

The Week That Was: 2012-06-30 (June 30, 2012)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week:

"This is how science works," the unsigned opinion said. "EPA is not required to re-prove the existence of the atom every time it approaches a scientific question." US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit June 26, 2012. Proving human caused dangerous global warming one time would be sufficient, but EPA has failed to do so.

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Number of the Week: 910

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THIS WEEK:

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

Due to power outages not yet attributable to the EPA, TWTW will be shorter than usual.

US EPA- General: With the close of Rio+20 with little damage to the citizens of the developed world, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) dominates the news in the US. Monday marked the final day for public comment on the EPA "carbon pollution standards." That is the amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) a new power plant can emit while generating electricity. The regulation is designed to prevent the construction of coal-fired power plants. There is an option, the use of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), which is an unproven technology that may become a giant money trap such as permanent storage of nuclear wastes at Yucca Mountain. SEPP's comments on the regulations appear later.

EPA Endangerment Finding: On Tuesday, the three-member panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit announced its opinion on the litigation challenging EPA's finding that greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions endanger public health and welfare. GHG include three man-made gases which can easily be regulated separately and three naturally occurring gases, the major one being CO2. The other two naturally occurring gases Nitrous Oxide and Methane can be, and are, regulated separately. The objective of the entire exercise is to give EPA the power to regulate CO2 as it pleases – something Congress did not envision when passing the Clean Air Act (CAA)

In 2007, the Supreme Court decreed that GHGs are pollutants that EPA can regulate under the CAA if the EPA finds that GHGs endanger public health and welfare. On December 15, 2009, the EPA, under Lisa Jackson, published such a finding. A number of private groups and government entities sued on various grounds. SEPP's litigation, with the Competitive Enterprise Institute, was based on the science. As stated in TWTW previously, if the finding is against the EPA, then it was expected to be on procedural grounds, not scientific ones. Tuesday's finding was unanimous. The finding of the court dismisses any challenges to EPA science. It was not surprising, but disappointing nonetheless. Selected quotes (in italics) and comments follow:

Court expressing its bias for the EPA

... *"we give an extreme degree of deference to the agency when it is evaluating scientific data within its technical expertise."* p. 29

Comment: To the court, EPA science is sacrosanct, no matter how biased or shoddy.

Three lines of evidence

Line of evidence number 1

The body of scientific evidence marshaled by EPA in support of the Endangerment Finding is substantial. EPA's scientific evidence of record included support for the proposition ... Linchpin finding – root cause

of the recently observed climate change is “very likely” the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

Comment: There is a weak correlation between late 20th century warming and CO2 emissions – this is scientific proof? Why has there been no warming trend for over a decade as CO2 emissions have increased?

Line of evidence number 2

“EPA further relied upon evidence of historical estimates of past climate change, supporting EPA’s conclusion that global temperatures over the last half-century are unusual. Endangerment Finding, 74 Fed. Reg. at 66,518. Scientific studies upon which EPA relied place high confidence in the assertion that global mean surface temperatures over the last few decades are higher than at any time in the last four centuries. Technical Support Document for the Endangerment Finding (TSD), at 31. These studies also show, albeit with significant uncertainty, that temperatures at many individual locations were higher over the last twenty-five years than during any period of comparable length since 900 A.D. Id.

Comment: Mr Mann’s hockey-stick in its full glory. No wonder the multi-billion global warming industry so adamantly attacks anyone who dares to question this work.

Line of evidence #3.

For its third line of evidence that anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases spurred the perceived warming trend, EPA turned to computer-based climate-model simulations. Scientists have used global climate models built on basic principles of physics and scientific knowledge about the climate to try to simulate the recent climate change. These models have only been able to replicate the observed warming by including anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases in the simulations. Endangerment Finding, 74 Fed. Reg. at 66,523.

Comment: What about the current divergence between model results and atmospheric CO2? During the oral arguments an attorney for the EPA falsely claimed the models have been validated.

To recap, EPA had before it substantial record evidence that anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases “very likely” caused warming of the climate over the last several decades. EPA further had evidence of current and future effects of this warming on public health and welfare. Relying again upon substantial scientific evidence, EPA determined that anthropogenically induced climate change threatens both public health and public welfare. It found that extreme weather events, changes in air quality, increases in food- and water-borne pathogens, and increases in temperatures are likely to have adverse health effects. Id. at 66,497–98. The record also supports EPA’s conclusion that climate change endangers human welfare by creating risk to food production and agriculture, forestry, energy, infrastructure, ecosystems, and wildlife. Substantial evidence further supported EPA’s conclusion that the warming resulting from the greenhouse gas emissions could be expected to create risks to water resources and in general to coastal areas as a result of expected increase in sea level. Id. at 66,498.

Finally, EPA determined from substantial evidence that motor-vehicle emissions of greenhouse gases contribute to climate change and thus to the endangerment of public health and welfare.

Comment: The list of disasters of biblical proportions, many false.

The court dismissed the arguments that the EPA did not submit its findings to the Science Advisory Board by stating that it was not clear that it had to.

As to Climategate, the court said: [It] “Dismissed denial of reconsideration in light of Climategate -- did not provide substantial evidence the endangerment should be reversed.”

“According to EPA, the petitioners’ claims based on the CRU documents were exaggerated, contradicted by other evidence, and not a material or reliable basis for questioning the credibility of the body of science at issue; two of the factual inaccuracies alleged in the petitions were in fact mistakes, but both were “tangential and minor” and did not change the key IPCC conclusions; and the new scientific studies raised by some petitions were either already considered by EPA, misinterpreted or misrepresented by petitioners, or put forth without acknowledging other new studies. *Id.* at 49,557–58.”

Comment: The melting of the Himalayas is tangential and minor in the science of climate change.

Without question, the courts will not hold the EPA accountable for misleading, biased science, no matter how shoddy.

Where does this decision leave those who believe the courts and the EPA are using false science to greatly expand governmental powers over energy use, thereby over the economy? No doubt the decision will be appealed to the full court, which will probably not consider it. Then a request will be made to the Supreme Court hear the case, but it is doubtful the Supreme Court will reverse a 2007 decision.

Perhaps the Appeals Court best said what needs to be done:

"We have serious doubts as to whether ... it is ever 'likely' that Congress will enact [contradicting] legislation at all." To those who find the EPA and the Court’s expansion of its powers arrogant, this statement may be Marching Orders. Two simple sentences may be sufficient: Carbon dioxide is a non-toxic, colorless, odorless, trace gas that is essential to human life. Its regulation is reserved for Congress, only, and it is not to be regulated under the Clean Air Act. Please see links under Litigation Issues.

EPA Carbon Pollution Rules: Given the Circuit Court decision on June 26 that did not surprise SEPP, some may ask why did SEPP bother filing comments on the proposed EPA Carbon Pollution Rules on June 25. The answer is it is not over yet, and it is critical to build a record that EPA science is biased and shoddy.

In its findings, EPA relies on separate reports from institutions: the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and a report from the National Research Council (NRC).

As linked in last week’s TWTW, Patrick Michaels prepared a devastating critique of the USGCRP report. Since the NRC report is built on both the IPCC and the USGCRP reports, the SEPP filing focused on the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) with major emphasis on AR4 and it’s Summary for Policymakers. These comments are far too late for inclusion in the litigation against the EPA finding that GHGs, especially carbon dioxide, endanger public health and welfare [Endangerment Finding (EF)].

At best, the EF was premature, and was based on faulty science, which subsequent research is discrediting. For that reason, SEPP continues to build the public record against the EPA’s EF that science does not support its finding that atmospheric CO2 emissions endanger public health and welfare. The other five gases included in the finding are a logical red herring – designed to distract others from the true goal – control of energy from carbon based fuels.

SEPP Comments included:

Scope of Comments:

The proposed rule is focused on carbon dioxide emissions, as will . the comments. Discussion of other greenhouse gases is secondary. They can be regulated selectively.

Carbon dioxide is a colorless, odorless, non-toxic, trace gas that is a building block of life on this planet as we generally recognize it. It is essential for all green plants and, subsequently, for other life that requires the food that green plants create. Without carbon dioxide most life, including humans, and the environment, as we generally recognize them, would not exist.

General Comment:

The above referenced rule is premature, is based on deficient scientific reports, embodies ignorance of climate history, faulty methodology, requires acceptance of predictions from computer models that have never undergone requisite scientific testing and that are failing, and ignores the enormous benefits of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Specific Comment:

The comments covered in brief the following subjects:

- Gross error in methodology: The assumption that the natural causes of global warming / climate change are known
- Data Contamination – including findings by Ross McKittrick
- Uncertainty in Inputs of the Models: Eleven of the identified 16 forcing inputs have high to very high levels of uncertainty.
- Uncertainty in the outputs: Nonlinear chaotic models do not produce consistent results. Each model must be run multiple times to give an idea of the general result. Averaging a number of models is without scientific value. All may exhibit the same bias that cannot be determined.
- False Certainty in AR4 and the EPA: Based on the uncertainty given above, there is no scientific basis for claiming 90 to 99 percent certainty that human emissions of CO₂ cause late 20th century warming.
- Failure to Validate: The models used in the projections / predictions of global warming have never been verified and validated.
- Prediction the Ultimate Test: Carbon dioxide emissions are increasing, atmospheric concentrations are increasing; yet there is no corresponding increase in global temperatures. The models that are the foundation of the EPA / EF are failing.
- Ignoring Benefits: Carbon dioxide emissions create more food for humanity and a more vibrant environment.

Conclusion:

In its rule making, the EPA has failed to follow proper administrative procedures in creating regulations that will destroy an industry that has served Americans for 130 years (the current price of natural gas which is promoting gas-fired power plants is a red herring).

The proposed rules, and the EF, are based on an ignorance of climate history and faulty methodology. The models used to justify these rules as benefiting future generations include faulty data, great uncertainty in inputs, great uncertainty in results, and a scientifically unsubstantiated belief in their accuracy. The models fail to predict accurately and are little more than artifacts, ignoring significant, natural causes of global warming / climate change.

The EPA should desist from such rule-making until a robust, independent review of all relevant science is conducted. Otherwise the EPA will continue to give the American public the impression that it can control global warming / climate change by controlling carbon dioxide emissions – something it surely cannot.

Of course, the EPA will not address its deficient science as long as the Federal Courts protect it.

Number of the Week: 910 According to a June 18, 2012 report by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Majority Staff to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce about \$8 Billion in subsidies given to solar and wind industry under Section 1603 directly produced about 910 jobs on an annual basis for the life of the systems. This is far below that promised. Please see link under Subsidies and Mandates Forever.

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see this week's TWTW at: www.sepp.org. The articles are at the end of the pdf.

1. Expanded Oil Drilling Helps U.S. Wean Itself From Mideast

By Angel Gonzalez, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304441404577480952719124264.html?mod=djemalertNEWS>

2. For Energy Producers, Natural Gas May Not Be the Only Source of a Glut

By Tom Fowler and Ben Lefebvre, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304458604577490562684904168.html>

3. Helping the Poorest, Climate Change and Capitalism

Letters, WSJ, Jun 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304782404577488992870843390.html?mod=ITP_opinion_1

[SEPP Comment: Dramatically opposing views.]

4. How Cuba Became a 'Happy' Country

Citizens flee on rafts. But environmentalists know better.

By Matthew Sinclair, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304870304577490764002841198.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

The fall of Forest 2006?

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jun 25, 2012

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2012/6/25/the-fall-of-forest-2006.html>

British science journalists on Climategate

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jun 24, 2012

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2012/6/24/british-science-journalists-on-climategate.html>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

World's Lakes Show Global Temperature Standstill

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Jun 26, 2012

<http://thegwpf.org/the-observatory/6060-worlds-lakes-show-global-temperature-standstill.html>

Settled Science? No Such Thing

By Bob Carter, The Australian, from GWPF, Jun 27, 2012

<http://thegwpf.org/opinion-pros-a-cons/6062-bob-carter-settled-science-no-such-thing.html>

Defending the Orthodoxy

UN panel rejects political claim by 'New Scientist'

By Frank McDonald, Irish Times, Jun 25, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2012/0625/1224318624533.html>

Climate Change: Waiting for a Catastrophic Wake-Up Call

By Mario Osava, Tierramérica, Jun 22, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.tierramerica.info/nota.php?lang=eng&idnews=4000>

[SEPP Comment: Searching for a humanitarian disaster to blame on global warming.]

Greenland ice may exaggerate magnitude of 13,000-year-old deep freeze

By Chris Barnard, Madison WI (SPX), Jun 27, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Greenland_ice_may_exaggerate_magnitude_of_13000_year_old_deep_freeze_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Trying to find a carbon dioxide component to the cooling and warming of the Younger Dryas.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

World cooling to global warming

By Lorne Gunter, Toronto Sun, Jun 26, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.torontosun.com/2012/06/26/world-cooling-to-global-warming>

Whatever Happened To Climate Change Crisis?

By Andrew McKillop, GWPF, Jun 28, 2012

<http://thegwpf.org/opinion-pros-a-cons/6067-andrew-mckillop-whatever-happened-to-climate-change-crisis.html>

Green 'drivel' exposed

The godfather of global warming lowers the boom on climate change hysteria

By Lorrie Goldstein, Toronto Sun, Jun 23, 2012

<http://www.torontosun.com/2012/06/22/green-drivel>

Questioning European Green

German Pols Now Demanding Energy Welfare For Its Citizens – 800,000 Have Had Their Electricity Cut Off!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jun 26, 2012

<http://notrickszone.com/2012/06/26/german-pols-now-demanding-energy-welfare-for-its-citizens-800000-have-had-their-electricity-cut-off/>

MPs have no idea how to meet the 'carbon' target they voted for

When readers asked their MPs to explain how the UK would cut CO2 emissions by 80 per cent, the answers made worrying reading

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, Jun 23, 2012 [By Anne Debeil]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/9350678/MPs-have-no-idea-how-to-meet-the-carbon-target-they-voted-for.html>

Coalition's plans to fuel UK with green energy at 'high risk' of failing, says watchdog

The Coalition's plans to keep Britain's lights on with green electricity have a “high risk” of failing, the Major Projects Authority has warned.

By Rowena Mason, Telegraph, UK, Jun 27, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/energy/9357555/Coalitions-plans-to-fuel-UK-with-green-energy-at-high-risk-of-failing-says-watchdog.html>

Energy reforms 'threaten beauty of country' with pylons, says CPRE

The Coalition's energy reforms threaten the “beauty and tranquillity” of the countryside because they encourage National Grid to cover Britain with pylons, the Campaign to Protect Rural England has warned.

By Rowena Mason, Telegraph, UK, Jun 25, 2012

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/rowena-mason/9354724/Energy-reforms-threaten-beauty-of-country-with-pylons-says-CPRE.html>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Economists Without Calculators

Be wary of op-eds in the New York Times that tout an “environmental revolution.”

By Robert Bryce, National Review, Jun 27, 2012

<http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/304069/economists-without-calculators-robert-bryce>

Rio + 20 – World Control?

U.N. moves decisively against the Green message to end Capitalism

The U.N. conference on sustainable development in Rio de Janeiro decisively rejected calls by green activists to shrink the world economy.

By Alan Oxley, UPI, Jun 26, 2012

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Analysis/Outside-View/2012/06/26/Outside-View-UN-moves-decisively-against-the-Green-message-to-end-Capitalism/UPI-30321340706600/

Rio +20 Earth Summit: The End of International Environmentalism

Watching green ideology crash and burn

By Ronald Bailey, Reason, Jun 26, 2012

<http://reason.com/archives/2012/06/26/rio-20-earth-summit-the-end-of-internati>

After Rio – what next?

By Kelvin Kemm, WUWT, Jun 28, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/06/28/after-rio-what-next/>

[SEPP Comments: The Rio conference was more about control of humans than actual concern for humans or the environment.]

Post Rio+20 Sustainable Development: RIP?

Executive at IISD writes devastating, almost despairing critique of Rio+20. “We have come to a sorry pass,” says Mark Halle in a commentary on last week's conference

By Terence Corcoran, Financial Post, Jun 25, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/06/25/terence-corcoran-post-rio20-sustainable-development-rip/>

Seeking a Common Ground

UK Conference of Science Journalists

By Doug Keenan, Bishop Hill, Jun 28, 2012

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2012/6/28/uk-conference-of-science-journalists.html>

We have known for millennia that prerequisites for integrity in human affairs include things like transparency and accountability. Those things should be in all scientific research.

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

Significant sea-level rise in a two degree warming world

By Staff Writers, Potsdam, Germany (SPX), Jun 27, 2012

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Significant sea level rise in a two degree warming world 999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Significant_sea_level_rise_in_a_two_degree_warming_world_999.html)

Andrew Dessler of Texas A&M: Climate scientist, science communicator

By Staff Writers, Texas Climate News, Jun 28, 2012

<http://texasclimateneews.org/wp/?p=1329>.

[SEPP Comment: A Google Science Communication Fellow. The interview conducted in 2011 in which he complained against the “denial machine.”]

Melting Sea Ice Threatens Emperor Penguins

By Staff Writers, Woods Hole MA (SPX), Jun 25, 2012

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Melting Sea Ice Threatens Emperor Penguins 999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Melting_Sea_Ice_Threatens_Emperor_Penguins_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: Movie stars are threatened.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

How is Creating Green Jobs is Like Banning Tractors to Create Farm Jobs?

By Todd Myers, NCPA, Jun 25, 2012 [H/t John Droz]

<http://environmentblog.ncpa.org/how-is-creating-green-jobs-is-like-banning-tractors-to-create-farm-jobs/>

[SEPP Comment: A bit of humor in the green jobs issue – more jobs will be created by investing in generating electricity from human driven stationary bicycles than by solar.]

Models v. Observations

Climate change and the South Asian summer monsoon

By Staff Writers, Manoa HI (SPX), Jun 27, 2012

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Climate change and the South Asian summer monsoon 999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Climate_change_and_the_South_Asian_summer_monsoon_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: The disastrous changes in the monsoons projected in the models are not happening.]

Changing Weather

Current Global Weather Patterns Normal Despite Government and Media Distortions

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Jun 28, 2012

<http://drtimball.com/2012/current-global-weather-patterns-normal-despite-government-and-media-distortions/>

Changing Climate

Chemical analysis of pottery reveals first dairying in Saharan Africa in the fifth millennium BC

By Staff Writers, Bristol UK (SPX), Jun 26, 2012

[http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Chemical analysis of pottery reveals first dairying in Saharan Africa in the fifth millennium BC 999.html](http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Chemical_analysis_of_pottery_reveals_first_dairying_in_Saharan_Africa_in_the_fifth_millennium_BC_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: Additional research supporting the writings of HH Lamb. The Holocene Climate Optimum, a period warmer than today, the Sahara was a wetter, greener place. Climate change is real, significant, and natural.]

Changing Seas

Rising sea level puts US Atlantic coast at risk: report

By Staff Writers, AFP, Jun 24, 2012

<http://news.yahoo.com/rising-sea-level-puts-us-atlantic-coast-risk-171554622.html>
[SEPP Comment: From 20 to 37 cm (8 to 15 inches) per century. This is alarming?]

Rising Tides Of Terror: Will Melting Glaciers Flood Al Gore's Coastal Home?

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Jun 26, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/06/26/rising-tides-of-terror-will-melting-glaciers-flood-al-gores-coastal-home/>

Changing Sea Ice

Antarctic ice shelves not melting at all, new field data show

Crafty boffins got elephant seals to survey for them

By Lewis Page, A Register, Jun 25, 2012 [H/t Gordon Fulks]

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2012/06/25/antarctic_ice_not_melting/

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Food security and climate change

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jun 26, 2012

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Food_security_and_climate_change_999.html

Litigation Issues

Attorney Peter Glaser's "Morning After" Reflections on the D.C. Circuit Court GHG Decision

By Marlo Lewis, CEI, Jun 27, 2012

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2012/06/27/attorney-peter-glaser-s-morning-after-reflections-on-the-d-c-circuit-court-ghg-decision/>

Federal Court Upholds EPA's Global Warming Rules

By Dina Cappiello, AP, Jun 26, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2012/06/26/Federal-court-upholds-EPAs-global-warming-rules>

A Court Rules for the Planet

Editorial, NYT, Jun 27, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/28/opinion/a-court-rules-for-the-planet.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120628

Court Gives A Green Light To The Imperial EPA

Editorial, IBD, Jun 27, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/article/616370/201206271826/ruling-on-greenhouse-gas-further-inflates-epa-power.htm>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Turning Carbon Into Gold: UK Court Liquidates CO2 Broker

A UK court has wound up a company it says misled private investors by comparing near worthless carbon credits to gold, the latest in a string of firms found to market poor quality offsets to the general public in a practice that financial regulators say has grown exponentially in the past 18 months.

By John McGarrity and Susanna Twidale, Point Carbon, Jun 27, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.pointcarbon.com/news/1.1931559>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Where Are the Jobs?

Committee on Energy and Commerce Memorandum

By Staff Members, June, 18, 2012

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/Media/file/PDFs/061812greenjobsstaffreport.pdf>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

EPA's Carbon Pollution Standard — One Step Closer to Policy Disaster

By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Jun 25, 2012

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2012/06/25/epas-carbon-pollution-standard-one-step-closer-to-policy-disaster/>

EPA's new CAFÉ mileage standards kill

By Deroy Murdock, SPPI, Jun 27, 2012

<http://sppiblog.org/news/epas-new-cafe-mileage-standards-kill>

Energy Issues – Non-US

Fracking should go ahead in Britain, report says

Fracking should be permitted in Britain because the risk of earthquakes and water contamination is minimal, a government-ordered report has found.

By Nick Collins, Telegraph, UK, Jun 29, 2012

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/9362608/Fracking-should-go-ahead-in-Britain-report-says.html>

Mega history lessons for the oil sands

The global economy may throw a few curve balls, just as it did in the 1980s

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Jun 26, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/06/26/peter-foster-mega-history-lessons-for-the-oil-sands/>

Australia to be ranked second for LNG?

By Staff Writers, Canberra, Australia (UPI), Jun 25, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Australia_to_be_ranked_second_for_LNG_999.html

Canadian pipelines targeted by U.S. funds

Vivian Krause, Financial Post, Jun 26, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/06/26/canadian-pipelines-targeted-by-u-s-funds/>

Energy Issues -- US

Annual Energy Outlook, 2012

By Staff Writers, US Energy Information Administration, Jun 25, 2012

<http://205.254.135.7/forecasts/aeo/>

[SEPP Comment: *The standard for energy information for the US.*]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Shale gas extraction in the UK:: a review of hydraulic fracturing

The Royal Society and The Royal Academy of Engineering, Jun , 2012

http://royalsociety.org/uploadedFiles/Royal_Society_Content/policy/projects/shale-gas/2012-06-28-Shale-gas.pdf

The Next Oil Revolution

By Al Fin, from GWPF, Jun 28, 2012

<http://thegwpf.org/international-news/6074-the-next-oil-revolution.html>

Professors argue against fracking

By Yue Wang, Medill News Service, Washington (UPI), Jun 25, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Professors_argue_against_fracking_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The professors have produced questionable studies against hydraulic fracturing.]

No peak oil in sight: We've got an unprecedented upsurge in global oil production underway

By Mark J. Perry, Carpe Diem, Jun 29, 2012

<http://mjerry.blogspot.com/2012/06/peak-what-weve-got-unprecedented.html>

Does Energy-Related Drilling Trigger Earthquakes?

By Geoffrey Styles, Energy Tribune, Jun 27, 2012

<http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/11027/Does-Energy-Related-Drilling-Trigger-Earthquakes?>

Washington's Control of Oil and Gas

Will President Obama's Re-election Doom Fracking?

Editorial, IBD, Jun 26, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/article/616210/201206261851/epa-proposes-new-shale-fracking-rules.htm>

Return of King Coal?

Coal: Likely Fuel for a World in Decline

By Gregor MacDonald, Resource Investor, Jun 29, 2012

<http://www.resourceinvestor.com/2012/06/29/coal-likely-fuel-for-a-world-in-decline?t=mining-investments>

India grapples with coal shortages

By Staff Writers, New Delhi (UPI), Jun 28, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/India_grapples_with_coal_shortages_999.html

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill exacerbated existing environmental problems in Louisiana marshes

By Staff Writers, Gainesville FL (SPX), Jun 27, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/BP_Deepwater_Horizon_oil_spill_exacerbated_existing_environmental_problems_in_Louisiana_marshes_999.html

[SEPP Comment: No doubt it did but the impact on the loss of wetlands was slight. The main problem is that to prevent major flooding of urban areas by the Mississippi, the river has been channeled and diverted.]

Waves of Berkeley Lab responders deploy [gen]omics to track Deepwater Horizon cleanup microbes

By Staff Writers, Berkeley CA (SPX), Jun 25, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Waves_of_Berkeley_Lab_responders_deploy_omics_to_track_Deepwater_Horizon_cleanup_microbes_999.html

Only 43.7 Percent of Gulf 'Oil Spill' Was Actually Oil

By Bruce Thompson, American Thinker, Jun 29, 2012

http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/06/only_437_percent_of_gulf_oil_spill_was_actually_oil.html

Nuclear Energy and Fears

U.S. partners with China on new nuclear

By Mark Halper, Smart Planet, Jun 26, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/intelligent-energy/us-partners-with-china-on-new-nuclear/17037>

[SEPP Comment: Speculating on what may be an exciting collaboration.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Wind energy jobs: Are the numbers pulled from thin air

By Staff Writers, IWAG, Jun 27, 2012

<http://www.windaction.org/faqs/35338>

[SEPP Comment: Job creation numbers do not consider the job losses due to higher energy prices.]

Solar firm that got DOE loan to declare bankruptcy

By Matthew Daly, AP, Jun 28, 2012

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-06-28/solar-firm-that-got-doe-loan-to-declare-bankruptcy>

[SEPP Comment: Although the recession and the competition from China hurt, the failure is a failed idea.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

A Two-Gallon Compact Car

By David Kreutzer, The Foundry, Jun 29, 2012

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/06/29/a-two-gallon-compact-car/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Terrestrial "Greening" and "Browning" in Time and Space

Reference: De Jong, R., Verbesselt, J., Schaepman, M.E. and De Bruin, S. 2012. Trend changes in global greening and browning: contribution of short-term trends to longer-term change. *Global Change Biology* 18: 642-655.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jun/26jun2012a1.html>

[SEPP Comment: A major trend: world is getting greener. Don't tell the EPA.]

Update on Remotely-Sensed Antarctic Sea Ice Extent

Reference: Pezza, A.B., Rashid, H.A. and Simmonds, I. 2012. Climate links and recent extremes in Antarctic sea ice, high-latitude cyclones, Southern Annular Mode and ENSO. *Climate Dynamics* 38: 57-73.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jun/26jun2012a4.html>

More Phytoplankton Under Arctic Sea Ice than Previously Thought

Reference: Arrigo, K.R., Perovich, D.K., Pickart, R.S., Brown, Z.W., van Dijken, G.L., Lowry, K.E., Mills, M.M., Palmer, M.A., Balch, W.M., Bahr, F., Bates, N.R., Benitez-Nelson, C., Bowler, B., Brownlee, E., Ehn, J.K., Frey, K.E., Garley, R., Laney, S.R., Lubelczyk, L., Mathis, J., Matsuoka, A., Mitchell, B.G., Moore, G.W.K., Ortega-Retuerta, E., Pal, S., Polashenski, C.M., Reynolds, R.A., Schieber, B., Sosik, H.M., Stephens, M. and Swift, J.H. 2012 Massive Phytoplankton Blooms Under Arctic Sea Ice. *Science* 336: 1408.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jun/26jun2012a5.html>

[SEPP Comment: Challenging yet another assumption in the claim that the polar bear is threatened.]

Millennial-Scale Climate Variability: It's the Norm!

Reference: Harada, N., Takahashi, K., Timmermann, A. and Sakamoto, T. 2012a. Climate change dynamics of present and past in the North Pacific and its northern marginal seas. *Deep-Sea Research II* 61-64: 1-3.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jun/27jun2012a2.html>

Taken together, these new studies, plus a host of other studies we have reviewed on our website (see [Millennial-Scale Oscillations of Temperature](#) in our Topical Archive), clearly demonstrate that the warming experienced over the past century or so is in no way unusual, unnatural or unprecedented, nor that it need to have been driven by anthropogenic CO₂ emissions.

Acidified Seawater: Does It Always Depress Calcification?

Reference: Findlay, H.S., Wood, H.L., Kendall, M.A., Spicer, J.I., Twitchett, R.J. and Widdicombe, S. 2011. Comparing the impact of high CO2 on calcium carbonate structures in different marine organisms. *Marine Biology Research* 7: 565-575.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jun/27jun2012a3.html>

[SEPP Comment: Decreasing the pH of sea water by bubbling CO2, rather than the EPA approved adding HCL, may actually benefit marine organisms.]

Environmental Industry

People Matter

Robert Zubrin’s powerful critique of antihumanism
By Bruce Thornton, City Journal, Jun 22, 2012 [H/t GWPF]
<http://www.city-journal.org/2012/bc0622bt.html>

The truth rolls in on green charities

You can sleep your way to a green economy
By Terence Corcoran, Financial Post, Jun 27, 2012
<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/06/27/terence-corcoran-the-truth-rolls-in-on-green-charities/>

Greenpeace sabotages Australia-bound super-trawler

By Staff Writers, Sydney (AFP), June 28, 2012
http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Greenpeace_sabotages_Australia-bound_super-trawler_999.html

Other Scientific News

Above and below, Chinese science soars

By Zhao Yanrong, Beijing (XNA), Jun 25, 2012
http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Above_and_below_Chinese_science_soars_999.html

China's Space Program Accelerates

By Morris Jones for Space Daily, Sydney, Australia (SPX), Jun 29, 2012
http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Chinas_Space_Program_Accelerates_999.html

A group of fungi marked the end of the coal age 300 million years ago

By Staff Writers, Madrid, Spain (SPX), Jun 29, 2012
http://www.terradaily.com/reports/A_group_of_fungi_marked_the_end_of_the_coal_age_300_million_years_ago_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The ability to break down lignin changed the chemistry of sediments.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

Focusing on water for Central Everglades essential to reversing whole ecosystem's continuing decline

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jun 26, 2012
http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Focusing_on_water_for_Central_Everglades_essential_to_reversing_water_hole_ecosystems_continuing_decline_999.html

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

The Sky Isn't Falling!

And regulators are worried.
By James Taranto, Best of the Web, Jun 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304058404577492870211292812.html?mod=djemBestOfTheWeb_h

[SEPP Comment: waiting for planes to crash so regulators can improve safety? May be behind a paywall.]

Risks and rewards of quantifying nature's 'ecosystem services'

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jun 27, 2012

http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/Risks_and_rewards_of_quantifying_natures_ecosystem_services_999.html

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ARTICLES:

1. Expanded Oil Drilling Helps U.S. Wean Itself From Mideast

By Angel Gonzalez, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304441404577480952719124264.html?mod=djemalertNEWS>

America will halve its reliance on Middle East oil by the end of this decade and could end it completely by 2035 due to declining demand and the rapid growth of new petroleum sources in the Western Hemisphere, energy analysts now anticipate.

The shift, a result of technological advances that are unlocking new sources of oil in shale-rock formations, oil sands and deep beneath the ocean floor, carries profound consequences for the U.S. economy and energy security. A good portion of this surprising bounty comes from the widespread use of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a technique perfected during the last decade in U.S. fields previously deemed not worth tampering with.

Milestones for American Oil

By 2020, nearly half of the crude oil America consumes will be produced at home, while 82% will come from this side of the Atlantic, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. By 2035, oil shipments from the Middle East to North America "could almost be nonexistent," the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries recently predicted, partly because more efficient car engines and a growing supply of renewable fuel will help curb demand.

The change achieves a long-sought goal of U.S. policy-making: to draw more oil from nearby, stable sources and less from a volatile region half a world away. "Whereas at one point there were real and serious concerns about the ability to maintain sustainable access of supplies to the United States if there were disruptions in the Middle East, that has changed," Carlos Pascual, the top energy official at the State Department, said in an interview.

U.S. officials stress that the Middle East will remain important to American foreign policy partly because of the region's continuing influence on global oil prices. "We need to continue to pay attention to how global markets function, because we have a fundamental interest that those markets are stable," Mr. Pascual said.

That means the U.S. military will keep guarding the region's oil shipping lanes, as it has done for decades. "Nobody else can protect it and if it were no longer available, U.S. oil prices would go up," said Michael O'Hanlon, a national security expert with the Brookings Institution, who says the U.S. spends \$50 billion a year protecting oil shipments. But China, a growing consumer of Middle Eastern crude, is seeking a larger presence in the region, with its navy joining antipiracy efforts near Somalia.

More

Still, growing domestic energy production could allow the U.S. to lessen its focus on the unpredictable region over time. Dependence on Middle East oil has shaped American foreign, national-security and defense policies for most of the last half century. It helped drive the U.S. into active participation in the search for Arab-Israeli peace; drove Washington into close alignments with the monarchies of the Persian Gulf states; compelled it to side with Iraq during its war with Iran; prompted it to then turn against Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait, bringing about the first Persian Gulf war; and prompted Washington to then build up and sustain its military presence in the region.

Whatever the success such strategies had in ensuring American influence in the region, all also came at a price. Involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process brought the U.S. the enmity of many of the region's most radical forces upset at the failure to create a Palestinian state. The decision to build up an American military presence in the region was used as a rationale for anti-American agitation and attacks by al Qaeda and other extremist forces.

The shift away from Middle Eastern oil means closer ties with Canada, which is emerging as the top U.S. energy ally, but also with Latin neighbors that are strong trading partners. A dollar spent buying oil from these countries is more likely to end up back in the U.S. than a dollar spent buying Iraqi or Saudi crude. Economies buoyed by petrodollars also lessen the appeal of northward migration for Latin America's poor, says Jeremy Martin, director of the energy program at the Institute of the Americas in La Jolla, Calif.

The American energy revolution also is making a splash across the Atlantic. Countries in Eastern Europe, long dependent on Russia for their energy, are seeking to tap their own shale resources with the help of U.S. companies. Even Russia, which needs new sources of oil to maintain its status as an energy superpower, is getting into fracking with the biggest U.S. oil company, Exxon Mobil Corp. This month Exxon and Russia's state-controlled OAO Rosneft broadened an existing alliance to include the joint development of tight oil reserves in western Siberia.

The prospect that new sources of supply in the Americas could lead to years of flat or even falling oil prices is a source of great concern in the Kremlin. Surging oil revenues over his 12 years in power have helped President Vladimir Putin pay for an eightfold increase in government spending, going to everything from pension and wage hikes to costly projects like the Sochi Olympics to a major military buildup. Now, his government is scrambling to find ways to tighten its belt as oil prices—and thus tax revenues—slide. Finding a new driver for Russia's economy is "a colossal challenge," said economy minister Andrei Belousov.

The domestic oil picture has become part of the presidential campaign this year. President Barack Obama likes to point out that output has surged during his first term. "We've added enough new oil and gas pipeline to encircle the Earth and then some," he said in a speech earlier this year. Mitt Romney, the presumed GOP candidate, says the U.S. must do more to promote domestic exploration and says Mr. Obama is holding back the industry. Mr. Romney's campaign ads say that on "Day 1" he will give approval for the Keystone XL pipeline, a project to bring oil from Canada that Mr. Obama's administration has rejected for now.

The renaissance of the U.S. oil patch is pushing down oil prices, giving a boost to the economy at a time when a global slowdown threatens to crimp demand. Research firm Raymond James lowered its 2013 forecast for U.S. crude prices this month to \$65 per barrel from \$83, partly because production in the U.S. has risen much more quickly than previously expected.

Just the same, obstacles to developing the Western Hemisphere's oil riches remain.

Argentina recently nationalized the assets of Spanish energy giant Repsol SA, arguing that the company wasn't investing enough to develop the country's full oil potential. The action makes investors leery of risking capital there to tap shale-rock formations that could rival booming U.S. oil fields.

In Brazil, where most of the newfound oil lies under thick salt domes far beneath the seabed, a small spill in a Chevron Corp. offshore field led to criminal charges, which Chevron contests. Also, state giant Petroleo Brasileiro SA cut its world-wide 2020 production forecast by 11% earlier this month while estimating that extracting its oil would be more costly than anticipated.

In the U.S., offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico is recovering slowly from the impact of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Still, U.S. government forecasters expect that U.S. petroleum purchases from the Middle East, Africa, and Europe will drop to about 2.5 million barrels a day by 2020, from more than four million barrels today. Oil imports from the Persian Gulf's OPEC members—a group that includes Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait—will drop to 860,000 barrels a day that year from 1.6 million barrels currently.
[image]

Global oil and gas investments tripled between 2003 and 2011, according to IHS Cambridge Energy Research Associates. In the Western Hemisphere, where the U.S. and Canada provided more political stability for investors, they nearly quadrupled. In 2011, 48% of global oil investment, or \$320 billion, ended up in the Americas, up from 39% in 2003.

A lot of that money went into the revival of the U.S. oil patch, where energy companies learned to profitably produce oil from tight oil formations by injecting them with high-pressure jets of water mixed with chemicals and sand. The technique has raised concerns with environmentalists who claim it uses too much water and can contaminate water supplies.

First developed in natural-gas fields, fracking yielded an unexpected oil boom that has redrawn America's energy geography. Abundant crude, combined with a huge refining base and waning demand at home turned the U.S. into a net exporter of refined products last year; the EIA expects that situation to continue beyond 2020.

North Dakota went from being a minor producer to surpassing Alaska in March in petroleum output thanks to the Bakken Shale, which is being developed through fracking. Now it is only second to Texas in oil production.

The Bakken, as well as Texas' booming Eagle Ford Shale and the deep-water U.S. Gulf of Mexico, helped average daily U.S. oil production rise 6% between October 2011 and March 2012, topping six million barrels a day for the first time since 1998, the EIA said this month.

"U.S. oil production was for nearly 40 years in total decline, and that decline was never supposed to end," says Jim Burkhard, an analyst with IHS CERA. "This is a major pivot point."

Canada's oil sands—where the earth is drenched in thick, tar-like oil—contain some of the largest quantities of oil in the world but for years they were too expensive to tap. Companies had to mine tons of oil-drenched sand for each barrel of oil, or inject steam deep beneath the earth to make the oil liquid enough for extraction.

As oil prices began to rise, starting in 1999, oil-sands reserves became more profitable, and early investments from Canadian producers like Suncor Energy Inc. and Encana Corp., along with international

producers like Royal Dutch Shell PLC turned Canada into the largest oil exporter to the U.S. Later in the decade, international investment poured into Alberta's boreal forest from U.S.-based companies like ConocoPhillips and Exxon Mobil, and Chinese oil companies like Sinopec, PetroChina Co. and CNOOC Ltd.

Deep-water technology enabled Brazil, which for years depended on oil imports, to become a net exporter in 2009. By 2020, Brazil's production is expected to rival Canada's, rising 57% to 4.7 million barrels a day, thanks to some of the largest offshore oil field finds in 30 years.

The drop in American energy imports comes at a time when hundreds of millions in the developing world are beginning to consume more energy as they rise from poverty. "We're very fortunate that this is happening," said Marvin Odum, the president of Shell's U.S. unit, who also heads its exploration and production activities in the Western Hemisphere. "It enables resources to flow to emerging economies." —Gerald F. Seib, Gregory L. White, Chip Cummins and Keith Johnson contributed to this article.

2. For Energy Producers, Natural Gas May Not Be the Only Source of a Glut

By Tom Fowler and Ben Lefebvre, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304458604577490562684904168.html>

Energy producers struggling with decade-low natural-gas prices have been relying on related fuels such as ethane, propane and butane to remain profitable.

But so many companies have increased drilling of wells with the fuels, known as natural-gas liquids, that their prices are falling as well, creating a new supply-glut problem for the industry and threatening to crimp profits.

Daymon Gardner for The Wall Street Journal

Ethylene plants like the one owned by Dow Chemical in Hahnville, La., have benefited from low NGL prices.

The U.S. saw record production of natural-gas liquids, or NGLs, in 2011, of about 2.18 million barrels per day, according to the Independent Petroleum Association of America. Natural-gas liquids revenue last year was about \$42 billion, close to natural-gas revenue, which was about \$48 billion, according to Tudor Pickering Holt & Co. estimates.

Natural-gas liquids, produced from oil and natural-gas wells, are forms of gas that are liquid when they reach the surface or are easily turned into a liquid. They have many uses but are mainly used in making plastics and synthetic rubber.

For a while, NGLs were "the 'good roommate'—paying the rent so gas can live for free, generating little return while eating Doritos and watching 'Price is Right,'" Tudor Pickering analysts joked in a recent report.

But that good roommate is starting to show his bad side. Prices for ethane have collapsed in many parts of the country as supply far outstrips demand from chemical plants that use it as a feedstock for plastics.

Ethane at the Mont Belvieu, Texas trading hub, a traditional pricing benchmark, sold for 28.4 cents per gallon Tuesday, down from a peak average of 89 cents in October, according to Platts research. Propane at Mont Belvieu sold for 79.65 cents per gallon, down from \$1.47 a gallon in October.

The weak prices, which may last for several years due to a mismatch between supply and demand according to many market observers, could provide an unexpected hit to earnings and cash flow for many exploration and production companies.

No major companies have stopped drilling for natural-gas liquids altogether, but Occidental Petroleum Corp. OXY +1.59% Chief Executive Stephen Chazen recently warned that the drop in prices was "troubling" and approaching levels where further production at those rates may not be economically viable.

"If the current low NGL prices continue, cutbacks in liquids-rich wells or gas-rich wells may be necessary," Mr. Chazen said in a call last month.

Companies including Exxon Mobil Corp., XOM +0.97% Dow Chemical Co. DOW -0.77% and Chevron Phillips Chemical Co. have announced plans for billions of dollars in new ethylene plants, which convert ethane into the building blocks for plastics, to take advantage of the new, cheap supplies. But those facilities can take up to five years to build. The time lag could be a problem for NGL producers if they continue to push into natural-gas liquids in hopes of quickly propping up sagging profits.

Among the companies likely to feel the crunch from low prices are Chesapeake Energy Corp. CHK +5.16% and Devon Energy Inc., DVN +2.97% as well as smaller firms such as Range Resources Inc. RRC +4.93% and Approach Resources Inc., AREX +4.37% because of their greater dependence on NGLs, according to an analysis by Wells Fargo Securities.

Chesapeake officials said during the company's quarterly earnings call in May that they weren't concerned about NGL prices, adding that they expect demand to eventually grow with supply.

Range Resources spokesman Rodney Waller said his company prepared for the price dip by beginning a hedging program last year to offset potential losses. The company expects to earn about \$10 million in the second quarter on its hedges and as much as \$48 million in the second half of 2012.

Approach Resources spokeswoman Megan Hays said the company is also hedging against lower prices this year and responding with a continued push into oil production. "In 2013 and beyond we see our oil production continuing to outpace natural-gas liquids," she said.

Though weaker prices are likely to affect profits, they don't necessarily mean companies will lose money producing natural-gas liquids anytime soon, said Rusty Braziel, president of consulting firm RNB Energy.

"CEOs may not be as happy as they were a couple of months ago, but you won't see them panhandling on the street," Mr. Braziel said.

3. Helping the Poorest, Climate Change and Capitalism

Letters, WSJ, Jun 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304782404577488992870843390.html?mod=ITP_opinion_1

[SEPP Comment: Dramatically opposing views.]

Helping the Poorest, Climate Change and Capitalism

Letters, WSJ, Jun 27, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304782404577488992870843390.html?mod=ITP_opinion_1

Bjorn Lomborg's perspective that "old-fashioned" water and air pollution of the sort he references are global issues that require the United Nations' action ahead of global climate change is wrongheaded ("Feel-Good Environmentalism at the U.N.," op-ed, June 21). The fact is that pollutants arising from local actions tend to yield local consequences that require local solutions. However, if borders are involved, such problems may also warrant bilateral action by adjoining communities or states. Climate change, on the other hand, is the classic global commons issue. Earth's climate affects all nations, and international cooperation is required to solve it. This is a clear example of the U.N.'s purpose.

Although Mr. Lomborg acknowledges global warming to be a concern, he has lost sight of what's at stake here: the immediate challenge of reducing carbon emissions to stabilize a worsening global situation. Some estimates assign only about a 50% probability of achieving the U.N. participants' goal of limiting temperature rise to less than a two-degree Celsius increase by midcentury. Left unchecked, scientists project that rising temperatures will further intensify climate disruptions and lead to population displacements, with economic consequences for both developing and developed nations.

The reality of the situation is this: No single energy source, policy or nation acting alone offers the solution to the worsening global climate situation. All energy sources will be needed to support the world's growing population and economic activities in this century. Also needed will be human ingenuity, continued industry innovation (e.g., shale-gas fracturing), smart policies, national will and international cooperation in the form of binding emissions targets to thwart climate-warming effects here at home and abroad. Now is certainly not the time for the U.N. to turn its attention away from our warming planet's crisis.

Mark L. Mullinix
Claremont, Calif.

Bravo for Bjorn Lomborg's plea for Western elites to put their pet environmental concerns in proper context. As he notes, today's most lethal pollutants aren't industrial greenhouse gases but rather preindustrial dangers still prominent in developing countries, like "inhaling smoke from inefficient and dirty fuels such as dried animal dung, crop residues and wood." We in the developed world have cleansed our environment of these most-lethal pollutants by relying on the very "non-green" technologies that chic environmentalists, ignorant of history, portray as unprecedentedly horrific sources of pollution.

Industrial capitalism is history's greatest antipollutant. Asphalt and automobiles, for example, combine to cleanse our cities and towns of the bacteria and insects (and stench) that are inseparable from animal-powered transportation. The petroleum used to make asphalt and to power automobiles is also used to make plastic wrap that keeps our foods unpolluted and to produce pharmaceuticals that keep our bodies cleaner and healthier.

We need only look around our homes for compelling evidence—evidence in the form of the solid (i.e., non-thatched) roofs above our heads and solid (i.e., non-dirt) floors beneath our feet, potable water running from faucets, indoor plumbing, antibacterial ointments and antibiotics, refrigerators and freezers, laundry detergents and automatic washing machines, vacuum cleaners, light bulbs, gas cooktops and electric heat-pumps. The list of ways in which the developed world has been cleaned by capitalism is practically endless.

Prof. Donald J. Boudreaux
George Mason University
Fairfax, Va.

4. How Cuba Became a 'Happy' Country

Citizens flee on rafts. But environmentalists know better.

By Matthew Sinclair, WSJ, Jun 26, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304870304577490764002841198.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

In what league does Iraq beat Britain, Haiti beat the United States, and Afghanistan beat Denmark? Political corruption? Violent crime? Temperature? No, welcome to the weird and wonderful world of the Happy Planet Index. It is a little window into the way many environmentalists think.

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) purports to "measure what matters: the extent to which countries deliver long, happy, sustainable lives for the people that live in them." It beautifully illustrates the two great vices of environmentalist thought: fetishizing resource efficiency above everything else and treating happiness economics with far too much respect.

Countries with high living standards tend to use more natural resources. That's why instead of being praised as having a dynamic economy and being the least corrupt country in Africa, Botswana comes at the bottom of the Happy Planet Index. It scores a pitiful 22.6, way below the Democratic Republic of the Congo (30.5) and Zimbabwe (35.3). Botswana's people might enjoy a much higher standard of living, but that means a larger ecological footprint.

Of course I will use less oil if I walk to work instead of driving or even getting the bus, or if I bring in crops by hand instead of using a combine harvester. The price you pay for that is normally taking a lot more time and therefore being a lot less productive: That's why we have to balance resource efficiency against other priorities. You might be able to consume fewer resources (and create lots of green jobs) by having people run in giant hamster wheels, but that doesn't make it a sensible way to power a city.

Happiness economics has similar problems. It works by asking people how satisfied they are with their lives. To assess "experienced well-being," the Happy Planet Index uses a question called the "Ladder of Life" from the Gallup World Poll. It asks respondents to imagine a ladder, where zero is the worst possible life and 10 is the best possible life, and report the step of the ladder on which they feel they currently stand.

The problem with a question like that is that your horizons might be a little more limited if you've grown up in a war-torn village in Afghanistan instead of prosperous, stable and connected Denmark. The average inhabitant of Copenhagen can probably imagine a more impressive life than the average inhabitant of Kabul, and that means a much higher bar for the real lives to meet.

It's even worse if you've grown up on the American dream. Do we really want to give countries high marks because the people living there treat just scraping by as a real achievement?

The Happy Planet Index hasn't been composed by some lonely obsessive living with his mother and boring a very small number of readers in a rarely visited corner of the Internet. No, the Happy Planet Index has been produced by the New Economics Foundation, a think tank with an annual budget of more than \$3.9 million and a staff of more than 50. They may be as mad as a box of frogs, but these people are well-funded and influential.

They are also playing with taxpayers' money. One of the New Economics Foundation's biggest donors in 2010-11—giving them more than \$155,000—was the British government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs paid more than \$90,000 for another project in 2009 in which the New Economics Foundation produced a report—"Moments of change as opportunities for influencing behaviour"—which looked to Communist Cuba for an example of "mass efficiency improvement."

Cuba, by the way, ranks 12th on the Happy Planet scale.

Reports like the Happy Planet Index claim to show us a different way of measuring success that "puts current and future well-being at the heart of measurement." But there's a reason Cubans regularly risk (and lose) their lives trying to escape their home country and make it to America, and there's no waves of humanity flowing in the opposite direction. That the Happy Planet Index can't capture those realities, or chooses to ignore them, suggests, well, that its authors are living on another planet.

Mr. Sinclair is director of the TaxPayers' Alliance, a London-based think-tank.

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