

The Week That Was: 2013-03-16 (March 16, 2013)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.* Farwell address by President Eisenhower stating two threats to American liberty from within, January 17, 1961 <http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/ike.htm>

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Number of the Week: 9

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Urgent: Reviewers Needed for Climate Change Reconsidered-2

The Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) is seeking credentialed individuals who are willing to serve as reviewers of the forthcoming NIPCC report Climate Change Reconsidered-2. Reviewers will be needed between April and August 2013 for various chapters and sub-chapters of the report. A list of topics addressed in the report, and for which reviews will be needed, can be found under the links and sub-links listed on the NIPCC Web site's Topical Archive page. To volunteer as a reviewer, or for more information, please send an email to NIPCC_contact@nipccreport.org. Thank you, your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

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THIS WEEK:

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

IPCC AR5: March 15 marked the deadline for which articles must be in press to qualify for inclusion for the upcoming Fifth Assessment Report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR5), with the full report due out sometime in 2014. The deadline for comments by the expert reviewers was November 30, 2012, assuring that the expert reviewers would not be able to comment on the latest rash of questionable science. The process allows the authors of the report to pick and choose what they wish to include. The process is hardly objective. If AR5 follows the pattern of AR4, then a politically negotiated, sensationalized Summary for Policymakers will appear first, expressing great certainty in the climate science, as presented, and great certainty in the climate models.

After the trumpeting has died down, the Summary will be followed months later by the detailed report supporting the Summary, with uncertainty of the science regulated to obscure appendices or ignored. Of course, papers presenting empirical science contradicting the main findings in AR5 will be dismissed or simply ignored. For a brief overview by John McLean of the scientifically challenged processes, please see link under Suppressing Scientific Inquiry. For a brief description of the biggest challenge to the models, capturing the chaotic nature of fluids, please see the link to an article by five-time IPCC expert reviewer Vincent Gray under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

The New Hockey-stick: As suggested in last week's TWTW, there are real problems with the study by Marcott et al, published last week in Science and used to claim that the last decade was hotter than over 70% of the period since the end of the last ice age. The study is being trumpeted by the usual organizations that declare human emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2), and other greenhouse gases, are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming (Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW)).

Among other comments in a piece in American Thinker, Fred Singer suggests the new hockey-stick may be worse than the discredited old one by Michael Mann. At least in graphs the old one differentiated between proxy data and instrument data. This one does not, and it includes the projections from climate models without differentiation! Thus, the graphics are highly misleading.

On the web site Suyts Space, by James Sexton, a statistician identified only by the name Hank, points out that of the data sets for the 73 sites, only 24 go to the year 1900, 9 to the year 1950, and only 2 to the year 2000. An independent check by TWTW of randomly selected datasets confirms that many do not go to the year 1900. If a close correspondence, over a reasonable period of time, between the proxy data and the instrument data cannot be established, then the two data sets cannot be combined with any scientific certainty to show a trend. This renders any comparison of the bulk of the data sets with 20th century warming as useless, as well as any comparison with recent data.

In two parts of a three part series on the WUWT web site, Don Easterbrook notes that 80% of the sites in the study are in the oceans. Changes in the oceans do not necessarily reflect changes on land or in the atmosphere. He uses hypothesis testing on the conclusions of the paper; and finds them wanting. He compares claims about the Holocene (since the end of the last ice age) with ice cores from Greenland, and finds them inconsistent. Easterbrook wonders why the study did not go further back in time to the Younger Dryas near the end of the last ice age, a period of very rapid cooling and warming.

The work of Marcott et al. is highly statistical, and statistical expert Steve McIntyre, who participated in the smashing of the last hockey-stick, is diligently examining the work. As of now, he reports there are surprising disparities between the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. No doubt he will report more findings this week.

All this emphasizes the importance of the blogs in examining scientific articles and in reporting failings which peer review does not uncover. The intriguing question is will the IPCC use the Marcott et al. paper in its upcoming AR5? Please see Article # 2 and links under New Hockey Stick?

NEPA: Reports state that the administration is considering using an expanded definition of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which “set forth a bold new vision for America.” [From its web site.] According the reports, the scheme is for the President to instruct government agencies to take global warming / climate change into account when assessing projects that come under its powers. NEPA requires Environmental Impact Statements for projects of a certain size often resulting in lengthy delays in construction or even abandonment of projects.

It was under NEPA, that, in the 1970's, environmental groups successfully sued the Corps of Engineers to stop the construction of a flood gate system to protect New Orleans from a hurricane storm surge, similar to those systems used by the Netherlands and, now, on the Thames to prevent flooding of important areas, including London. The successful litigation was touted on the web sites of the environmental groups until the storm surge from Katrina killed hundreds of people who would have been otherwise protected.

We can expect the administration to use its new-found powers to stop or at least slow down projects it finds politically objectionable, particularly coal-fired power plants. Of course, the administration will not wait for approval from Congress. This is another sad illustration on how climate alarmism is used to justify authoritarianism. Please see links under EPA and other Regulators on the March.

Science? This Friday, Science magazine published a lament by Bruce Alberts, the editor in chief. He engaged in the logical fallacy of special pleading by invoking the future of his grandchildren in pleas for more funding of science. Perhaps Mr. Alberts should first look at what he means by the term science and the editorial policy of his magazine.

The magazine published the article on the new hockey-stick, which is being rapidly discredited. Yet, for years the magazine has failed to publish articles that scientifically challenge the claim the carbon dioxide emissions are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming. The magazine published a fawning book review of the *Merchants of Doubt*, which is little more than an *ad hominen* screed against four distinguished scientists. Yet, it rejected a reasoned rebuttal by the only survivor of the four, Fred Singer. By its actions, the magazine supports global warming / climate alarmism, which is being used to promote authoritarian control of the economy, including the destruction of coal-fired electric generation, at a time when advances in technology are making coal-fired plants much more efficient and cleaner.

Mr. Alberts should be concerned about the future of his grandchildren, including their economic future. As climate alarmism is used to justify authoritarianism, their economic future is in jeopardy. Perhaps there is too little funding of empirical science. But there is too much funding of the type of climate science Mr. Albert's magazine supports – precisely the product of a scientific-technological elite President Eisenhower stated may threaten American liberty.

Based on reports by the Congressional Research Service and the Government Accountability Office, on July 14, 2012 TWTW estimated the total funding of global warming / climate change, from 1993 to FY 2012 amounted to about \$150 Billion. Since the Senate has not bothered to pass a budget for three years, it is difficult for a small group to estimate the current funding level. However, with another annual funding level of \$20 Billion, the total will be about \$170 Billion.

What does the nation have to show for this expenditure of funds? Scientific papers that do not withstand analysis, expensive computer models that are failing, subsidies for second-rate methods of generating electricity, numerous predictions about the future that are based on models that have not been validated, therefore are meaningless, and a growing bureaucracy intent on crippling viable, critical components of the economy. Mr. Alberts should be worried. Please see links under Expanding the Orthodoxy.

Trust But Verify: “Trust but verify” is a slogan for many in military command. Trust your subordinates but verify their statements or work as often as possible. Interestingly, Admiral Sam Locklear, chief of US forces in the Pacific, warned that the greatest long-term threat to US security is not North Korea, or China, etc; but climate change. He said he arrived at his conclusion after meeting with scholars from Harvard and Tufts.

For decades the faculty at Harvard demonstrated its contempt for the military by its actions towards the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. First it banned it, later, it allowed it, but without credit and with the military drills taking place at MIT. These actions did not raise a red flag to the Admiral. Obviously, he has forgotten the second part of "Trust but verify." Please see links under Expanding the Orthodoxy.

Climategate 3: A new set of Climategate email has been released by notification to various blogs of a password to access the emails. In 2009, the original Climategate emails gave ammunition to those opposing the carefully crafted scheme of many western leaders to cap carbon dioxide emissions and obligate their countries to punishing regulations. These regulations have been implemented by the European Union. The person(s) releasing the emails identifies himself as Mr. FOIA (Freedom of Information Act). The emails are being analyzed by many who have the password. Please see links under Climategate Continued.

Transparency: On March 5, the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology held a hearing on Scientific Integrity and Transparency. Stanley Young, the Assistant Director of Bioinformatics at National Institute of Statistical Sciences (NISS) gave a disturbing account of failure rate of peer-reviewed medical studies to hold up to replication. Replication is critical to all sciences. The failure rate underlines the need for all Federally funded studies be transparent and publish the database and computer codes. Many EPA health claims are not based on transparent science. John Holdren, President Obama's science advisor, has issued a memorandum calling for legislation to support transparency. Please see link under Seeking a Common Ground.

Methane Hydrates: Japan Oil, Gas & Metals National Corp announced that it had successfully extracted natural gas from deep undersea methane hydrates. It did so, not by heating the area, but by lowering the pressure. The technical explanations will be interesting. As with deep underground hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, we can expect the extreme environmental groups to be bitterly opposed to the new technology.

Number of the Week: 9. According to James Sexton's web site, 9 of the 73 locations for proxy data reported in the Marcott et al. new hockey-stick study had data later than 1950. Thus, late 20th century correspondence between instrument data and proxy data cannot be established for 64 (88%) of the locations. Hardly grounds for making any grand pronouncements.

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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. Another Hockey Stick?

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Mar 13, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/03/another_hockey_stick.html?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=facebook#ixzz2NPujSBXj

2. New Push to Securitize Renewable-Power Pacts

By Ryan Tracy and Cassandra Sweet, WSJ, Mar 15, 2013 [H/t James Wallace]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323293704578330283121248400.html?KEYWORDS=New+Push+to+Securitize+Renewable-Power+Pacts>

[SEPP Comment: Sub-prime energy going the route of sub-prime mortgages.]

3. EU Rethinking Climate Goals

By Alessandro Torello, WSJ, Mar 13, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324077704578358343243465444.html>

4. Fishing for Wildlife Lawsuits

The Interior Department revives the game of 'sue and settle.'

Editorial, WSJ, Mar 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324178904578340584163944930.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_2

[SEPP Comment: More government abuse of laws and power.]

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Commentary: Is the Sun Rising?

Leading International Geologist Peter Ziegler: “Sun Is Driving Climate, Not CO2.”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 14, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/03/14/leading-international-geologist-peter-ziegler-sun-is-driving-climate-not-co2/>

Link to pdf Presentation:

http://www.friendsofscience.org/assets/documents/ClimateChange_Ziegler-2013.pdf

The Cloud,

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Mar 15, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/03/15/the-cloud/>

The calm before the solar storm? NASA warns 'something unexpected is happening to the Sun'

2013 was due to be year of the 'solar maximum'

As this picture shows, in fact the sun is incredibly calm - baffling experts

By Mark Prigg, Mail Online, Mar 8, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2290289/NASA-warns-unexpected-happening-Sun-year-supposed-peak-sunspot-cycle.html>

Climategate Continued

Climategate 3.0 has occurred – the password has been released

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Mar 13, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/03/13/climategate-3-0-has-occurred-the-password-has-been-released/#more-82057>

[SEPP Comment: The site is being frequently updated.]

Climategate 2013 is here: FOIA

By Lubos Motl, The Reference Frame, Mar 13, 2013

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2013/03/climategate-2013-is-here-foia.html#more>

[SEPP Comment: Expressing concern that by making a public statement Mr FOIA will lead investigators to him.]

CG3: The Gold Medalist

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 15, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/15/cg3-the-gold-medalist/>

The category remains hotly contested, with many new contestants. Jones, whatever his other sins, has tended to use fairly simple methods and I find it hard to picture him maintaining a spot on the podium. Mann, of course, has a repertoire of upside-down techniques that are highly regarded by climate referees and which make it very difficult for new contestants to seize the gold medal.

Who Released The Climategate Emails And Why

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Mar 15, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/03/15/who-released-the-climategate-emails-and-why/>

Who's Mr. FOIA

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 14, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/03/14/whos-mr-foia/>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

How the IPCC writes its own ticket

By John McLean, Quadrant, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2013/03/how-the-ipcc-writes-its-own-ticket>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Chaos

NZ Climate Truth Newsletter No 306

By Vincent Gray, Mar 10, 2013

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2013/03/chaos.html>

[SEPP Comment: Climate models cannot describe fluid dynamics.]

New Report: Global Temperature Standstill Is Real

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Mar 15, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/report-global-temperature-standstill-real/>

Link To Full Study, 60+ pages http://www.thegwpf.org/content/uploads/2013/03/Whitehouse-GT_Standstill.pdf

[SEPP Comment: In the past decade CO2 levels increased from 370 ppm to 390 ppm, IPCC estimates suggest it should have warmed by 0.2 deg C – it did not. Was the failure to warm due to natural cooling, or faulty models? It is unlikely the natural cooling would equally balance the projected warming. According to Whitehouse, using a standard distribution over the range of model projections, the probability of a 15 year no warming trend is about 4%.]

Internationally Renowned IPCC Scientist Prof. Mojib Latif Now Postpones Warm Winters By Up To 100 Years!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 16, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/03/16/internationally-renowned-ipcc-scientist-prof-mojib-latif-now-postpones-warm-winters-by-up-to-100-years/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Remote clouds responsible for climate models' glitch in tropical rainfall

By Staff Writers, Seattle WA (SPX), Mar 14, 2013

[http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/Remote clouds responsible for climate models glitch in tropical rainfall 999.html](http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/Remote%20clouds%20responsible%20for%20climate%20models%20glitch%20in%20tropical%20rainfall%20999.html)

"We have confidence in climate predictions outside the tropics, but tropical rainfall forecasts are much less certain," Frierson said. "We hope this work will lead to better rainfall forecasts in regions like equatorial Africa, where it's so important to have accurate predictions of future patterns."

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Deranged science, perverse policy

Book describes attempt to impose climate servitude

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Mar 13, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/03/13/peter-foster-deranged-science-peverse-policy/>

[SEPP Comment: Review of the Age of Global Warming by Rupert Darwall – not yet released in the US.]

Book excerpt: The first warmist

Wanted U.K. to grasp importance of global warming

By Robert Darwall, Financial Post, Mar 13, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/03/13/book-excerpt-the-first-warmist/>

Book Review: 'Climate Change: Natural or Manmade?'

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Mar 12, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/3/12/book-review-climate-change-natural-or-manmade.html>

This review of '[Climate Change: Natural or Manmade?](#)' is by John Shade of [Climate Lessons](#) blog.

Peers review Oreskes and find her wanting

By Otto Nebbler, Quadrant, Mar 16, 2013

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2013/03/peers-review-oreskes-and-find-her-wanting>

People with books to flog buzz regularly through Australia, those with the correct ideological orientation getting guernseys via the ABC and other sympathetic media outlets. Naomi Oreskes enjoyed that microphone-at-the-ready treatment last year, when she touched down to push her book, Merchants of Doubt, which re-stitches the hoary meme that shadowy string-pullers are underwriting climate-change sceptics.

Paul Krugman, climate, and inconceivable sins

By Lubos Molt, The Reference Frame, Mar 15, 2013

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2013/03/paul-krugman-climate-and-inconceivable.html#more>

[SEPP Comment: *Krugman insists those challenging global warming alarmism are committing "an almost inconceivable sin."*]

Look at the graph to see the evidence of global warming

Met Office data show only a tiny change in world temperatures

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, Mar 9, 2013
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/globalwarming/9919121/Look-at-the-graph-to-see-the-evidence-of-global-warming.html>

Bad Science and Bad Journalism are a Bad Combination

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Mar 11, 2013
<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2013/03/bad-science-and-bad-journalism-are-bad.html>

AGW Proponents Fight Rearguard Action As Political Climate Science Fails

By Tim Ball, WUWT, Mar 12, 2013
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/03/12/agw-proponents-fight-rearguard-action-as-political-climate-science-fails/>

New Hockey Stick?

Validity of “A Reconstruction of Regional and Global Temperature for the Past 11,300 Years”

By Don Easterbrook, WUWT, Mar 11, 2013
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/03/11/validity-of-a-reconstruction-of-regional-and-global-temperature-for-the-past-11300-years/>

Validity of Marcott et al. PART II

By Don Easterbrook, WUWT, Mar 13, 2013
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/03/13/validity-of-marcott-et-al-part-ii/>

No Uptick in Marcott Thesis

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 14, 2013
<http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/14/no-uptick-in-marcott-thesis/>

Marcott Mystery #1

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 13, 2013
<http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/13/marcott-mystery-1/>

How Marcottian Upticks Arise

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 15, 2013
<http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/15/how-marcottian-upticks-arise/>

Marcott’s Zonal Reconstructions

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 15, 2013
<http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/15/marcotts-zonal-reconstructions/>

Analysis on the new hockey stick

By James Sexton and Hank [last name not given], Suyts Space,
The Hockey Stick Resurrected By Marcott et al. 2012
By Hank, Mar 10, 2013
<http://suyts.wordpress.com/2013/03/10/the-hockey-stick-resurrected-by-marcott-et-al-2012/>
<http://suyts.wordpress.com/2013/03/11/the-dagger-in-the-heart-maybe-a-remedial-explanation-of-marcotts-hs-blade-mikey-whats-that-about-a-dagger/>

<http://suyts.wordpress.com/2013/03/14/more-fishing-for-hockey-sticks-in-marcott-et-al-2013/>
<http://suyts.wordpress.com/2013/03/14/hockey-stick-found-in-marcott-data/>

Let's play hockey – again

By Rud Istvan, Climate Etc, Mar 11, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/03/11/lets-play-hockey-again/#more-11268>

Questioning the Orthodoxy – Earth Hour

Earth Hour: A Dissent

By Ross McKittrick, His Blog, 2009

<http://www.rossmckittrick.com/uploads/4/8/0/8/4808045/earthhour.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: The demonization of electricity is one of the most inane concepts of extreme green – a celebration of ignorance, poverty, and backwardness.]

Blinded by the Light

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Mar 13, 2013

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/earth-hour-s-counterproductive-symbolism-by-bjorn-lomborg>

Questioning European Green

Eco madness and how our future is going up in smoke as we pay billions to switch from burning coal to wood chips at Britain's biggest power station

By Christopher Booker, Telegraph, UK, Mar 8, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2290444/Madness-How-pay-billions-electricity-bills-Britains-biggest-power-station-switch-coal-wood-chips--wont-help-planet-jot.html>

[SEPP Comment: Green energy promoting the deforestation of the Americas.]

Germany's Green Energy Disaster: A Cautionary Tale For World Leaders

By Howard Rich, Forbes, Mar 14, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/03/14/germanys-green-energy-disaster-a-cautionary-tale-for-world-leaders/>

[SEPP Comment: A lesson in government failure in commanding something to happen.]

Fracking: the monster we greens must embrace

Despite the doubts, shale gas can play a vital bridging role in reducing carbon emissions by ousting filthier coal

By Fred Pearce, The Guardian, Mar 14, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/mar/15/fracking-monster-greens-must-embrace>

The last environmental leader who proposed shale gas as a bridging technology was Carl Pope, director of the US's Sierra Club. He was hounded out of office for his pains.

EU Leaders Weigh Green Goals against Growth

By Walter Russell Mead, Via Meadia, Mar 14, 2013

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2013/03/14/eu-leaders-weigh-green-goals-against-growth/>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Am I Wrong?

By Bruce Alberts, Editor-in-Chief, Science, Mar 15, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/339/6125/1252.full>

Tightening scientific belts

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Mar 16, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/3/16/tightening-scientific-belts.html>

[SEPP Comment: Devastating comments on the editor of Science magazine calling for more government funding by a member of the panel that covered up Climategate.]

The Government must increase funding for science and engineering in order to boost growth

54 scientists call on the Government to increase research and development spending

The Telegraph, UK, Mar 11, 2013

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/letters/9920713/The-Government-must-increase-funding-for-science-and-engineering-in-order-to-boost-growth.html>

[SEPP Comment: Aren't the wind farms sufficient to create growth?]

Chief of US Pacific forces calls climate biggest worry

By Bryan Bender, Boston Globe, Mar 11, 2013

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2013/03/09/admiral-samuel-locklear-commander-pacific-forces-warns-that-climate-change-top-threat/BHdPVCLrWEMxRe9IXJZcHL/story.html>

Climate Change: Key mission for the US Navy?

Admiral Locklear is concerned about climate change, but are his concerns misguided?

By Steve Goreham, Washington Times, Mar 13, 2013

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/climatism-watching-climate-science/2013/mar/13/climate-change-key-mission-us-navy/>

Military Doesn't Need To Worry About Climate Change

Editorial, IBD, Mar 14, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/031413-648111-locklear-should-focus-on-real-threats-not-global-warming.htm>

Seeking a Common Ground

Testimony of Committee on Science, Space and Technology

Scientific Integrity and Transparency

By Stan Young, NISS, Mar 5, 2013

<http://www.niss.org/sites/default/files/Young%20One-Page%20Summary%20March%202013.pdf>

Pain yesterday, pain today and pain tomorrow

By John Brignell, Number Watch, Mar 13, 2013

<http://www.numberwatch.co.uk/2013%20March.htm#pain>

The death-throes of the global warming fallacy are going to be of long duration, painful and ugly.

Tropical forests unexpectedly resilient to climate change

Models predict that forests such as the Amazon will keep carbon locked up until 2100

By Olive Heffernan, Nature, Mar 10, 2013 [H/t David Kreutzer]

<http://www.nature.com/news/tropical-forests-unexpectedly-resilient-to-climate-change-1.12570>

[SEPP Comment: Surprise! Surprise!]

Atmospheric electricity affects cloud height

By Liz Kalaugher for Institute of Physics

London, UK (SPX) Mar 12, 2013

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Atmospheric_electricity_affects_cloud_height_999.html

Link to the paper and brief video: Electrical signature in polar night cloud base variations

By R Giles Harrison and Maarten H P Ambaum, Environ. Res. Letters, Mar 5, 2013

<http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/8/1/015027/article>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Our 'Angry Summer' was no worse than miffed

It is hardly surprising that the hot summer experienced in many parts of Australia has led our very own warmists to claim it confirmed the dangerous global warming threat of rising temperatures. While this claim has been widely reported in the media, including the ABC and The New York Times, as if it is factually correct, in reality the warmists have a problem.

By Des Moore, Quadrant, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2013/03/our-angry-summer-was-no-worse-than-miffed>

Tarot Cards Climate Article Suggests That AGW-Induced Arctic Ice Melt Creates “Superstorms”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Mar 11, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/03/11/tarot-cards-climate-study-suggests-that-agw-induced-arctic-ice-melt-creates-superstorms/>

Link to article: Superstorm Sandy: A series of unfortunate events?

By Charles H. Greene, Jennifer Francis und Bruce Monger, Oceanography, Mar, 2013

http://www.tos.org/oceanography/archive/26-1_greene.pdf

Communicating Better to the Public – Their Way!

Glorious ‘Bastards’

Feature: Target of global warming agitprop unconcerned, amused

By Alana Goodman, Free Beacon, Mar 12, 2013

<http://freebeacon.com/glorious-bastards/>

‘Greedy Lying Bastards’ movie review

By Michael O'Sullivan, Washington Post, Mar 7, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/greedy-lying-bastards-movie-review/2013/03/07/f85a6512-82ab-11e2-8074-b26a871b165a_story.html

[SEPP Comment: The Washington Post View.]

Changing Weather

New England’s snows

By Joseph D’Aleo, ICECAP, Mar 12, 2013

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/new_englands_snows1/

[SEPP Comment: Worcester is near the center of Massachusetts about 50 miles from Boston and the Atlantic Ocean, and has an elevation of about 522 ft]

Deaths up by 30,000 in big freeze

BRITAIN'S relentless big freeze has sparked fears of the highest winter death rate for five years.

By Nathan Rao, Express, Mar 13, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/383823/Deaths-up-by-30-000-in-big-freeze>

1M Brits Dead in Winter Scandal

By Alastair Grant, Daily Star, UK, Mar 3, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/view/301641/1M-Brits-dead-in-winter-scandal/>

[SEPP Comment: From winter 1982/83 to winter 2011/12]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Rare positive side-effect of climate change

By Alister, Doyle, Rueters, Mar 11, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.iol.co.za/scitech/science/environment/rare-positive-side-effect-of-climate-change-1.1484061#UUOAoRyA-b5>

[SEPP Comment: The word rare in the headline is inappropriate and a 3 mm sea level rise per year is not historically significant.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Mediterranean Precipitation Simulated by CMIP5 Climate Models

Reference: Kelley, C., Ting, M., Seager, R. and Kushnir, Y. 2012. Mediterranean precipitation climatology, seasonal cycle, and trend as simulated by CMIP5. *Geophysical Research Letters* 39: 10.1029/2012GL053416.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/mar/12mar2013a3.html>

Global Mean Sea Level: Is It Accelerating? ... Or Is It Not?

Reference: Chambers, D.P, Merrifield, M.A. and Nerem, R.S. 2012. Is there a 60-year oscillation in global mean sea level? *Geophysical Research Letters* 39: 10.1029/2012GL052885.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/mar/12mar2013a4.html>

Recent Warming of the Antarctic Peninsula

Reference: Mulvaney, R., Abram, N.J., Hindmarsh, R.C.A., Arrowsmith, C., Fleet, L., Triest, J., Sime, L.C., Alemany, O. and Foord, S. 2012. Recent Antarctic Peninsula warming relative to Holocene climate and ice-shelf history. *Nature* 489: 10.1038/nature11391.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/mar/13mar2013a1.html>

No Change in Global Drought in the Past 60 Years

Reference: Sheffield, J., Wood, E.F. and Roderick, M.L. 2012. Little change in global drought over the past 60 years. *Nature* 491: 435-438.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/mar/13mar2013a4.html>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Obama's misguided carbon tax plans

New fees on energy use would strangle economy

By Paul Driessen, Washington Times, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/12/obamas-misguided-carbon-tax-plans/>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Rough Day for Refiners

By Sam Mamudi, Barron's, Mar 13, 2013 [H/t Sterling Account]

<http://blogs.barrons.com/stockstowatchtoday/2013/03/13/rough-day-for-refiners/>

[SEPP Comment: Consequences of mandates. President Obama blames the increasing gasoline prices on the oil industry and market instability, not government policy, which is the cause.]

CBO Testifies on Federal Financial Support for Fuels and Energy Technologies

By Terry Dinan, CBO, Mar 13, 2013

http://www.cbo.gov/publication/43994?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=0

Link to full report: <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/03-12-EnergyTechnologies.pdf>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

An Order From Obama Puts Another Boot On The Economy

Editorial, IBD, Mar 15, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/031513-648254-obama-global-warming-rule-will-hurt-commerce.htm>

Obama Will Use Nixon-Era Law To Fight Climate Change

By Mark Drajem, Businessweek, Mar 15, 2013 [H/t Joseph D'Aleo]

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-03-14/obama-will-use-nixon-era-law-to-fight-climate-change>

EPA email: Goal was 'shaming' states into compliance

By Stephen Dinan, Washington Times, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/12/epa-email-goal-was-shaming-states/>

EPA Nominee Gina McCarthy Has A History Of Misleading Congress

By Marlo Lewis & Anthony Ward, Forbes, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/03/12/epa-nominee-gina-mccarthy-has-a-history-of-misleading-congress/>

Energy Issues – Non-US

A Song of Fire Ice

By Walter Russell Mead, Via Meadia, Mar 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2013/03/12/a-song-of-fire-ice/>

Japan warms to 'fire ice' potential

By Jonathan Soble, Financial Times, Mar 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b5751242-8ae4-11e2-b1a4-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2NWolZhec>

'Burnable Ice' Will Set the Energy World on Fire

By Matt Ridley, The Times, on GWPF, Mar 15, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/matt-ridley-burnable-ice-set-wenergy-world-fire/>

Looking for a better way to sell the Keystone pipeline

Global warming is a place to start

By Tom Harris, Washington Times, Mar 14, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/14/looking-for-a-better-way-to-sell-the-keystone-pipe/>

Cuadrilla suspends shale gas testing in Lancashire until 2014

By Katie Hope, City A.M., Mar 14, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.cityam.com/article/cuadrilla-suspends-shale-gas-testing-lancashire-until-2014>

Energy Issues -- US

Environmental Groups Strongly Endorse "None Of The Above" Energy Plans

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/03/12/environmental-groups-strongly-endorse-none-of-the-above-energy-plans/>

Risk of Relying on Natural Gas for Base Load

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Mar 12, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/03/12/risk-of-relying-on-natural-gas-for-base-load/>

[SEPP Comment: *The natural gas pipeline infrastructure is obstacle in shifting from coal to natural gas.*]

Washington's Control of Energy

Agency Confirms: Obama Has Blocked Oil Production

Editorial, IBD, Mar 11, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/031113-647576-regulation-restricts-oil-production-on-federal-lands.htm>

Link to report: U.S. Crude Oil and Natural Gas Production in Federal and Non-Federal Areas

By Marc Humphries, CRS, Feb 28, 2013

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/20130228CRSreport.pdf>

Keystone XL: Parallels to the Alaska Pipeline

By Rudy Takala and David Kreutzer, The Foundry, Mar 11, 2013

<http://blog.heritage.org/2013/03/11/keystone-xl-parallels-to-the-alaska-pipeline/>

The Keystone Pipeline, Delay is the Name of the Game

By Marita Noon, Townhall, Mar 14, 2013

http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/maritanoon/2013/03/14/the-keystone-pipeline-delay-is-the-name-of-the-game-n1532999?utm_source=thdaily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nl

Obama will block Keystone

Not needed for U.S. energy security or employment

By Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post, Mar 14, 2013

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2013/03/14/lawrence-solomon-obama-will-block-keystone/>

When to Say No

Editorial, NYT, Mar 10, 2013 [H/t David Manuta]

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/11/opinion/when-to-say-no-to-the-keystone-xl.html?emc=eta1&_r=0

Interior chief: Shell ‘screwed up,’ must improve to resume Arctic effort

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Mar 14, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/288315-interior-chief-shell-screwed-up-must-improve-to-resume-arctic-effort>

[SEPP Comment: It is doubtful this administration will permit Shell to drill.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

How Fracking Can Reduce the Budget Deficit

By Bob McTeer, Forbes, Mar 4, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/bobmcteer/2013/03/04/how-fracking-can-reduce-the-budget-deficit/>

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Deepwater Horizon: Criminalizing an Accident

By Bruce Thompson, American Thinker, Mar 15, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/03/deepwater_horizon_criminalizing_an_accident.html

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Moniz is Obama's new man for energy

By Staff Writers, WNN, Mar 5, 2013

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NP_Moniz_is_Obamas_new_man_for_energy_0503131.html

Nuclear Industry Withers in U.S. as Wind Pummels Prices

By Julie Johnsson & Naureen S. Malik, Bloomberg, Mar 11, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-03-11/nuclear-industry-withers-in-u-s-as-wind-pummels-prices-energy.html>

[SEPP Comment: As usual, the article fails to recognize the cost of the unreliability of wind. Negative pricing is a burden to consumers, not a sign of a healthy industry.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Texas Wind Power: New Record, Bad Economics (and capacity inhibitor for future reliability)

By Bill Peacock, Master Resource, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/03/setting-the-record-straight-on-renewable-energy-subsidies/#more-24654>

[SEPP Comment: Not all new records are cause for celebration.]

Letter to those planning a wind power project

By Ross McKittrick, Dept of Economics, University of Guelph, Mar 12, 2013

<http://www.rossmckitrick.com/uploads/4/8/0/8/4808045/wind-general-letter.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: Discusses certainty of cost increases, structural mismatch between production and consumption, unreliability, increase GHG and air pollutant emissions, harms jobs creation, Spanish and German experience shows real economic harm.]

Big Wind & Avian Mortality (Part II: Hiding the Problem)

By Jim Wiegand, Master Resource, Mar 15, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/03/wind-avian-mortality-ii/#comments>

[SEPP Comment: Second of 2 parts. During the year immediately following the BP disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, Fish & Wildlife collections produced 2303 dead birds, with visible oil. It is becoming clear that for birds wind power is a far greater disaster.]

Here's the Cold Hard Truth About Solar Energy

By Kent Moors, Money Morning, Mar 14, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://moneymorning.com/2013/03/14/heres-the-cold-hard-truth-about-solar-energy/>

Report: Solar industry has record year

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Mar 14, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/288131-report-solar-industry-has-record-year>

[SEPP Comment: Why is there need for continued subsidies and mandates?]

Maryland's "Wind Powered Welfare"

By David Middleton, WUWT, Mar 12, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/03/12/marylands-wind-powered-welfare/>

[SEPP Comment: Costs to consumers and taxpayers mean nothing to politicians and bureaucrats going green.]

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Vehicles

Green Cars: Not So Clean After All

By Staff Writers, NCPA, Mar 13, 2013

http://www.ncpa.org/sub/dpd/index.php?Article_ID=22945&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EnvPD

Link to Article By Bjorn Lomborg, WSJ, Mar 11, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324128504578346913994914472.html?mod=W_SJ_Opinion_LEADTop

Electric Dreams Shatter, What's Next for Carmakers?

By Staff Writers, Reuters, Mar 8, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/industries/2013/03/08/electric-dreams-shatter-what-next-for-carmakers/>

Chairman of DOE-backed electric car firm resigns

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Mar 13, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/287921-chairman-of-doe-backed-electric-car-firm-resigns>

Health, Energy, and Climate

Learning from China: Coal and its Nukes

By Roger Pielke Jr, His Blog, Mar 11, 2013

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2013/03/learning-from-china-coal-and-its-nukes.html>

Other Scientific News

Solar Wind Energy Source Discovered

By Dr. Tony Phillips for NASA Science News

Huntsville AL (SPX) Mar 12, 2013

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Solar_Wind_Energy_Source_Discovered_999.html

Link to letter, Sensitive Test for Ion-Cyclotron Resonant Heating in the Solar Wind

By Kasper, et al, Phys. Rev. Let, Feb 28, 2013

<http://prl.aps.org/abstract/PRL/v110/i9/e091102>

Other News that May Be of Interest

Russian satellite hit by remnants of destroyed Chinese spacecraft

By Staff Writers, Moscow (Voice of Russia) Mar 12, 2013

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Russian_satellite_hit_by_remnants_of_destroyed_Chinese_spacecraft_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Space Wars?]

Dreamliners and the hidden cost of efficiency

By David Kreutzer, Washington Times, Mar 13, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/13/kreutzer-dreamliners-and-hidden-cost-efficiency/#ixzz2NY2zOwj>

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

D.C. Government to Switch to Wind Power for Electricity Needs

By Benjamin Freed, DCIST, Mar 6, 2013

http://dcist.com/2013/03/dc_government_to_switch_to_wind_pow.php

[SEPP Comment: If the article is correct, that the only source of electricity will be wind power, then riding an elevator in a city building will become an adventure few wish to experience.]

Stanford researchers map out an alternative energy future for New York

By Rob Jordan, Stanford CA (SPX) Mar 14, 2013

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/Stanford_researchers_map_out_an_alternative_energy_future_for_New_York_999.html

"Converting to wind, water and sunlight is feasible, will stabilize costs of energy and will produce jobs while reducing health and climate damage,"

[SEPP Comment: Stabilize energy costs at a poverty creating level!]

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ARTICLES:

1. Another Hockey Stick?

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Mar 13, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/03/another_hockey_stick.html?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=facebook#ixzz2NPujSBXj

Green forces, eager to promote their theories of global warming, appear to be practicing intellectual recycling. Is this the return of the notorious hockey stick - which, in 2001, was the central dogma of Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) believers ?

This quasi-religious faith in catastrophic AGW still remains a prerequisite for membership in scientific and media elite circles, even in the face of the failure of earlier (model) predictions of apocalypse to manifest, and the [admission by an apostle](#) of the faith that for the past 17 years global temperatures have not increased -- contrary to the projections of every climate model.

As other religious fanatics, the failure only drives adherents to recycle past claims. Last week, in [The Anatomy of Climate Science Hype](#), I discussed the manner of collaboration of the unholy trinity of ambitious scientists, a science journal anxious for publicity, and the old grey New York Times eagerly publishing anything that may tend to confirm their credo. In yet another [NYT story](#) (March 7) by science reporter Justin Gillis a [research paper](#) (March 8) in the formerly respected journal *Science* was previewed

Now, several of us skeptics (a term of honor in the long history of scientific advance) have had an opportunity to review that paper itself. It is a very detailed and difficult paper, whose lead author is Shaun Marcott of Oregon State University, obviously aiming to become the next poster-boy for the UN-sponsored IPCC (Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change). (I note that the OSU paper just made the cut-off deadline for the 2013 IPCC report.) After a great deal of work in analyzing proxy (historic, non-thermometer) data of the past 11,300 years, the start of the current warm interglacial Holocene period, the authors conclude that "recent warming is unprecedented." It is not -- but never mind. The same claim had been made previously (in a 1998 paper in *Nature*) by the notorious "Hockey-stick" graph produced by Michael "hide-the-decline" Mann, and exposed as being "not only wrong but essentially worthless" - to adapt a famous quote of one of my teachers, Nobel physicist Wolfgang Pauli.

The IPCC latched on to the Hockey-stick graph in 2001 as its main crutch in support of its claims for AGW. It promoted a newly minted Ph D student to international fame - or perhaps, notoriety. One can learn all about his fall from the pinnacle from Andrew Montford's [book](#) *The Hockey Stick Illusion: Climategate and the Corruption of Science*. The chapters on Climategate, based on thousands of e-mails, leaked (hacked? stolen? -- it depends whom you talk to) in Nov. 2009, relate the whole sordid story of a gang of IPCC scientists, mainly British and US, conspiring to control what goes into IPCC reports and scientific publications.

The IPCC no longer gives credence to the Hockey-stick graph and uses a different argument in its 2007 report to back up AGW. That argument is also failing, but the IPCC doesn't give up. Eventually, they will discover that AGW is insignificant and hardly visible. But by then much money will have been wasted to "fight climate change, keep the ocean from rising, and heal the Earth."

The *Science* paper

The four authors, three from OSU and one from Harvard, are quite fuzzy in defining the word "recent." Their analysis takes 1950 as "present." But then they add a humongous temperature increase by using all of the 20th century. That's really the crux of their claim, but also their

weakest point: The only warming that's sure is from 1910 to 1940. Although that warming is certainly genuine, only a few fanatic scientists believe that it is human-caused. Not even the IPCC considers the warming up to 1940 as anthropogenic.

On the other hand, the large surface warming claimed from 1979 to 2000 may not even exist. Opinions are divided on this important question. The warming is certainly not seen in the satellite data, the best global temperature observations we have.

Of course, the authors ignore the fact that there has been no warming for at least a decade - while anthropogenic greenhouse gases have been increasing more rapidly. According to Philip Jones, the IPCC's guru on Global Temperatures, there hasn't been any significant global warming for 17 years!

Even stranger is their forecast for the future -- entirely based on climate models that have never been validated. Their exact quote is: "By 2100, global average temperatures will probably [be] 5 to 12 sigma deviations above the Holocene temperature mean." In non-technical language, this means a huge increase; but the probability of a large temperature rise is practically nil. Of course, they leave themselves plenty of room by providing at least half a dozen projections depending on assumed scenarios.

Hiding the data mix

What is distinctive about this latest effort at claiming unusual 20th-century warming and implying a human contribution is their presentation. The original hockey stick, first published in 1998, explained carefully that the modern instrumental (thermometer) record had been grafted onto a centuries-long proxy (non-thermometer) record; the OSU paper neglects to inform the reader about this important fact.

As a reviewer of IPCC reports, I well remember efforts to hide the mixing of proxy and thermometer data: IPCC's 3rd Assessment report (2001) showed the proxy temperature record with a black line and the 20th century temperatures with a blue line. I complained that these were very hard to distinguish -- especially in a black-and-white Xerox copy. Since then, the IPCC and everyone else have used a distinctive red color for the instrumental data. That kind of distinction, however, is missing in the present OSU-Harvard paper.

To use a current analogy: it's like putting horsemeat into Swedish meatballs that advertise beef. In the case of the meatballs, the DNA evidence betrayed the addition of horsemeat. Here it is the fact that one sees sharp temperature changes at the end of the record -- despite the authors' statement that they have used a 100-year smoothing of the raw data. With long smoothing times like a century, one cannot expect to see temperature spikes that may only be a decade long.

So what did they really do? I suspect that the paper is a rehash of Marcott's doctor's thesis. He too is a newly minted PhD (in 2011), lucky enough to get Hockeystick #2 not only published, but internationally promoted -- It's all based on analyses of 73 samples of deep-ocean sediments, corals, shells, etc. Nothing really new here: In 1996 Lloyd Keigwin (of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution) published such an analysis in *Science*. He found that it was warmer

1000 years ago (during the Medieval Warm Period) - and much warmer 3000 years ago and earlier.

So why did the editors of Science give the OSU paper the 'special' treatment, sending out press releases, arranging interviews, etc? Perhaps they were captured by the authors' claim "that the planet today is warmer than it has been during 70 to 80 percent of the time over the past 11,300 years. But as British climate expert David Whitehouse points out "Of course, another way to put this is that current temperatures are colder than 28% of the Holocene. According to this research, the temperatures seen in the 20th century were about average for the Holocene."

This whole episode is one more illustration of once distinguished scientific journals hyping an upcoming article by sending out early press releases to selected journalists who will write a sensationalized story. It may impress laymen but it will have no significant impact on the real science debate about AGW. Its impact on policy is nil - or should be.

S. Fred Singer is professor emeritus at the University of Virginia and director of the Science & Environmental Policy Project. His specialty is atmospheric and space physics. An expert in remote sensing and satellites, he served as the founding director of the US Weather Satellite Service and, more recently, as vice chair of the US National Advisory Committee on Oceans & Atmosphere. He is a Senior Fellow of the Heartland Institute and the Independent Institute. He co-authored the NY Times best-seller "Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1500 years." In 2007, he founded and has since chaired the NIPCC (Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change), which has released several scientific reports [See www.NIPCCreport.org]. For recent writings see http://www.americanthinker.com/s_fred_singer/ and also Google Scholar.

2. New Push to Securitize Renewable-Power Pacts

By Ryan Tracy and Cassandra Sweet, WSJ, Mar 15, 2013 [H/t James Wallace]

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323293704578330283121248400.html?KEYWORDS=New+Push+to+Securitize+Renewable+Power+Pacts>

[SEPP Comment: Sub-prime energy going the route of sub-prime mortgages.]

The Obama administration and some on Wall Street are laying the groundwork for bundling renewable-power contracts into securities, part of an effort to make it cheaper to finance alternative energy.

The initiative aims to extend to renewable energy a financial tool already used in the mortgage and credit-card industries. The securities could be sold to pension funds or other investors, who would receive a return funded by payments from users of electricity where solar panels or other equipment is installed.

An early focus is the military, which is preparing to spend billions of dollars on electricity from solar, wind and other renewable sources during the next decade. The military services can enter into electricity-purchase agreements without new appropriations from Congress.

Administration officials say they are approaching the prospect with caution, aware that mortgage-backed securities played a key role in the 2008 financial crisis and the ensuing recession. But

officials view the financing structure as a possible avenue to lower the cost of buying renewable energy.

"We are very aware of the benefits of securitization from a general standpoint. Obviously that's been shown in other industries," said John Lushetsky, director of the U.S. Army's Energy Initiatives Task Force.

Hurdles to securitizing renewable-power deals remain, both for government and private contracts. The idea of securitization is to spread risk across hundreds of contracts and ensure a steady return for investors. That is much easier to do with home mortgages than it is with solar- or wind-power contracts, due largely to the relative immaturity and small size of renewable-energy markets. Also, doing a deal with the government might be trickier given the possibility that future power shifts in Washington bring different priorities concerning military spending.

While officials said there are no immediate plans to securitize government contracts, the U.S. departments of Defense and Energy are exploring the idea and taking steps toward making it more attractive to investors, including standardizing the terms of power-purchase contracts.

The actions fit with a broader strategy by the Obama administration to use executive authority to advance policy goals. Congress soured on government help for renewable-energy projects after the 2011 bankruptcy of U.S.-backed Solyndra LLC, and big-ticket spending programs have expired.

The Army is preparing to buy up to \$7 billion of energy from projects that private developers build and finance, part of a goal to add 1,000 megawatts of renewable-electricity capacity by 2025.

The Navy wants to add an equal amount of capacity. In October, it started buying power from its largest solar array so far—a 13.8 megawatt project near its air weapons station in China Lake, Calif. SunPower Corp. built the project, which is tied to a 20-year power-purchase agreement. The Navy expects the project will save money because the agreed-upon price for the solar power will rise more slowly than market electricity rates.

For the military, securitization potentially "expands the ability to raise more dollars to get more projects done sooner, which was really their goal," said Jeffrey Holzschuh, who is chairman of the institutional securities business at Morgan Stanley and has worked with the government on financing energy projects.

Tom Hicks, the Navy's deputy assistant secretary for energy, said the Navy wants to "take the fear out" of doing a large-scale deal with the government. For instance, he said, contracts could be arranged to compensate investors if a future administration decides to close a naval base.

Solar- and wind-power developers generally raise money for new projects through private deals with banks, insurance companies or corporations. But they are eager to tap public markets, where the pool of investors would expand to include pension funds or individual investors.

Wall Street and Washington are looking at other ways to cut the cost of financing renewable energy. Some in Congress have proposed changes that would provide favorable tax treatment and the ability to sell ownership shares publicly. One option, a real-estate investment trust, could be available for renewable-energy projects if the Internal Revenue Service allows them to qualify. Another, a master limited partnership, won't be available unless Congress passes new legislation.

Nat Kreamer, chief executive of solar financier Clean Power Finance, said access to large new pools of investment would drive down costs associated with raising capital, cut solar development costs and allow the U.S. solar market to expand faster. "Very capable" private institutions are pursuing securitization, he said. "It could happen this year."

Andrew Davidson, president of a risk analytics firm, cautioned that securitization of new assets is likely to be greeted with skepticism after the troubles with mortgage-backed securities. "It's a little harder to do these now," he said.

Bankers say a renewable-energy security would have to be considered fairly low-risk in order to earn a high mark from ratings firms and attract large, conservative investors like pension funds. The terms of each of the contracts involved also would need to be relatively similar so that investors could make an educated guess about the group's overall risk.

3. EU Rethinking Climate Goals

By Alessandro Torello, WSJ, Mar 13, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324077704578358343243465444.html>

BRUSSELS—European policy makers must factor in the impact of the region's deep financial crisis and stumbling economies as they design climate and energy policies, according to a draft European Union document seen by The Wall Street Journal.

The document signals that the 27-nation bloc may be reining in its ambition to lead the world in tackling climate change.

The paper, whose final version is expected to be published March 27, aims to start a debate ahead of the drafting of the EU climate and energy policy for the decade between 2020 and 2030, of which a first version should be ready by the end of this year.

The paper will look at issues ranging from new binding limits to CO2 emissions to government incentives to promote clean technologies.

While Europe has long pledged to lead from the front on the fight against climate change, hoping to persuade the U.S., China and others to follow suit, the continuing economic malaise in the wake of the 2009 financial crisis has shifted priorities.

With the region still languishing in recession, battling a debt crisis and suffering high unemployment while leading companies in key industrial sectors complaining of the cost of implementing climate change initiatives, the paper from the European Commission, the EU executive, reflects concerns about whether Europe should or can sign up to stringent new carbon emission reduction targets.

"This framework for 2030 must be sufficiently ambitious to ensure that the EU is on track to meet longer-term climate objectives. But it must also reflect a number of important changes that have taken place since the original framework was agreed," the paper says.

Five years ago, the 27-country bloc set binding targets to cut its greenhouse gas emissions, increase the use of renewable energy and boost energy savings by 2020, in a climate policy that was regarded as one of the most ambitious in the world and that the EU used as an example in promoting similar initiatives globally.

But since that decision economic and financial problems have shifted priorities dramatically. Policy makers focused on saving the euro zone, national governments cut budgets, including incentives for clean energy developments, and companies stressed the cost of the climate policies for their recession-hit businesses.

At the same time, the failure at the United Nations-sponsored Copenhagen climate conference in 2009 to hammer out a global agreement on CO2 emissions lowered the momentum of international talks.

Now the draft document, written jointly by the European Commissioner for Energy Günther Oettinger and Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard, shows that the EU executive body is taking these developments into account.

The key question for discussion is whether the EU should set new, binding targets for 2030 which are more stringent than those already agreed for the end of this decade.

The laws agreed five years ago mandated that by 2020 the EU must reduce CO2 emissions by 20% compared with 1990, while 20% of the energy it consumes must come from renewable sources such as wind. The commission has since suggested ratcheting up greenhouse gas emission cuts to 40% of 1990 totals by 2030, as part of a long-term strategy to reduce them by as much as 95% by midcentury.

"There is a need...to assess which targets can best, and most simply and cost effectively, drive energy and climate policies," the draft paper reads.

While the two commissioners agree that there should still be binding targets both for CO2 emission reductions and increasing the use of renewable energy, there is no unity on what those targets should be, an EU official said.

Mr. Oettinger told The Wall Street Journal in a recent interview that such targets should be "very moderate."

In Brussels consensus over the need for and levels of such targets remains hard to reach, with environmentalists lobbying for ambitious ones and industries whose activities emit high amounts of CO2 lobbying against.

"The level of ambition is far behind where it should be," said Frederic Thoma, energy policy adviser at Greenpeace. "It's no more time for half measures," he explained.

"We are very skeptical" about the targets, said Peter Botschek, director for energy policy at the EU chemical lobby group CEFIC. The priority should be "strengthening Europe as a manufacturing base," he said, explaining that the chemical industry was highly energy intensive and highly exposed to international competition.

4. Fishing for Wildlife Lawsuits

The Interior Department revives the game of 'sue and settle.'

Editorial, WSJ, Mar 10, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324178904578340584163944930.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_2

[SEPP Comment: More government abuse of laws and power.]

The Senate last week gave a warm confirmation welcome to Sally Jewell, until recently the head of outdoor equipment company REI and now President Obama's nominee to run the Interior Department. It's a pity the Senators didn't ask what Mrs. Jewell thinks of the Obama Administration's amazing assault on private property. Its weapon is the Endangered Species Act.

The Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service has resurrected a Clinton-era tactic known as "sue and settle." With this strategy, outside green groups friendly to the Administration sue the government, demanding a particular regulatory action. The agency happily forswears court and sits down with the plaintiffs to reach a settlement.

The Administration then claims it was forced to take an action that it wanted all along. One more thing: Businesses and property owners most hurt by the settlement are barred from the talks; the public gets no input. Is this a great country or what?

This tactic reached a zenith in Fish and Wildlife's 2011 mega-settlement with the Center for Biological Diversity, WildEarth Guardians, and other green groups over the species act. That agreement allowed Fish and Wildlife to claim it must take action on some 750 species covered by 85 legal actions. The deal's immediate effect was to tee up 250 species for full protection, including sweeping "critical habitat" designations that will restrict commercial or other use of millions of acres of private property.

Among the 750 species is the lesser prairie chicken, a bird whose listing could devastate farmers and ranchers across five states. Oh, and the greater sage grouse, which could shut down oil and gas development and cattle grazing, for starters.

The Administration is also moving to hide the costs of these actions. One of the only smart parts of the species act is a requirement that regulators evaluate the economic impact of designating a critical habitat. That at least gives the public a sense of the costs for businesses and landowners.

The Administration is pushing a rule to dilute these inconvenient economic reports, by moving to what is known as the "baseline" approach. This allows regulators to assume, for purposes of the economic analysis, that the land in question is already subject to a critical habitat designation—

and thus worthless for private economic activity. Fish and Wildlife can then claim the only cost of a listing is the cost to the agency itself.

Louisiana Senator David Vitter, ranking member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, has demanded that Fish and Wildlife provide details of its interactions with the suing green groups. The agency refused. Mr. Vitter is calling on Congress to cut off money for the enforcement of these settlements. That's a start.

The 40-year-old law has an undistinguished record of restoring species. Its main effect now is simply to terminate economic activity. Mrs. Jewell could make a mark at Interior by initiating a modernization of the species act, and it's a shame no one in the Senate thought the issue mattered enough to inquire about.

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