

The Week That Was: 2013-01-26 (January 26, 2013)
Brought to You by SEPP (www.SEPP.org)
The Science and Environmental Policy Project

#####

Quote of the Week: *We never intended a fundamentalist Green movement that rejected all energy sources other than renewable, nor did we expect the Greens to cast aside our priceless ecological heritage because of their failure to understand that the needs of the Earth are not separable from human needs. We need take care that the spinning windmills do not become like the statues on Easter Island, monuments of a failed civilisation.* James Lovelock scientist and author as he states in a letter dated 12/12/12, “known as the originator of Gaia theory, a view of the Earth that sees it as a self-regulating entity that keeps the surface environment always fit for life.” [H/t Andrew Montford]

#####

Number of the Week: 8°C +/- 4°C (about 14°F +/-7°F).

#####

SAVE THE DATE: February 2 -- 1:30 to 3:30 A SEPP / VA-SEEE Energy Forum: Understanding Energy in a Politically Charged World. presentation on National and Virginia Energy Issues. At the Conference Center, Norfolk International Airport, 2200 Norview Avenue Norfolk, VA. Please register here (no cost). (<http://hrenergyforum.eventbrite.com>).

#####

THIS WEEK:

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

The Right Climate Stuff Team: One of the most spectacular successes of modern empirical science was landing a man on the moon. The motto of the Apollo team was: “In God we trust, all others bring data.” Last spring, some members of the Apollo team announced they would explore the issue of man’s emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG), particularly if carbon dioxide (CO2) are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming (Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming, CAGW). The team would approach the AGW issue with the same rigor and attention to detail needed for a successful lunar landing. They invited a number of scientists on both sides of the issue to make presentations, but required data to support claims.

On Wednesday, the team made its preliminary findings in six major points including: 1) The science that predicts the extent of Anthropogenic Global Warming is not settled science; 2) There is no convincing physical evidence of Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming; 3) Computer models need to be validated before being used in critical decision-making. These findings are similar to those of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) and many of those skeptical of the findings of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its followers, including the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP). Please see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

A Debate: On Wednesday evening a group called The Hard Question hosted a debate titled Climate Change – Science or Hype at the National Press Club. The panelists were Hal Doiron (team leader of the Right Climate Stuff Team), Leighton Steward (PlantsNeedCO2), David Kreutzer (Heritage Foundation), Daniel Weiss (Center for American Progress), Scott Sklar (Stella Group), and Dennis V. McGinn (ret. Admiral) (American Council on Renewable Energy). It quickly became obvious that the first three came to debate the science and the second three came to ignore it. Instead, the second three came to promote renewable energy, especially wind.

Weiss of the Center for American Progress quickly set the tone by stating he is not a scientist and recited organizations that have unquestionably followed the announcements of the IPCC, Sklar followed suit, as did McGinn, who referenced a highly questionable Navy threat analysis based on exaggerations of consequences from global warming. These three quickly demonstrated they did not have a scientific approach in questioning authority. Apparently, they believe that authority is the determining factor in science rather than the data gathered through rigorous observation and experimentation. In short, they had a medieval concept of science.

When the three scientifically orientated panelists tried to focus on climate science, they were ignored by the others, who were promoting the virtues of wind power. Steward tried to point out the health benefits of increased atmospheric CO₂, which greatly benefits plants. Hopefully, some in the audience will take time to read his booklet. As all too typical, the promoters dominated the scientists. The panel did not take any questions, but the organizers requested that up to two questions be submitted to be answered later.

The two questions submitted by SEPP are:

Climate Change / Global Warming: The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is called the world's foremost authority on global warming / climate change. Using climate models, in 1990, the IPCC predicted significant, continuous global warming to 2012 and beyond. According to comprehensive satellite data, there has been no warming of the atmosphere for over a decade. According to the less comprehensive, but highly recognized surface data (from HadCRU), there has been no statistically significant surface warming for sixteen years. Should US government policy be based on predictions from models which are obviously failing? Why?

Alternative Energy / Wind Power: Texas has the largest installed wind capacity of any state. ERCOT is the major grid operator, covering about 85% of the state. According to ERCOT, the greatest demand is in the summer, late afternoon and evening. Yet, during the time of critical need, the wind farms deliver about Eight Percent (8%) of installed capacity. Thus, expensive duplicate capacity is required to provide electricity when needed the most. Should those operators, who fail to perform when needed the most, pay for the duplicate capacity required by those who do perform when needed the most? Why?

Please see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and <http://plantsneedco2.org/default.aspx?act=documents.aspx?category=Critical%20Facts>

President Obama and Climate Change: On Monday, in his inaugural address, President Obama announced with almost religious zeal of a moral obligation to fight climate change. Of course, this delighted the Greens. Since climate change has been occurring for hundreds of millions of years, how does he propose stopping it? Or perhaps, he is setting the stage for claiming he stopped global warming, which has not occurred for over a decade. After all, he is claiming credit for the rapid expansion of oil and natural gas production in the US, even though the Administration has curtailed production and development on Federal lands and waters.

Problems in Europe: Western Europe has been in the forefront in advocating dangerous AGW and the accompanying, expensive green energy solutions. Increasingly, there seems to be a

problem. More scientists are questioning the IPCC, and the popular press is as well. It may be that because many countries, such as Germany, have experienced four severe winters out of the last five. It may be that sharp increases in electricity costs to consumers are finally having an effect. Member of the European Parliament, Roger Helmer has informed TWTW of a new "European Citizens' Initiative" calling for "the suspension of the EU's massively expensive 2009 Climate & Energy Package, which sets very aggressive targets for renewable energy use by member-states by 2020. It is this Package which is driving the massive proliferation of renewables, especially wind, in the EU, with consequent increases in energy prices." The petition is for citizens of the EU only. Please see links under Questioning the Orthodoxy, Challenging European Green and www.affordable-energy.eu.

Life before Fossil Fuels: Master Resource had two posts from a report by Indur Goklany on life before fossil fuels and how humanity, as well as nature, has benefited from the use of fossil fuels. Please see links under Health and Science.

Corrections and Amplifications: A number of readers pointed out that last week's TWTW contained a conversion error in the Number of the Week. Seventeen feet converts to 5.2 meters not to 7.6 meters as erroneously stated. The correct conversion factor of feet to meters of 0.3048 was used, but the estimated wave height of 25 feet was converted, not the estimated storm surge of 17 feet. Nonetheless, if the 1938 hurricane had hit New York City, Sandy would be discussed as the strongest hurricane to hit New York since 1938, not a super storm. As always, TWTW appreciates those who take the time to correct errors.

Number of the Week: 8°C +/- 4°C (about 14°F +/-7°F). In the past, ice core borings have failed to produce satisfactory estimates of temperatures in Greenland during the last warm interglacial period, the Eemian period, from about 130,000 to 115,000 years ago. This week a team led by the Niels Bohr Institute published its new findings – that 126,000 years ago Greenland was about 8°C warmer than today. Even though Greenland was considerably warmer than today for a period of about 15,000 years, the ice sheet did not disappear. After shrinking during the first part of the Eemian period, to a level about 130 meters below the current level, starting about 122,000 years ago it remained stable. Also, the warming was basically unrelated to atmospheric CO2. If the study withstands the criticism that will, no doubt, follow, then those who predict rapid sea level rise from melting Greenland ice will need to recalculate their models.

#####

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. We the Government

An inaugural address of striking liberal ambition and partisanship.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 22, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324624404578256063772926812.html?mod=djemEditorialPage_t

2. The Real Obama Climate Deal

To approve natural gas exports and other energy projects, the president may demand a carbon tax
By Kimberley Strassel, WSJ, Jan 24, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323539804578262140731231404.html>

3. Climate-Change Misdirection

Fear-mongering exaggeration about effects of global warming distracts us from finding affordable and effective energy alternatives.

By Bjorn Lomborg, WSJ, Jan 23, 2013 [H/t Roger Cohen]

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323485704578258172660564886.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: Disagree with points that CO2 causes significant global warming and CO2 emissions must be reduced.]

#####

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Summary of Preliminary Report

The Right Climate Stuff Research Team, Their Web Site, Jan 23, 2013

<http://www.therightclimatestuff.com/SummaryPrelimReport.html>

Team of Ex-NASA Scientists Concludes No Imminent Threat from Man-Made CO2

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 23, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/01/23/team-of-ex-nasa-scientists-concludes-no-imminent-threat-from-man-made-co2/>

Global Warming: One NASA Scientist Vs. More Than 20

Editorial, IBD, Jan 25, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/012513-642054-nasa-scientists-engineers-global-warming-facts.htm>

[SEPP Comment: The number of scientists on one side of the other does not matter as much as how and why do they know what they claim to know. What do the data show?]

The Hard Question Debate

Climate Change – Science or Hype

Hosted by Blanquita Cullum

<http://www.thehardquestion.com/>

Link to video: <http://vimeo.com/58107137>

Temperature Standstill Continues: 2012 just Scrapes into Top Ten

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Jan 24, 2013

<http://www.thegwgf.org/temperature-standstill-continues-2012-scrapes-top-ten/>

Someone please tell us where's the warming

By Frank Bosse and Fritz Vahrenholt, (Translated/edited by P Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, Jan 24, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/01/24/prof-fritz-vahrenholt-ohc-tells-us-to-prepare-for-a-long-period-of-temperature-stagnation/>

New study finds low climate sensitivity

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 25, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/1/25/new-study-finds-low-climate-sensitivity.html>

Global warming less extreme than feared?

By Bård Amundsen/Else Lie. Translation: Darren McKellep/Carol B. Eckmann, Research Council of Norway, Jan 24, 2013

http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Newsarticle/Global_warming_less_extreme_than_feared/1253983344535/p1177315753918?WT.ac=forside_nyhet

The low-down on aerosols

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 24, 2013

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2013/1/24/the-low-down-on-aerosols.html>

The changing climate of climate change

By Gordon Fulks, Oregon Live, Jan 19, 2013

http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2013/01/the_changing_climate_of_climat.html#inc_art_river

Defending the Orthodoxy

Speech Gives Climate Goals Center Stage

By Richard Stevenson and John Broder, NYT, Jan 21, 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/22/us/politics/climate-change-prominent-in-obamas-inaugural-address.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130122

Make climate change a priority

By Jim Yong Kim, President, World Bank, Jan 24, 2013 [H/t Dennis Manuta]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/make-climate-change-a-priority/2013/01/24/6c5c2b66-65b1-11e2-9e1b-07db1d2ced5b_story.html?wpisrc=emailtoafriend

[SEPP Comment: World Bank squandering funds fighting imaginary warming.]

The Danger of Making Science Political

By Puneet Opal, The Atlantic, Jan 19, 2013 [H/t Thomas Sheahen]

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/01/the-danger-of-making-science-political/267327/>

Many more scientists identify as Democrats than as Republicans, but threats to scientific thinking can come from any quarter. What must be preserved is the pursuit of science, away from irrational dogma.

[SEPP Comment: Then the author descends into it.]

How Climate Change Could Wipe Out the Western Forests

If current trends continue, the landscapes of states like New Mexico and Arizona may soon be unrecognizable.

Editorial, The Atlantic, Jan 24, 2013

<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/01/how-climate-change-could-wipe-out-the-western-forests/267457/>

Like the hurricane season, statistics suggest the burn season is becoming longer and more severe.

[SEPP Comment: The data show hurricane seasons becoming less severe.]

In inaugural address, Obama makes a moral case for action on climate change

By Juliet Eilperin, Washington Post, Jan 22, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/obama-makes-a-moral-case-for-action-on-climate-change/2013/01/22/1d33ea98-64cf-11e2-9e1b-07db1d2ccd5b_story.html

How High Could the Tide Go?

By Justin Gillis, NYT, Jan 21, 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/22/science/earth/seeking-clues-about-sea-level-from-fossil-beaches.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130122&r=0

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Of climate science and stomach bugs

By Tom Quirk, Quadrant, Jan 21, 2013

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2013/01/of-climate-science-and-stomach-bugs>

A Citizen's Guide to Global Warming Evidence

By William Briggs, His Blog, Jan 22, 2013 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://wmbriggs.com/blog/?p=1417>

[SEPP Comment: A practical summary of some of the issues regarding the claims that man is causing dangerous global warming.]

The U.N.'s Global Warming War On Capitalism: An Important History Lesson

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Jan 22, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/01/22/the-u-n-s-global-warming-war-on-capitalism-an-important-history-lesson-2/>

The Overwhelming Judgment of Science Rejects Obama's Global Warming Claims

By James Taylor, Forbes, Jan 24, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamestaylor/2013/01/24/the-overwhelming-judgment-of-science-rejects-obamas-global-warming-claims/>

Extreme media alert

The insurance industry appears to be behind all the hype of extreme weather

By Terence Corcoran, Financial Post, Jan 23, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/01/23/terence-corcoran-extreme-media-alert/>

[SEPP Comment: A winter warming of a few degrees in Canada is hardly the end of the world.]

Inaugural Lies and the Big Chill

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Jan 21, 2013

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2013/01/inaugural-lies-and-big-chill.html>

Questioning European Green

Ofgem and the family bill

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 23, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/1/23/ofgem-and-the-family-bill.html>

[SEPP Comment: How to manipulate numbers to make proposed legislation appear to be less costly to households than it actually is.]

Only five households sign up to Coalition's flagship energy project

With less than a week to go until the launch of the Coalition's flagship energy efficiency project, just five households have signed up for the Green Deal.

By Louis Gray, Telegraph, UK, Jan 22, 2013 [H/t Malcolm Ross]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/9818741/Only-five-households-sign-up-to-Coalitions-flagship-energy-project.html>

Despite months to prepare, 600 trained builders on standby and the involvement of 40 organisations, including household names like B&Q and British Gas, it looks like few people are interested – never mind queuing up to be the first in line for a loan.

Climate policy could be 'collateral damage' of UK exit from EU

By Arthur Neslen, EurActiv, Jan 24, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.euractiv.com/climate-environment/climate-policy-collateral-damage-news-517292>

How not to reduce carbon dioxide emissions

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Jan 25, 2013

<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/how-not-reduce-carbon-dioxide-emissions>

[SEPP Comment: A cross nation assessment of Western Europe does not result in clear indications that those governments that spend heavily on renewable sources of electricity have comparatively low per capita carbon dioxide emissions.]

Lovelock recants

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 25, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/1/25/lovelock-recants.html>

Major German Daily Carries Front-Page Headline: “Global Warming Keeps Us Waiting...CO2 Over-Estimated?”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jan 21, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/01/21/major-german-daily-front-page-headline-global-warming-keeps-us-waiting-co2-over-estimated/>

Leading German Meteorologist Dismisses Climate Horror Scenarios...”Are Without Any Scientific Merit”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jan 23, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/01/23/leading-german-meteorologist-dismisses-climate-horror-scenarios-are-without-any-scientific-merit/>

Lomborg: Electricity prices for German households have increased 61% since 2000 – renewables blamed

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 23, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/01/23/lomborg-electricity-prices-for-german-households-have-increased-61-since-2000-renewables-blamed/>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Obama still chasing 'green jobs' will-o'-the-wisp

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Jan 22, 2013

http://washingtonexaminer.com/examiner-editorial-obama-still-chasing-green-jobs-will-o-the-wisp/article/2519392?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest%20-%2001/23/2013&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Opinion%20Digest#.UQF_dWfb_fE

Obama's Bonfire of Green Energy Inanities

By Peter Glover, Energy Tribune, Jan 25, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/71647/obamas-bonfire-of-green-energy-inanities>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Ban Ki-moon: climate agreement tops 2013 wishlist

The UN chief said global warming, along with ending the Syrian crisis, were his priorities among an ambitious list of hopes

By Staff Writers, AP, Jan 22, 2013

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2013/jan/22/ban-ki-moon-climate-agreement>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

US climate fears mount, but political action wanes

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP), Jan 19, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/US_climate_fears_mount_but_political_action_wanes_999.html

U.K. Referendum Call Rattles Europe's Gilded Cage

Editorial, IBD, Jan 24, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/012413-641907-britain-referendum-call-rattles-eu-gilded-cage.htm>

Japan ready to ditch target for emissions cut

By Staff Writers, AFP, Jan 24, 2013

<http://phys.org/news/2013-01-japan-ready-ditch-emissions.html>

The Gleick Affair

Caught Red-Handed on Climate Change

By John Ransom, Townhall, Jan 21, 2013 [H/t Tom Sheahan]

http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/johnransom/2013/01/21/caught-redhanded-on-climate-change-n1493559?utm_source=thdaily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nl

Seeking a Common Ground

Biased Scientific Appraisals

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Jan 22, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/01/22/biased-scientific-appraisals/>

[SEPP Comment: Prior to review, there is no reason to assume an assessment from Exxon is superior or inferior to one by Greenpeace.

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

Study Finds Severe Climate Jeopardizing Amazon Forest

By Staff Writers, Pasadena CA (JPL), Jan 21, 2013

[http://www.terraily.com/reports/Study Finds Severe Climate Jeopardizing Amazon Forest 999.html](http://www.terraily.com/reports/Study_Finds_Severe_Climate_jeopardizing_Amazon_Forest_999.html)

5 Tips for Handling Climate Skeptics in 2013

By Mike Bellamente Climate Counts, Jan 16, 2013 [H/t Ronald Lansky]

<http://www.justmeans.com/justmeansclickstats?url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5qdXN0bWVhbnMuY29tL2Js2dzLzUtVGJlwey1mb3ItSGFuZGxpbmctQ2xpbWF0ZS1Ta2VwdGljcy1pbi0yMDEzLzMyMzQuaHRtbA==&email=cm9ubGFza3lAYW9sLmNvbQ==&newsid=NDA0>

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to the author's claims, carbon dioxide is more than a harmless gas, it is a beneficial gas to the environment and humanity.]

Climate change to profoundly affect the Midwest in coming decades

By Staff Writers, Ann Arbor MI (SPX), Jan 21, 2013

[http://www.terraily.com/reports/Climate change to profoundly affect the Midwest in coming decades 999.html](http://www.terraily.com/reports/Climate_change_to_profoundly_affect_the_Midwest_in_coming_decades_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: From the draft of the National Climate Assessment using models that have not been validated.]

"Misinterpreted climate report threatens the credibility of scientists'

Debate/Discussion article published January 21, 2013 by the Swedish major daily newspaper Dagens Nyheter, Translation by LRG, [H/t Anne Debeil]

Link "Misstolkad klimatrapport hotar forskares trovärdighet"

By Lennart Bengtsson,, Deliang Chen,, Marie-José Gaillard, Henning Rodhe. Jan 21, 2013

<http://www.dn.se/debatt/misstolkad-klimatrapport-hotar-forskares-trovardighet>

The World Bank's recent climate report was not saying that we necessarily face an extreme global temperature increase - but was about the potential consequences of such. It is one of several examples of how climate information can be misinterpreted and ultimately damage the credibility of researchers, writes leading climate scientists.

[SEPP Comment: When in doubt equivocate.]

Unprecedented melting of Andean glaciers due to climate change

The high mountain water source for millions of people in South America is now in question.

By Martin Barillas, Spero News, Jan 23, 2013

<http://www.speroforum.com/a/ACFIKTEZER49/73529-Unprecedented-melting-of-Andean-glaciers-due-to-climate-change>

[SEPP Comment: Unprecedented! Over the 300 year study period – starting during the . Little Ice Age. No excuse for the ignorance of history.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Sir David Attenborough calls humans 'a plague on the Earth'

Filmmaker warns of population growth outstripping resources, global warming

By Staff Writers, Live Science, Jan 22, 2013

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/50554460/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/sir-david-attenborough-calls-humans-plague-earth/?lite&lite=obinsite#.UQFQj2fb_fE

[SEPP Comment: Royal Society Fellow Paul Ehrlich agrees.]

Northeast Faces Stark Choice on Climate Pollution

By Peter Shattuck & Daniel Sosland, NYT, Jan 24, 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/25/opinion/northeast-faces-stark-choice-on-climate-pollution.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130125&r=0

[SEPP Comment: From global warming, to climate change, to extreme weather, to climate pollution, is there any limit to the absurd claims appearing in the once vaunted Gray Lady?]

Measurement Issues

Via experiment, NOAA establishes a fact about station siting: ‘nighttime temperatures are indeed higher closer to the laboratory’

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 20, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/01/20/noaa-establishes-a-fact-about-station-siting-nighttime-temperatures-are-indeed-higher-closer-to-the-laboratory/>

Changing Weather

California Megaflood: Lessons from a Forgotten Catastrophe

By Stefan Landherr, NCTCS, Jan 21, 2013

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2013/01/california-megaflood-lessons-from.html>

Link to full Article: California Megaflood: Lessons from a Forgotten Catastrophe

A 43-day storm that began in December 1861 put central and southern California underwater for up to six months, and it could happen again

By B. Lynn Ingram, Scientific American, Jan 19, 2013

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=atmospheric-rivers-california-megaflood-lessons-from-forgotten-catastrophe>

Snowpocalypse Russia: 'Snow tsunami' swallows streets, cars, buildings (PHOTOS)

By Staff Writers, Russia Today, Jan 19, 2013 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://rt.com/news/winter-snow-russia-weather-275/>

Australia’s Alien Environment Fuels Firestorms

By Viv Forbes, WUWT, Jan 20, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/01/20/australias-alien-environment-fuels-firestorms/>

[SEPP Comment: Native Americans used similar techniques in places such as the Shenandoah Valley and Yosemite. Imagine the screams if it was proposed now.]

Changing Climate

Study Provides New Insights on Drought Predictions in East Africa

By Staff Writers, Cape Cod MA (SPX), Jan 21, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Study_Provides_New_Insights_on_Drought_Predictions_in_East_Africa_999.html

Link to Article: Multidecadal variability in East African hydroclimate controlled by the Indian Ocean

By Jessica E. Tierney, Jason E. Smerdon, Kevin J. Anchukaitis, & Richard Seager, Nature, Jan 16, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v493/n7432/full/nature11785.html>

Tiny fossils hold answers to big questions on climate change

By Staff Writers, Press Release, Cardiff University, Jan 21, 2013 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/articles/tiny-fossils-hold-answers-to-big-questions-on-climate-change-10042.html>

Link to Article: Glacial discharge along the west Antarctic Peninsula during the Holocene
By Pike, Swan, Leng, & Snelling, Nature, Jan 20, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/ngeo/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/ngeo1703.html>

We show that two processes of atmospheric forcing—an increasing occurrence of La Niña events⁵ and rising levels of summer insolation—had a stronger influence during the late Holocene than oceanic processes driven by southern westerly winds and upwelling of upper Circumpolar Deepwater.

[SEPP Comment: One should not extrapolate from what is occurring on the west Antarctic Peninsula to the entire continent. Part of it is outside the Antarctic Circle and it has the mildest climate and the only flowering plants in Antarctica.]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

First complete ice core record of last interglacial period shows the climate of Greenland to be significantly warmer than today

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 24, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/01/24/first-complete-ice-core-record-of-last-interglacial-period-shows-the-climate-of-greenland-to-be-significantly-warmer-than-today/>

Link to Article: Eemian interglacial reconstructed from a Greenland folded ice core
By NEEM, Nature, Jan 23, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v493/n7433/full/nature11789.html>

Greenland less vulnerable than expected to a runaway melt

Only 25 percent of ice sheet thawed in warm period more than 100,000 years ago: study

By Alister Doyle, Reuters, Jan 23, 2013 [H/t Clyde Spencer]

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/50568211/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/greenland-less-vulnerable-expected-runaway-melt/#.UQFQBWfb_fe

Greenland Ice Simply Would Not Melt in Baking +8°C Era 120k Years Ago

By Lewis Page, The Register, Jan 24, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/01/24/greenland_ice_sheet_simply/

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

USDA Studies Confirm Plant Water Demands Shift with Water Availability

By Ann Perry for USDA News. Washington DC (SPX), Jan 23, 2013

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/USDA_Studies_Confirm_Plant_Water_Demands_Shift_with_Water_Availability_999.html

First Global Assessment of Land and Water 'Grabbing'

By Fariss Samarrai for UV News, Charlottesville VA (SPX), Jan 23, 2013

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/First_Global_Assessment_of_Land_and_Water_Grabbing_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Would environmental NGOs placing lands into preserves also be considered 'Grabbing.']

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Calcification and Productivity in Symbiont-Bearing Foraminifer

Reference: Vogel, N. and Uthicke, S. 2012. Calcification and photobiology in symbiont-bearing benthic foraminifera and responses to a high CO₂ environment. *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* 424-425: 15-24.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jan/22jan2013a1.html>

Tropical Cyclones of the Lesser Antilles

Reference: Chenoweth, M. and Divine, D. 2012. Tropical cyclones in the Lesser Antilles: descriptive statistics and historical variability in cyclone energy, 1638-2009. *Climatic Change* 113: 583-598.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jan/22jan2013a2.html>

Fine-Scale Temperature Features at High Elevations

Reference: Graham, E.A., Rundel, P.W., Kaiser, W., Lam, Y., Stealey, M. and Yuen, E.M. 2012. Fine-scale patterns of soil and plant surface temperatures in an alpine fellfield habitat, White Mountains, California. *Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research* 44: 288-295.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jan/22jan2013a3.html>

The Medieval Warm Period on Maui

Reference: Pau, S., MacDonald, G.M. and Gillespie, T.W. 2012. A dynamic history of climate change and human impact on the environment from Kealia Pond, Maui, Hawaiian Islands. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 102: 748-762.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jan/22jan2013a4.html>

The Political Games Continue

Republicans threaten 'formal action' over EPA head's 'Richard Windsor' emails

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Jan 24, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/279069-house-gop-presses-epa-on-richard-windsor-email-account>

[SEPP Comment: To some, the concepts of transparency and public records are in the mind of the beholder.]

Climate Change on Obama's Second-Term Agenda

By Gail Reitenbach, Power News, Jan 24, 2013

http://www.powernews.com/news/5305.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2603596&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e66050d0

EPA and other Regulators on the March

China's bad air puts the lie to EPA scare tactics

Costly regulations have no basis in fact

By Steve Milloy, Washington Times, Jan 22, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jan/22/chinas-bad-air-puts-the-lie-to-epa-scare-tactics/>

EPA Usurps Congressional Intent

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Jan 25, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/01/25/epa-usurps-congressional-intent/>

Court delivers blow to biofuel industry in ruling against EPA

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Jan 25, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/279329-court-decision-on-key-rule-delivers-setback-to-biofuel-industry>

[SEPP Comment: A court ruling that the EPA cannot require refiners to use product that does not exist in commercial quantities creates uncertainty among the would-be producers who have yet to deliver the product! With this ruling, the EPA can no longer pocket the fines levied for failure to use a product that does not exist.]

EPA Proposal Could Mean \$1.1B in New Emissions Controls for Arizona Coal Plant

By Sonal Patel, Power News, Jan 24, 2013

http://www.powernmag.com/news/5329.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2603596&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0

Energy Issues – Non-US

Keystone vs. religion

Climate change isn't about policy as much as religion

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Jan 22, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/01/22/peter-foster-keystone-vs-religion/>

US 'shale boost' provokes EU fears and indecision

By Staff Writers, EurActiv, Jan 23, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.euractiv.com/specialreport-europe-industry-ha/us-industry-shale-boost-provokes-news-517266>

Savanna study highlights African fuel wood crisis

By Staff Writers, London, UK (SPX,) Jan 21, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Savanna_study_highlights_African_fuelwood_crisis_999.html

[SEPP Comment: England, the US, etc. solved their fuel wood crisis by using coal. Will the powers that be permit that solution for Africa?]

Energy Issues -- US

Watchdog group demands information on green building program

By Michael Bastasch, Daily Caller, Jan 17, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/01/17/watchdog-group-demands-information-on-green-building-program/>

Washington's Control of Energy

Nebraska OKs re-routed Keystone XL pipeline, now it's Obama's problem

By Andrew Malcolm, IBD, Jan 23, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/politics-andrew-malcolm/012313-641560-keystone-xl-pipeline-approved-by-nebraska-goes-to-obama.htm>

Nebraska OKs Pipeline; Now It's Climate Myth Vs. Jobs

Editorial, IBD, Jan 23, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/012313-641707-nebraska-governor-approves-keystone-xl-pipeline.htm?p=full>

John Kerry Says He'll Control Keystone XL Review as Secretary of State

Climate change is among the 'life threatening issues' that define U.S. foreign policy, he tells Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

By Maria Gallucci, Inside Climate News, Jan 24, 2013

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20130124/john-kerry-secretary-of-state-nomination-keystone-xl-pipeline-climate-change-global-warming-obama-oil-sands>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

The Abundance of Fossil Fuels,

By Philipp Mueller, Report, GWPF, No Date

<http://www.thegwpf.org/content/uploads/2013/01/Mueller-Fossil-fuels.pdf>

Will California Be the Next Big Shale Oil Play?

By Geoffrey Styles, Energy Tribune, Jan 24, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/71524/will-california-be-the-next-big-shale-oil-play>

[SEPP Comment: The more complex geology of the Monterey shale formation as compared with the Bakken and Eagle Ford, increases the risks of any individual well.]

Breaking: Major shale oil find in South Australia (geopolitical shift coming?)

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jan 24, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/01/breaking-major-shale-oil-find-in-south-australia-geopolitical-shift-coming/#more-26576>

[SEPP Comment: It depends on the costs of development and extraction.]

Return of King Coal?

IEA: Coal Will Be The World's Dominant Fuel By 2030

By Rank Clemente, Energy Facts, Jan 22, 2013

<http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=29bc7d5d85828d574f86c157a&id=1d1bd58be3&e=>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy -- Other

Photovoltaics beat biofuels at converting sun's energy to miles driven

By Staff Writers, Santa Barbara CA (SPX), Jan 21, 2013

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/Photovoltaics_beat_biofuels_at_converting_suns_energy_to_miles_driven_999.html

[SEPP Comments: Biofuels perform that poorly!]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

CBO Says Electric Vehicle Subsidies to Cost \$7.5 Billion With Little Benefit

By Mark Modica, NLPC, Jan 18, 2013

<http://nlpc.org/stories/2013/01/18/cbo-says-ev-subsidies-cost-75-billion-little-benefits>

Link to Report: Effects of Federal Tax Credits for the Purchase of Electric Vehicles

By CBO, Sep 20, 2012

<http://www.cbo.gov/publication/43576>

Health and Science

Fossil Fuels: Humanity’s Liberator (escaping the Malthusian curse via coal, oil, and gas)

By Indur Goklany, Master Resource, Jan 24, 2013
<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/01/fossil-fuels-humanity-liberator/#more-23791>

Nature, Not Only Mankind, Saved by Fossil Fuels

By Indur Goklany, Master Resource, Jan 25, 2013
<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/01/nature-saved-fossil-fuels/#more-23860>

Finally — a little common sense on mercury

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Jan 22, 2013

<http://www.acsh.org/finally-a-little-common-sense-on-mercury/>

[SEPP Comment: Perhaps it should be called the “mad hatter” agreement. Large doses of the correct mercury compound cause neurological damage. Using the linear no-threshold model, EPA claims that any exposure to mercury causes neurological damage and death. Stay away from the oceans and the sea air!]

Environmental Industry

Scientists worldwide: BPA is safe; CAL-EPA and NRDC: No, it's not

By Staff Writers, ACSH, Jan 25, 2013

<http://www.acsh.org/scientists-worldwide-bpa-is-safe-cal-epa-and-nrdc-no-its-not/>

Sierra Club Decides to Break Law to Stop Keystone Pipeline

By Brandon Darby, Breitbart, Jan 24, 2013 [H/t Jeff Braswell]

<http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2013/01/23/Sierra-Club-Decides-to-Break-Law-to-Stop-Keystone-Pipeline>

Coal, not oil sands, biggest climate villain: Greenpeace

By Bob Weber, Canadian Press, Jan 23, 2013

http://business.financialpost.com/2013/01/23/coal-not-oil-sands-biggest-climate-villain-greenpeace/?_lsa=aa4b-c4ad

Other Scientific News

Extinction fears 'alarmist': study

By Staff Writers, Wellington (AFP), Jan 25, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Extinction_fears_alarmist_study_999.html

Link to Article: Can We Name Earth's Species Before They Go Extinct?

By Costello, May and Stork, Science, Jan 25, 2013

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/339/6118/413>

[SEPP Comment: Extinction fears are over rated.]

PODEX Experiment to Reshape Future of Atmospheric Science

By Kathryn Hansen for NASA Earth News, Greenbelt MD (SPX), Jan 17, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/PODEX_Experiment_to_Reshape_Future_of_Atmospheric_Science_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Certainly more data is needed.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

Tree and human health may be linked

By Staff Writers, Portland OR (SPX), Jan 18, 2013

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Tree and human health may be linked 999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Tree_and_human_health_may_be_linked_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: Perhaps in a way that the authors do not realize. More atmospheric CO2 yields healthier plants, trees included, thus more food to humanity.]

#####

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Green energy and organized crime: A match made in heaven

By Conn Carroll, Washington Examiner, Jan 23, 2013

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/green-energy-and-organized-crime-a-match-made-in-heaven/article/2519468#.UQLVTCfwUZ5>

It's Time to Prepare Your Portfolio for Climate Change

By Travis Hoium, The Motley Fool, Jan 18, 2013 [H/t Charles Schafer]

<http://www.fool.com/investing/general/2013/01/18/its-time-to-prepare-your-portfolio-for-climate-cha.aspx?source=ihsith0000001>

Marginal lands are prime fuel source for alternative energy

By Staff Writers, Lansing MI (SPX), Jan 18, 2013

[http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/Marginal lands are prime fuel source for alternative ene_rgy_999.html](http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/Marginal_lands_are_prime_fuel_source_for_alternative_ene_rgy_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: What a joke. Talk to environmental NGOs about wetlands being used for alternative energy.]

#####

ARTICLES:

1. We the Government

An inaugural address of striking liberal ambition and partisanship.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 22, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324624404578256063772926812.html?mod=djemEditorialPage_t

President Obama's second inaugural address won't be remembered for stirring lines, but then its purpose seemed to be more political than inspirational. Mr. Obama was laying down a marker that he has no intention of letting debt or deficits or lagging economic growth slow his plans for activist, expansive government.

Inaugurals usually include calls for national unity and appeals to our founding principles, which is part of their charm. With the election long over, swearing in a President is a moment for celebrating larger national purposes. But Mr. Obama's speech was notable for invoking the founding principles less to unify than to justify what he called "collective action." The President borrowed the Constitution's opening words of "we the people" numerous times, but his main theme was that the people are fundamentally defined through government action, and his government is here to help you.

On that theme, the speech was especially striking for including a specific defense of the federal entitlement programs that everyone knows must be reformed. Mr. Obama cited "Medicare, and Medicaid, and Social Security" by name as "the commitments we make to each other." Typically,

such programmatic specificity is reserved for State of the Union speeches. Mr. Obama almost seemed to be elevating them to Constitutional rights.

Typically, too, inaugural addresses avoid overt partisanship. But after mentioning those entitlements by name, Mr. Obama couldn't resist saying that those programs "do not make us a nation of takers; they free us to take the risks that make this country great."

The "takers" line was a clear shot at Mitt Romney's most famous campaign gaffe. This should have been beneath a Presidential inaugural, but then again it fits Mr. Obama's post- re-election pattern of continuing to demean and stigmatize those who disagree with him as if the election campaign is still on.

If you think this characterization is unfair, White House communications director Dan Pfeiffer expressed the current mood in the West Wing this way to the Washington Post on Inauguration Day: "There's a moment of opportunity now that's important. . . . What's frustrating is that we don't have a political system or an opposition party worthy of the opportunity."

So neither the checks and balances of U.S. democracy nor the Republican Party that controls one branch of Congress is worthy of President Obama's grand aspirations. Presumably they must bow to his superior moral purposes. It's important to appreciate how much such contemptuous talk deviates from normal public White House respect for the men and women a President must do political business with.

All of this suggests a second-term President less interested in bipartisan accommodation than in aggressively pursuing the progressive goals on behalf of what he views as a new center-left majority. One of his most passionate moments was even devoted to addressing "climate change," of all things.

He rarely mentioned the subject in the election campaign. But doing something about global warming is a commandment in the modern liberal catechism, and now Mr. Obama says it will be a major priority in the next four years. He even used the stock liberal description that those who disagree with him on climate change "deny" scientific fact. It's another example of deliberately stigmatizing his opposition.

We were also struck by what Mr. Obama didn't say considering the day and its symbolism. He spoke on Martin Luther King Day, a national holiday, yet apart from a fleeting reference he barely mentioned the occasion.

This is odd because there could be no greater symbolism that King's dream has been realized than the second inauguration of our first black President on the opposite end of the Washington mall on which he gave his most famous speech. It was a missed opportunity to bind up old wounds, but perhaps an intentional one lest Mr. Obama understate the need for even more urgent government action.

Americans want their Presidents to succeed, because they naturally assume that when Presidents do well so will the country. Mr. Obama will thus get a respectful hearing for his agenda, even if he has never been as candid as he was Monday in asserting his liberal ambitions. But if his second

term does break down into more partisan gridlock and rancor, let the record show that the President set the tone with his second inaugural.

2. The Real Obama Climate Deal

To approve natural gas exports and other energy projects, the president may demand a carbon tax
By Kimberley Strassel, WSJ, Jan 24, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323539804578262140731231404.html>

President Obama set off a guessing game this week as to what he intended with his inaugural promise to double down on climate change. There's no need to guess. California Democrat Barbara Boxer, the Senate's climate guru, was happy to fill in the gory details.

The president's climate shout-out sent the green community into flurries of ecstasy, with grand hopes of a new push for cap-and-trade in Congress, or of a redoubled U.S. commitment to a global carbon pact. It fell to Mrs. Boxer to tamp down those ambitions, even as she reassured her devotees that there is more than one way to skin the climate cat.

"A lot of you press me . . . on: 'Where is the bill on climate change? Where is the bill?' There doesn't have to be a bill," Mrs. Boxer explained in a briefing the day after Mr. Obama's speech. "I'm telling you right now, EPA has the authority in the transportation sector, the electricity sector, and the industrial sector under the Clean Air Act" to do everything that legislation might otherwise do.

In other words, with the election over, all pretense is gone. Democrats won't waste political capital on a doomed cap-and-trade bill. Yet they'll get their carbon program all the same, by deputizing the EPA to impose sweeping new rules and using their Senate majority to block any GOP effort to check the agency's power grab. The further upside? Brute regulation is not only certain and efficient, it allows vulnerable Democrats to foist any blame on a lame-duck administration.

Mrs. Boxer has spent years on climate, and she wouldn't be surrendering her legislative ambitions without clear assurances the White House has her covered. Her words were a signal that the Obama EPA is about to re-energize the regulatory machine that it put on ice during the election. Republicans who hoped Lisa Jackson's resignation signaled a more humble EPA approach should instead prepare for an agency with a new and turbocharged mission.

Just as notable, Mrs. Boxer gave the clearest sign yet that Dems intend to simultaneously pursue the new holy grail of climate control: a carbon tax. The left has been ginning up enthusiasm for this energy tax, not only as a means of cutting fossil-fuel use, but as a way of generating enormous revenue to cover their spending ambitions. The Democrats' political problem, however, is that the tax remains hugely unpopular.

Mrs. Boxer helpfully detailed Democrats' new strategy for getting a foothold. Now that cars are so much more fuel-efficient, she explained, the gas tax isn't bringing in enough revenue to cover highway needs. How to fix this? Easy! Just replace the gas tax with a carbon tax.

As strategy goes, this is clever. The gas tax itself is unpopular, so Democrats are betting on some public support for killing it. They figure at least some Republican porksters will salivate at more state highway money. Democrats can initially sell the tax as limited to covering infrastructure, knowing that once the principle is established, they can ramp up. And all this can be silkily pitched as part of "tax reform."

The only thing Mrs. Boxer did not explain was how the administration intends to balance this climate crackdown with its position atop an American energy renaissance. Mr. Obama spent the past election year bragging that gas and oil production had risen on his watch, hoping to cadge some credit for the economic boom that has accompanied private-sector drilling advances.

The administration has kept open the possibility of approving the Keystone XL pipeline. It has hinted it will greenlight more export terminals for natural gas. It last week again delayed its fracking rules for public lands. These moves have encouraged the oil-and-gas industry, even as they have driven the environmental community nuts. The Natural Resources Defense Council this week declared that approving Keystone would be "fundamentally inconsistent" with Mr. Obama's renewed vow to "address climate change."

Or would it? Republicans might recollect that the Obama administration has a practiced method of winning controversial legislation like ObamaCare and Dodd-Frank. To wit, it uses a combination of bribes and threats to get pertinent sectors of the business community to back its efforts.

Consider what the mighty oil-and-gas lobby might be co-opted to do—either out of gratitude for the president's backing or fear that he might turn on it. Consider how the political environment might change if the industry threw its weight behind a carbon tax or the EPA climate scheme. Consider that this might prove an easy call, given that a tax would be borne by its customers, while EPA regs will mostly crush coal. Consider that numerous Big Oil chieftains have already endorsed such a carbon levy. And who says Mr. Obama has to decide Keystone XL or anything else soon? He could hold out, to see what he can extract in return.

All this is food for thought for those conservatives who have been lulled into complacency by the stall of cap and trade. A big climate agenda is coming, only on very different terms. If Republicans hope to spare the economy that pain, it's time to adapt.

3. Climate-Change Misdirection

Fear-mongering exaggeration about effects of global warming distracts us from finding affordable and effective energy alternatives.

By Bjorn Lomborg, WSJ, Jan 23, 2013 [H/t Roger Cohen]

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323485704578258172660564886.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: Disagree with points that CO2 causes significant global warming and CO2 emissions must be reduced.]

In his second inaugural address on Monday, President Obama laudably promised to "respond to the threat of climate change." Unfortunately, when the president described the urgent nature of the threat—the "devastating impact of raging fires, and crippling drought, and more powerful

storms"—the scary examples suggested that he is contemplating poor policies that don't point to any real, let alone smart, solutions. Global warming is a problem that needs fixing, but exaggeration doesn't help, and it often distracts us from simple, cheaper and smarter solutions.

For starters, let's address the three horsemen of the climate apocalypse that Mr. Obama mentioned.

Historical analysis of wildfires around the world shows that since 1950 their numbers have decreased globally by 15%. Estimates published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences show that even with global warming proceeding uninterrupted, the level of wildfires will continue to decline until around midcentury and won't resume on the level of 1950—the worst for fire—before the end of the century.

Claiming that droughts are a consequence of global warming is also wrong. The world has not seen a general increase in drought. A study published in *Nature* in November shows globally that "there has been little change in drought over the past 60 years." The U.N. Climate Panel in 2012 concluded: "Some regions of the world have experienced more intense and longer droughts, in particular in southern Europe and West Africa, but in some regions droughts have become less frequent, less intense, or shorter, for example, in central North America and northwestern Australia."

As for one of the favorites of alarmism, hurricanes in recent years don't indicate that storms are getting worse. Measured by total energy (Accumulated Cyclone Energy), hurricane activity is at a low not encountered since the 1970s. The U.S. is currently experiencing the longest absence of severe landfall hurricanes in over a century—the last Category 3 or stronger storm was Wilma, more than seven years ago.

While it is likely that we will see somewhat stronger (but fewer) storms as climate change continues, a March 2012 *Nature* study shows that the global damage cost from hurricanes will go to 0.02% of gross domestic product annually in 2100 from 0.04% today—a drop of 50%, despite global warming.

This does not mean that climate change isn't an issue. It means that exaggerating the threat concentrates resources in the wrong areas. Consider hurricanes (though similar points hold for wildfire and drought). If the aim is to reduce storm damage, then first focus on resilience—better building codes and better enforcement of those codes. Ending subsidies for hurricane insurance to discourage building in vulnerable zones would also help, as would investing in better infrastructure (from stronger levees to higher-capacity sewers).

These solutions are quick and comparatively cheap. Most important, they would diminish future hurricane damage, whether climate-induced or not. Had New York and New Jersey focused resources on building sea walls and adding storm doors to the subway system and making simple fixes like porous pavements, Hurricane Sandy would have caused much less damage.

In the long run, the world needs to cut carbon dioxide because it causes global warming. But if the main effort to cut emissions is through subsidies for chic renewables like wind and solar power, virtually no good will be achieved—at very high cost. The cost of climate policies just for

the European Union—intended to reduce emissions by 2020 to 20% below 1990 levels—are estimated at about \$250 billion annually. And the benefits, when estimated using a standard climate model, will reduce temperature only by an immeasurable one-tenth of a degree Fahrenheit by the end of the century.

Even in 2035, with the most optimistic scenario, the International Energy Agency estimates that just 2.4% of the world's energy will come from wind and only 1% from solar. As is the case today, almost 80% will still come from fossil fuels. As long as green energy is more expensive than fossil fuels, growing consumer markets like those in China and India will continue to use them, despite what well-meaning but broke Westerners try to do.

Instead of pouring money into subsidies and direct production support of existing, inefficient green energy, President Obama should focus on dramatically ramping up investments into the research and development of green energy. Put another way, it is the difference between supporting an inexpensive researcher who will discover more efficient, future solar panels—and supporting a Solyndra at great expense to produce lots of inefficient, present-technology solar panels.

When innovation eventually makes green energy cheaper, everyone will implement it, including the Chinese. Such a policy would likely do 500 times more good per dollar invested than current subsidy schemes. But first let's drop the fear-mongering exaggeration—and then focus on innovation.

Mr. Lomborg, director of the Copenhagen Consensus Center in Washington, D.C., is the author of "The Skeptical Environmentalist" (Cambridge Press, 2001) and "Cool It" (Knopf, 2007).

#####