean is clean enough?" The answer is, "We reach the best degree of cleanup when the added benefit of a little bit more cleanup just equals its incremental cost."

Applying this simple concept is generally easier said than done. Managing environmental risk requires risk assessment in order to determine the benefits of reducing environmental harms and then evaluating the costs of addressing those harms using various methods.

Precisely that difficult task -- risk assessment -- is missing from [Obama's chance to lead the green recovery](#), by economists Joseph Stiglitz and Nicholas Stern.

Stiglitz and Stern want to assert, rather than analyze, the benefits of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. They assert that climate change due to increased concentrations of greenhouse gases is "an even deeper crisis than the current global financial crisis." They assert, "The scale of risk from climate change is altogether of a different and greater magnitude as are the consequences of mismanaging or ignoring it." That is the full extent of their "risk assessment" and provides no clue of measurable benefits of incrementally reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

How do they do on evaluating risk management methods? No better, I fear. Their conclusion, without analysis, is, "Mistakes in managing the risks of the climate crisis may be irreversible." They recommend only one solution and, without hesitation, assert that we would get a double whammy heading off climate catastrophe *and* boosting job growth. Stiglitz and Stern assert, "[C]onvert[ing] our society to a low-carbon economy would drive growth over the next two or three decades." But does it seem plausible that this green growth can match the global economic growth that we can achieve if we continue to use lower-cost fossil fuels to supply energy over that same period?

Stiglitz and Stern are not willing to wait until market prices for fossil fuels rise sufficiently, or costs of renewable alternatives fall enough, to produce an orderly transition in energy markets such as we have seen throughout the history of societal advancement. No, if the whole planet is in peril, then the heavy (but surely benign) hand of government is the only method to manage risk. They prescribe subsidies for insulating homes and buildings, investment in “green technology and infrastructure,” and “a strong, stable carbon price” presumably produced by a cap and trade system or a carbon tax.

In short, Stiglitz and Stern assume an infinite cost of not reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This leaves the door wide open for managing the crisis by forcing low-cost fossil fuels out of the market place. The next presumption is that alternative “green” energy resources will create high rates of economic growth and employment. Stiglitz and Stern are confident that this is what President Obama has in mind. America, all you need do is accept more government spending on higher-cost renewable energy and higher prices to drive your cars, heat your homes, and for everything you buy that requires energy to produce and transport.

6. RESPONSE TO FRED KRUPP (president, EDF):

“Carbon Caps Are the Best Policy” in WSJ 3/24/2009

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123785178691219381.html#mod=djemEditorialPage>

By SFS/3/24/2009

Let’s be clear about one thing first. The Cap-and-Trade scheme being proposed – whether a 20% reduction by 2020 in US emissions of CO₂, or an 80% reduction by 2050 – is not only technically unrealistic but will produce an insignificant lowering of *global* CO₂ levels. The best science says: Do not expect any impact at all on climate. So when we consider C&T, we are really just talking about an energy tax – albeit a tax (i.e. the price paid for emission permits) that rises when the economy is strong and drops when the economy falters, producing a kind of ‘negative feedback’ for economic growth. It is basically a consumption tax, like a sales tax or a VAT (value-added tax) that hits hardest on the poorest of the poor. But because of its programmed annual increase (as the number of emission permits is reduced year by year) it can stop economic growth altogether. Clearly, there is scope here for political meddling; perhaps we should call C&T what it really will become: the “Lobbyists Full Employment Act of 2009.”

Once we get rid of romantic notions and understand that C&T has nothing to do with climate, we need to ask: Is this the best kind of consumption tax? And do we really want a tax that distorts investment decisions in energy supply, and leads to investments that are clearly uneconomic and survive only with taxpayer subsidies – like solar photovoltaic, wind power -- or even CCS (carbon capture and sequestration), which simply degrades the operating efficiency of power stations?

Even worse, any energy tax that increases year after year will throttle economic growth, force industries to close shop or move abroad, and kill jobs.

7. U.N. CLIMATE PLAN WOULD SHIFT \$ TRILLIONS TO FORM NEW WORLD ECONOMY

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,510937,00.html>

By George Russell, Fox News, 27 March 2009

A United Nations document on "climate change" that will be distributed to a major environmental conclave next week envisions a huge reordering of the world economy, likely involving trillions of dollars in wealth transfer, millions of job losses and gains, new taxes, industrial relocations, new tariffs and subsidies, and complicated payments for greenhouse gas abatement schemes and carbon taxes - all under the supervision of the world body.

Those and other results are blandly discussed in a discreetly worded United Nations "information note" on potential consequences of the measures that industrialized countries will likely have to take to implement

the Copenhagen Accord, the successor to the Kyoto Treaty, after it is negotiated and signed by December 2009. The Obama administration has said it supports the treaty process if, in the words of a U.S. State Department spokesman, it can come up with an "effective framework" for dealing with global warming.

The 16-page note, obtained by FOX News, will be distributed to participants at a mammoth negotiating session that starts on March 29 in Bonn, Germany, the first of three sessions intended to hammer out the actual commitments involved in the new deal.

In the stultifying language that is normal for important U.N. conclaves, the negotiators are known as the "Ad Hoc Working Group On Further Commitments For Annex I Parties Under the Kyoto Protocol." Yet the consequences of their negotiations, if enacted, would be nothing short of world-changing.

Getting that deal done has become the United Nations' highest priority, and the Bonn meeting is seen as a critical step along the path to what the U.N. calls an "ambitious and effective international response to climate change," which is intended to culminate at the later gathering in Copenhagen.

Just how ambitious the U.N.'s goals are can be seen, but only dimly, in the note obtained by FOX News, which offers in sparse detail both positive and negative consequences of the tools that industrial nations will most likely use to enforce the greenhouse-gas reduction targets.

The paper makes no effort to calculate the magnitude of the costs and disruption involved, but despite the discreet presentation, makes clear that they will reverberate across the entire global economic system.

Among the tools that are considered are the cap-and-trade system for controlling carbon emissions that has been espoused by the Obama administration; "carbon taxes" on imported fuels and energy-intensive goods and industries, including airline transportation; and lower subsidies for those same goods, as well as new or higher subsidies for goods that are considered "environmentally sound."

Other tools are referred to only vaguely, including "energy policy reform," which the report indicates could affect "large-scale transportation infrastructure such as roads, rail and airports." When it comes to the results of such reform, the note says only that it could have "positive consequences for alternative transportation providers and producers of alternative fuels."

In the same bland manner, the note informs negotiators without going into details that cap-and-trade schemes "may induce some industrial relocation" to "less regulated host countries." Cap-and-trade functions by creating decreasing numbers of pollution-emission permits to be traded by industrial users, and thus pay more for each unit of carbon-based pollution, a market-driven system that aims to drive manufacturers toward less polluting technologies.

The note adds only that industrial relocation "would involve negative consequences for the implementing country, which loses employment and investment." But at the same time it "would involve indeterminate consequences for the countries that would host the relocated industries."

There are also entirely new kinds of tariffs and trade protectionist barriers such as those termed in the note as "border carbon adjustment"- which, the note says, can impose "a levy on imported goods equal to that which would have been imposed had they been produced domestically" under more strict environmental regimes.

Another form of "adjustment" would require exporters to "buy [carbon] offsets at the border equal to that which the producer would have been forced to purchase had the good been produced domestically."

The impact of both schemes, the note says, "would be functionally equivalent to an increased tariff: decreased market share for covered foreign producers." (There is no definition in the report of who, exactly, is "foreign.") The note adds that "If they were implemented fairly, such schemes would leave trade and investment patterns unchanged." Nothing is said about the consequences if such fairness was not achieved.

Indeed, only rarely does the "information note" attempt to inform readers in dollar terms of the impact of "spillover effects" from the potential policy changes it discusses. In a brief mention of consumer subsidies for fossil fuels, the note remarks that such subsidies in advanced economies exceed \$60 billion a year, while they exceed \$90 billion a year in developing economies."

But calculations of the impact of tariffs, offsets, or other subsidies is rare. In a reference to the impact of declining oil exports, the report says that Saudi Arabia has determined the loss to its economy at between \$100 billion and \$200 billion by 2030, but said nothing about other oil exporters.

One reason for the lack of detail, the note indicates, is that impact would vary widely depending on the nature and scope of the policies adopted (and, although the note does not mention it, on the severity of the greenhouse reduction targets).

But even when it does hazard a guess at specific impacts, the report seems curiously hazy. A "climate change levy on aviation" for example, is described as having undetermined "negative impacts on exporters of goods that rely on air transport, such as cut flowers and premium perishable produce," as well as "tourism services." But no mention is made in the note of the impact on the aerospace industry, an industry that had revenues in 2008 of \$208 billion in the U.S. alone, or the losses the levy would impose on airlines for ordinary passenger transportation. (Global commercial airline revenues in 2008 were about \$530 billion, and were already forecast to drop to an estimated \$467 billion this year.)

In other cases, as when discussing the "increased costs of traditional exports" under a new environmental regime, the report confines itself to terse description. Changes in standards and labeling for exported goods, for example, "may demand costly changes to the production process." If subsidies and tariffs affect exports, the note says, the "economic and social consequences of dampening their viability may, for some countries and sectors, be significant."

Much depends, of course, on the extent to which harsher or more lenient greenhouse gas reduction targets demand more or less drastic policies for their achievement. And, precisely because the Bonn meeting is a stage for negotiating those targets, the note is silent. Instead it suggests that more bureaucratic work is needed "to deepen the understanding of the full nature and scale of such impacts."

But outside the Bonn process, other experts have been much more blunt about the draconian nature of the measures they deem necessary to make "effective" greenhouse gas reductions.

In an influential but highly controversial paper called "Key Elements of a Global Deal on Climate Change," British economist Nicholas Lord Stern, formerly a high British Treasury official, has declared that industrial economies would need to cut their per capita carbon dioxide emissions by "at least 80% by 2050," while the biggest economies, like the U.S.'s, would have to make cuts of 90 percent.

Stern also calls for "immediate and binding" reduction targets for developed nations of 20 percent to 40 percent by 2020. To meet Stern's 2050 goals, he says, among other things, "most of the world's electricity production will need to have been decarbonized."

By way of comparison, according to the U.S. Department Of Energy, roughly 72 percent of U.S. electrical power generation in 2007 was derived from burning fossil fuels, with just 6 percent coming from hydro-power and less than 3 percent from non-nuclear renewable and "other" sources. And even then, those "other" non-fossil sources included wood and biomass - which, when burned, are major emitters of carbon.

George Russell is executive editor of FOX News.

H/t to CCNet

8. U.N. GREENS HOPE FOR OBAMA'S CLIMATE BILLIONS

By LEILA ABOUD and STEPHEN POWER, Wall Street Journal, 27 March 2009

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123810453832651911.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

When the Obama administration makes its debut in the international climate-change debate at talks next week, expectations will be high: Europe hopes the U.S. can help end a standoff between rich and poor countries over how to share the burden of cutting carbon emissions.

"The arrival of the new U.S. administration will have a huge and positive effect on the negotiations," said Yvo de Boer, head of the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat, which is overseeing the talks. "This will be the first opportunity for the Obama administration to state what it expects and wants."

The summit in Bonn from March 29 to April 8, is one of several meetings this year aimed at drafting a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. That treaty committed 183 signatories to collectively reduce their emissions 5% from 1990 levels by 2012.

The aim is to agree on a new global treaty that would include the world's biggest emitters -- the U.S. and China -- by mid-December. The U.S., under the Bush administration, didn't ratify the Kyoto treaty, and China and other developing countries such as India and Brazil aren't obligated under the treaty to restrict emissions of greenhouse gases, which are believed to contribute to climate change.

The thorniest issue in the talks is deciding how much aid rich countries will give poorer countries to help them limit emissions and cope with the effects of rising temperatures. Another challenge will be agreeing on how deeply and quickly rich countries will cut emissions.

In 2007, developing countries committed to take "measurable, reportable and verifiable" actions to reduce their emissions, but only if they were given support by rich countries. Hammering out the details of such support is crucial to getting countries such as China and India on board.

The Obama administration has sent mixed signals about the issue, highlighting the difficulty it faces in getting congressional support for its emissions goals.

U.S. President Barack Obama has repeatedly said the U.S. must do more to fight climate change, and has called for legislation to cut U.S. emissions about 80% below 2005 levels by 2050. But getting such a law through Congress will be difficult, and any international climate-change treaty must be ratified by the Senate. Some politicians are balking at the idea of imposing new regulatory burdens on companies during a recession.

Todd Stern, Mr. Obama's climate envoy, told reporters earlier this month that the administration was developing a "financing package" to help developing countries. But U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu suggested last week that tariffs could be levied on products imported from countries that don't agree to limit their emissions -- a move that could shield energy-intensive U.S. industries and increase costs in developing countries.

Mr. Chu said tariffs were just one idea, but his comments raised eyebrows because they came after a Chinese diplomat warned that a carbon tariff would violate World Trade Organization agreements. In a letter Thursday, congressional Republicans called on the Obama administration to clarify its stance on emissions-related trade policy.

Mr. Stern, the climate envoy, declined through an aide to be interviewed ahead of the Bonn conference.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is moving toward regulating greenhouse-gas emissions, and Democrats in the House of Representatives have begun drafting a bill to establish a system that limits emissions and creates a market for businesses to buy and sell the right to produce them.

But in recent weeks, Democratic lawmakers such as Sen. Kent Conrad (D., N.D.), chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, have objected to key elements of Mr. Obama's plan, raising the prospect the U.S. won't be able to enact such legislation before the Copenhagen talks in December.

European countries haven't been able to agree among themselves on how much money they are willing to

give to poorer countries to help them cut emissions. Europe was supposed to decide on a financial package by this month, but recently pushed back the decision until June after countries squabbled over how to share the burden.

"It's a disappointment," said the U.N.'s Mr. de Boer of Europe's delay. "Without money on the table, we will not get the developing-country engagement we need."

9. US TO BE 'PRAGMATIC ON CLIMATE'

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7980441.stm>

Speaking at UN talks in Bonn, Jonathan Pershing said the US must not offer more than it could deliver by 2020.

Poor countries said the latest science showed rich states should cut emissions by 40% on 1990 levels by 2020. President Barack Obama's plan merely to stabilise greenhouse gases at 1990 levels by 2020 is much less ambitious.

Mr Pershing, the US delegation head, previously spent many years promoting clean energy for the International Energy Agency and at the Washington think-tank WRI - World Resources Institute.

He told the BBC he was very worried the Earth might already be committed to dangerous climate change. But he said the US should not make promises for 2020 that it could not keep: "It is not the point in time in 2020 that matters - it is a long-term trajectory against which the science measures cumulative emissions. The president has also announced his intent to pursue an 80% reduction by 2050.

"It is clear that the less we do in the near-term, the more we have to do in the long-term. But if we set a target that is un-meetable technically, or we can't pass it politically, then we're in the same position we are in now where the world looks to us and we are out of the regime.

"We want to be in (the regime), we want to be pragmatic, we want to look at the science. There is a small window of where they overlap. We hope to find it."

SEPP Comment: Our government negotiators seem to be unaware of the science (whether correct or not) which claims that CO2 emissions are 'irreversible' [Solomon et al, PNAS 2009] and cannot be compensated for by deeper cuts in the future. State Dept and White House: Pls call NOAA!