

The Week That Was: 2020-05-09 (May 9, 2020)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

Quote of the Week: *“The first principle is that you must not fool yourself and you are the easiest person to fool.”* – Physicist Richard Feynman, Nobel Laureate.

Number of the Week: £25/MWh of reliable power or £122/MWh of unreliable power?

THIS WEEK:

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

Harold "Hal" Hughes Doiron, RIP: Jim Peacock, the Acting Chairman of The Right Climate Stuff (TRCS) team requested that TWTW link to several additional studies produced by the team and the formal obituary of Hal Doiron. These are linked below. The November 30, 2016 report merits special attention because it demonstrates the high quality of scientific thinking, attention to detail, and the drive to avoid mistakes. That quality is missing in reports by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and supporting entities, such as US government laboratories which produce global climate models. Those models fail basic testing against global atmospheric temperatures, where the greenhouse effect occurs.

The abstract of the report titled “Recommendations to the Trump Transition Team Investigating Actions To Take at the Environmental Protection Agency” states:

*“The TRCS goal is to determine the extent to which burning fossil fuels can cause harmful global warming. **To determine if this is the root cause of the slight amount of observed global warming, we did a simple bounding analysis based on the physics of interaction of currently increasing atmospheric CO2 with heat radiating from the sun and the earth.** In accordance with “The Scientific Method,” we compared our results with the best available global temperature data measured since the beginning of widespread use of fossil fuels. Our analysis fits the measured Global Mean Surface Temperature (GMST) data for the past century and a half very well and **we predict that CO2 emissions will continue to have no significant effect on global warming. In our report, our validated model predicts at most, only 1 deg C additional warming above current levels by 2100.** This is in clear contrast to the poor, unvalidated models used for justification by the EPA to start unilateral CO2 emission controls that have a serious potential for wrecking the US economy without having any effect at all on climate. [Boldface added]*

“The power and uniqueness of our approach is that the measured data reflects the results of the actions and interactions of the numerous climate forcing functions which have confounded attempts to solve this complex problem by use of computerized climate models for the last 37 years. We believe our analysis has the same quality of accuracy as many of the analyses we performed for manned space flights during the Apollo program.”

Root cause analysis is used in science and engineering to identify the primary cause of faults or problems. It is used in IT operations, telecommunications, process control, accident analysis, such as aviation, etc. The Kepner-Tregoe Problem Solving and Decision-Making model provides four distinct phases for resolving problems: 1) Situation analysis; 2) Problem analysis; 3) Solution

analysis; and 4) Potential (new) problem analysis. There is no set numerical model to use, because each problem is unique and requires an individualized approach.

By contrast, in general, the global climate models are unstable, subject to the mathematical concept of chaos. They are parameterized or simplified for purposes of producing certain results. This gives lots of “wobble room.” The IPCC approach of using multiple models results in a spaghetti bowl of trends generally indicating that a doubling of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) will result in an increase in surface temperatures of 3°C plus or minus 1.5°C (50%). This would have been unacceptably sloppy for the Apollo mission. The sloppiness of the IPCC approach is seen in Figure 1 of the February 2014 TRCS report. As that report stated:

“We are often criticized because we are not educated and experienced in the field of climate science. That may be true, but totally irrelevant considering our excellent performance in the totally new discipline of manned spaceflight, outside of earth orbit. We went into the Apollo Program knowing that our success would depend on adherence to scientific discipline, personal honesty and integrity, and a lot of stressful hard work. Then as now, we grade on performance, not credentials. Then as now, our motto and the way we do our work is ‘In God we trust, all others bring data.’ Also important is that we are objective, impartial arbiters of the ongoing AGW debate without any conflicts of interest associated with the continued flow of research grants sought by scientists in universities who want to continue to ‘study’ the problem, without any assigned responsibility for solving the problem they have proposed.”

The bounding analysis is critical because IPCC assessment reports have stated that the ice covering the Himalayan Mountains will melt soon (dates were changed). The bounding analysis in the November 2016 report gives a slightly reduced estimate from the 2014 report. A maximum warming of 1°C by 2100 needs to be rationally considered and discussed, but it is not to be feared. It is within the range indicated by 40 years of atmospheric temperature trends.

The TRCS team bounding analysis is based on what is occurring. Rather than on speculation of what may happen, however unlikely. Thus, it is more realistic than the UN fantasies of what may occur.

Hal Doiron and TRCS team have done the country and the world a great service in reducing irrational fear of carbon dioxide and the greenhouse effect. Both of which are critical for life on this planet as we know it. May he Rest in Peace. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy – Hal Doiron, RIP

Two NASAs? The brilliant work of the Apollo team and the application of the scientific method brought honor to the country. Unfortunately, many entities in NASA appear to have abandoned the scientific method in favor of publicity and possible increased budgets. For example, Kirye and Pierre Gosselin point out that NASA is adjusting historic surface temperature records to show a warming where none existed previously. After giving specific examples they conclude:

“In summary rural US areas without urban impacts have raw data showing cooling or almost no warming for the past 100 years. But NASA revisions wiped it out and produced a history of warming.”

Another example, in his March 30 discussion of the publication of their paper on developing the UAH Global Temperature dataset, now showing over 40 years of temperature trends, Roy Spencer states:

*“As the years went by, we would learn that the lack of substantial warming in the satellite data was probably hurting NASA’s selling of ‘Mission to Planet Earth’ to Congress. **The bigger the perceived problem, the more money a government agency can extract from Congress to research the problem.** At one point a NASA HQ manager would end up yelling at us in frustration for hurting the effort.”* [Boldface added]

Though Spencer does not discuss it, several years ago Haapala learned that the Earth System Science Center at The University of Alabama in Huntsville receives more funding from the state of Alabama than from the US government. Apparently, Alabama cares more for the scientific method than NASA and NOAA. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Eisenhower’s Farewell Speech: In his farewell address to the American people (1961), President Dwight D. Eisenhower alerted Americans to two new threats to liberty and democracy: 1) the military-industrial complex; and 2) the *“danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.”* Scientific organizations that abandon the scientific method and receive great funds from the Federal government represent the second threat. See links under Seeking a Common Ground.

Undersea Volcanos Changing Weather? In his 2009 book, *Heaven and Earth: Global Warming: The Missing Science*, Geologist Ian Plimer discusses how little we know about undersea volcanoes. Writing in the Blog, ICECAP, Meteorologist Joseph D’Aleo discusses the blob of warm water that mysteriously developed in the South Pacific east of New Zealand. The blob changed weather patterns, unexpectedly.

The ICECAP discussion brings up a paper by Alvin Wong and Wyss Yim of the Volcanoes Study Group, Hong Kong, which discusses the blob and Antarctic warming. [Professor Yim founded the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Hong Kong.] That paper states:

“Hot blobs beneath the sea surface formed by the release of geothermal heat through submarine volcanic eruptions and/or sub-aerially erupted hot volcanic materials including lava flows into the sea are an underestimated natural cause of ocean heat waves. Recent examples include the 2013-2016 North Pacific Blob and the 2018-2019 Southwest Indian Ocean Blob. The present study on the development of a blob in the South Pacific Ocean referred to as the 2019-2020 South Pacific Blob has provided evidence to account for the observed recent warming in Antarctica including a new hottest temperature record on February 6, 2020 and heat wave conditions dramatically changing Antarctica in just 9 days.”

Thus, the sudden warming on the Antarctic Peninsula that occurred this winter may have been the result of an undersea volcano. As D’Aleo notes:

“Nature is awesome... forecasting is challenging, we have to look up, and globally, but are at the mercy of changes from beneath too, it appears.”

See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Power of Hydrogen: For aqueous solutions, the concentration of hydrogen (H⁺) ions versus the concentration of hydroxide (OH⁻) ions can be measured as pH. A pH of 7 is considered neutral. The numbers range from pH 0, battery acid, to pH 14, liquid drain cleaner, (alkaline). Both battery acid and liquid drain cleaner are corrosive. They can damage or destroy metal. Normal sea water has a pH ranging from 7.8 to 8.3, slightly alkaline. Human blood has a pH of 7.3 to 7.5, still alkaline but less so. It seems foolish, but repeatedly US research organizations produce studies claiming that when pH drops but still remains alkaline, pH above 7, the solution is becoming corrosive. Now, some studies ignore the pH measurements and just claim the solution is becoming corrosive, even though it really may be becoming less corrosive with a pH approaching 7.

The authors from the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences and Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, University of Colorado and the Climate and Global Dynamics Laboratory, National Center for Atmospheric Research, recently produced one such study for the California Current System. They showed no actual measurements of pH. Instead they used “*a novel suite of retrospective, initialized ensemble forecasts with an Earth system model (ESM) to predict the evolution of surface pH anomalies in the CCS.*”

Of course, they had the usual warnings:

*“Ocean acidification is an ongoing large-scale environmental problem, whereby the absorption of anthropogenic CO₂ by the ocean lowers its pH, impacting ocean ecosystems worldwide. The California Current System (CCS) supports **productive fisheries crucial to the US economy and is particularly vulnerable to ocean acidification due to the upwelling of naturally corrosive (i.e., relatively low pH) waters to the surface.** [Boldface added]*

Again, if the pH remains above 7 after the reduction, the reduction makes the waters less corrosive—more neutral—not more corrosive. Given the vast amount of calcium-based shells and bones deposited in the oceans over the eons, the likelihood that the highly buffered oceans could become acidic is somewhere between zero and none.

One can contrast the vagueness of the above paper with one reviewed by CO₂ Science on an investigation that took place near submerged volcanic vents, which took actual measurements. CO₂ Science wrote about a study by Enochs, et al.:

“Results of their [Enochs et al.] investigation revealed localized CO₂ enrichment around the volcanic seep that amounted to frequent episodes of ‘extreme acidification with pH levels as low as 6.540 and undersaturation of aragonite.’ Surprisingly, Enochs et al. report that ‘despite localized CO₂ enrichment and gas venting, the surrounding area has high hard and soft coral cover, as well as extensive carbonate frameworks.’ Such observations, in their words, ‘supports up-regulation of pH at the site of calcification’ and further indicates ‘mechanisms of resilience to [the] extreme acidification stress.’ And that would suggest concerns over the future of these key marine organisms in response to so-called ocean acidification may well be over-blown.”

See links under: Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO₂ Science and Acidic Waters.

COVID-19 and Air Pollution: A glaring example of secret science is the EPA decision to institute strict limits on fine particulate matter, soot and dust, PM 2.5, without any public input discussing the quality of the science involved. More than any other government action, this damaged or destroyed the coal-fired power industry, a major source of reliable electricity.

Different estimates of deaths that would be prevented were made, but largely unsubstantiated. The solid statistical studies establishing that smoking cigarettes is a major cause of lung cancer and heart attacks are lacking for PM 2.5. Former EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy was a leader in the PM effort. She and former presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg wrote a piece for the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News claiming that reducing air regulations will significantly increase deaths from COVID-19. They cite a study by the Department of Biostatistics, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health as supporting their claims.

On its face, the study is absurd. For example, it states:

“We found that an increase of only 1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in PM_{2.5} is associated with an 8% increase in the COVID-19 death rate [reduced from 15%] (95% confidence interval [CI]: 2%, 15%). The results were statistically significant and robust to secondary and sensitivity analyses.”

The fine data needed to support the study do not exist, particularly for the COVID-19 death rate. It has not been established. The numbers for PM_{2.5} are largely guessed. The PM data comes from a combinations of satellite measurements, Aerosol Optical Depth (AOD), unverified transport models, and some ground-based observations.

According to Worldometers, the current (May 9, 2020) world-wide death rate from COVID-19 is 36 per million, the USA rate is 242 per million, and the rate in China, where COVID-19 started, is 3 per million. Steve Milloy, who has followed the PM 2.5 controversy for years estimates that the PM 2.5 concentration in the air in Wuhan, China, where the virus is thought to have started, is about 10 times as high as it is in the air in the US. The aerial photos broadcast by news outlets confirmed a major reduction in air pollution over Wuhan.

The same applies to other urban areas where burning of coal and traditional fuels for heating creates significant PM 2.5 concentrations. If one trusts the numbers, which TWTW does not, then the death rate in China should be far greater than for the US.

Article # 1 provides a good rebuttal to the Bloomberg/McCarthy essay, also used by Joe Biden. See links under Defending the Orthodoxy, Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up. <https://sites.wustl.edu/acag/datasets/surface-pm2-5/> and <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>

SEPP’S APRIL FOOLS AWARD THE JACKSON

Since 2012, SEPP conducted an annual vote for the recipient of the coveted trophy, The Jackson, a lump of coal. Readers are asked to nominate and vote for who they think is most deserving, following these criteria:

- The nominee has advanced, or proposes to advance, significant expansion of governmental power, regulation, or control over the public or significant sections of the general economy.
- The nominee does so by declaring such measures are necessary to protect public health, welfare, or the environment.
- The nominee declares that physical science supports such measures.

- The physical science supporting the measures is flimsy at best, and possibly non-existent.

The eight past recipients, Lisa Jackson (12), Barrack Obama (13), John Kerry (14), Ernest Moniz (15), Michael Mann (16), Christiana Figueres (17), Jerry Brown (18), and AOC (19) are not eligible. Generally, the committee that makes the selection prefers a candidate with a national or international presence. The voting will close on June 30. Please send your nominee and a brief reason why the person is qualified for the honor to Ken@SEPP.org. Thank you.

Number of the Week: £25/MWh of reliable power or £122/MWh of unreliable power.

According to Paul Homewood, this weekend is a major UK holiday and the government faced a decision. There was a fear of too much electrical power on the grid, which would shut it down. The Grid could A) not accept power from Sizewell nuclear plant, for which the Grid (i.e., customers) pay £25/MWh; or B) not accept power from offshore wind generators, for which the Grid (customers) pay £122/MWh. No need to guess what the government preferred, though it will cost the public an estimated £300 million.

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), 2013

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

Summary: <https://www.heartland.org/template-assets/documents/CCR/CCR-II/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf>

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

Idso, Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), 2014

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/climate-change-reconsidered-ii-biological-impacts/>

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

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Fossil Fuels

By Multiple Authors, Bezdek, Idso, Legates, and Singer eds., Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, April 2019

<http://store.heartland.org/shop/ccr-ii-fossil-fuels/>

Download with no charge:

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Climate-Change-Reconsidered-II-Fossil-Fuels-FULL-Volume-with-covers.pdf>

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

By Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, and S. Fred Singer, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), Nov 23, 2015

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge:

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

Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate

S. Fred Singer, Editor, NIPCC, 2008

http://www.sepp.org/publications/nipcc_final.pdf

Global Sea-Level Rise: An Evaluation of the Data

By Craig D. Idso, David Legates, and S. Fred Singer, Heartland Policy Brief, May 20, 2019

https://www.heartland.org/_template-assets/documents/publications/SeaLevelRiseCCRIL.pdf

Challenging the Orthodoxy – Hal Doiron, RIP

Recommendations to the Trump Transition Team Investigating Actions To Take at the Environmental Protection Agency

A Report of The Right Climate Stuff Research Team, Harold H. Doiron, Chairman, Nov 30, 2016

<https://nebula.wsimg.com/ff3168a9c41882691fb20000b8523c8e?AccessKeyId=4E2A86EA65583CBC15DE&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Bounding GHG Climate Sensitivity for USE in Regulatory Decisions

A Report of The Right Climate Stuff Research Team, Harold H. Doiron, Lead Author, February 2014

<https://nebula.wsimg.com/4fa8733209089fc0ed36165b8de8206c?AccessKeyId=4E2A86EA65583CBC15DE&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Executive Summary

Bounding GHG Climate Sensitivity for USE IN Regulatory Decisions

A Report of The Right Climate Stuff Research Team, Harold H. Doiron, Lead Author, February 2014

<https://nebula.wsimg.com/821c3d8164fb00815dd891723cc26ec2?AccessKeyId=4E2A86EA65583CBC15DE&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

In Loving Memory: Harold "Hal" Hughes Doiron

October 31, 1941 – April 28, 2020

<https://jeterfuneralhome.com/harold-hal-hughes-doiron/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Professor Deepak Lal Passes Away At 80

By T C A Srinivasa Raghavan, Indian Business Standard, Via GWPF, May 4, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/prof-deepak-lal-passes-away-at-80/>

We Are Winning The War On Climate-Related Diseases

Press Release, Global Warming Policy Foundation, May 8, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/we-are-winning-the-war-on-climate-related-diseases/>

Link to report: The Lancet Countdown on Climate Change: The need for context

By Indur Goklany, GWPF, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.org/content/uploads/2020/05/LancetCountdown-1.pdf>

Undersea volcanism and our weather

By Joseph D'Aleo, CCM, Co Chief Meteorologist at Weatherbell Analytics, LLC, Via ICECAP, May 6, 2020

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/undersea_volcanism_and_our_weathera/

The UAH Global Temperature Dataset at 30 Years: A Look Back at the Early Days

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Mar 30, 2020

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2020/03/the-uah-global-temperature-dataset-at-30-years-a-look-back-at-the-early-days/>

Net-Zero Greenhouse-Gas Emissions, and Extinction Capitalism

By Rupert Darwall, National Review, May 6, 2020

https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/05/climate-change-politics-net-zero-greenhouse-gas-emissions-extinction-capitalism/?utm_source=CCNet+Newsletter&utm_campaign=0260afa0d5-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_12_46_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fe4b2f45ef-0260afa0d5-20137121&mc_cid=0260afa0d5&mc_eid=2206e9995b

Rural Northern US Stations Showed No Warming – Before NASA Rewrote The Data

By Kirye and Pierre Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, May 3, 2020

<https://notrickszone.com/2020/05/03/rural-northern-us-stations-showed-no-warming-before-nasa-rewrote-the-data/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

How Trump’s EPA Is Making Covid-19 More Deadly

A respiratory pandemic is no time to roll back air-pollution rules.

By Michael Bloomberg and Gina McCarthy, Bloomberg, May 4, 2020

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-05-04/how-trump-s-epa-is-making-covid-19-more-deadly>

Link to paper: COVID-19 PM2.5

A national study on long-term exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States

By Xiao Wu, et al. Department of Biostatistics, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Apr 24, 2020

<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/covid-pm>

[SEPP Comment: Based on studies that are held in secret. Using a precision that is just not available in national measurements.]

Climate change could reawaken Indian Ocean El Nino

By Staff Writers, Austin TX (SPX), May 07, 2020

https://www.terradyaily.com/reports/Climate_change_could_reawaken_Indian_Ocean_El_Nino_999.html

Link to paper: Emergence of an equatorial mode of climate variability in the Indian Ocean

By Pedro N. DiNezio, et al. AAAS Science, May 6, 2020

<https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/6/19/eaay7684>

“Global warming is approaching a tipping point that during this century could reawaken an ancient climate pattern similar to El Nino in the Indian Ocean, new research led by scientists from The University of Texas at Austin has found.”

[SEPP Comment: Warming will cause weather patterns that occurred during the last Ice Age? See link immediately below.]

Study: Global Warming Could Resurrect the Ice Age Indian Ocean El-Nino

By Eric Worrall, WUWT, May 7, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/07/study-global-warming-could-ressurrect-the-ice-age-indian-ocean-el-nino/>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

Unsuitable for 'human life to flourish': Up to 3B will live in extreme heat by 2070, study warns

By Doyle Rice, USA Today, May 4, 2020

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/unsuitable-human-life-flourish-3b-190011473.html>

Link to paper: Future of the human climate niche

By Chi Zu, et al., PNAS, May 4, 2020

<https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/04/28/1910114117>

From Abstract: Here, we demonstrate that for millennia, [6,000 years] human populations have resided in the same narrow part of the climatic envelope available on the globe, characterized by a major mode around ~11 °C to 15 °C [52 to 59 °F] mean annual temperature (MAT).

[SEPP Comment: Over the past 8,000 years the earth has been generally cooling interrupted by warming periods! The average temperature experienced by the Inuit and the Congolese has been 52-59 °F. Beware of averages. Think of the average human, averaging the physical descriptions.]

Former Aussie PM Malcolm Turnbull: “When is physics going to mug political complacency and [Climate] denialism?”

By Eric Worrall, WUWT, May 8, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/08/former-aussie-pm-turnbull-when-is-physics-going-to-mug-political-complacency-and-climate-denialism/>

Stars and scientists call for world not to 'go back to normal'

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP) May 6, 2020

https://www.terraviva.com/reports/Stars_and_scientists_call_for_world_not_to_go_back_to_normal_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Human prosperity is bad. Never before had the percentage of people living in extreme poverty been so low!]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Siberian Fires And The Temperature of 2020

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, May 6, 2020

<https://www.thegwgf.com/siberian-fires-and-the-temperature-of-2020/>

Link to one paper: The Duality of Reforestation Impacts on Surface and Air Temperature

By Kimberly A. Novick and Gabriel G. Katul, JGR Biogeosciences, Mar 13, 2020

<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1029/2019JG005543>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

Russia to boost coal production & sales, will be world's top exporter within decade

By Staff, RT, May 2, 2020 [Russian Times]

<https://www.rt.com/business/487200-russia-coal-production-exports-boost/>

Seeking a Common Ground

Eisenhower's Farewell Speech

By Tony Heller, His Blog, May 7, 2020

<https://realclimatescience.com/2020/05/eisenhowers-farewell-speech/>

On Living in a Pandemic Age

By Matthew Omoleky, Quadrant, May 8, 2020

<https://quadrant.org.au/opinion/qed/2020/05/on-living-in-a-pandemic-age/>
[SEPP Comment: Discusses CS. Lewis' essay "On Living in an Atomic Age,"]

Science, Policy, and Evidence

Half Of European Deaths Were In Nursing Homes

By Tony Heller, His Blog, May 7, 2020

<https://realclimatescience.com/2020/05/half-of-european-deaths-were-in-nursing-homes/>

CCC Warns Govt Over Coronavirus Climate Trap

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 7, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/07/ccc-warns-govt-over-coronavirus-climate-trap/>

“The government faces a post-lockdown choice between green growth or propping up polluting industries’

“If that is [not] deliberately disingenuous, I don’t know what is!”

Yellow and green make red

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/yellow-and-green-make-red/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO2 Science

Effects of Elevated CO2 on Secondary Metabolites of Tea Plants

Li, X., Zhang, L., Ahammed, G.J., Li, Y.-T., Wei, J.-P., Yan, P., Zhang, L.-P., Han, X. and Han, W.-Y. 2019. Salicylic acid acts upstream of nitric oxide in elevated carbon dioxide-induced flavonoid biosynthesis in tea plant (*Camellia sinensis* L.). *Environmental and Experimental Botany* 161: 367-374., May 8, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V23/may/a4.php>

“In the future, therefore, it would appear that tea plants will benefit from CO2-induced increases in flavonoids, which will help improve plant defenses against environmental and biotic stresses while also enhancing plant quality.”

A Meta-analysis on the Growth Response of Vegetables to CO2 Enrichment

Dong, J., Gruda, N., Li, X., Tang, Y., Zhang, P. and Duan, Z. 2020. Sustainable vegetable production under changing climate: The impact of elevated CO2 on yield of vegetables and the interactions with environments-A review. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 253: 119920. May 6, 2020

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V23/may/a3.php>

“The above positive findings reveal a truth that we have been reporting on for over two decades here at CO2 Science, that rising CO2 stimulates crop productivities and yields, which stimulation will greatly assist in global food security efforts as the world's population rises in the years and decades ahead.”

Reef Persistence Under Real-world Extremes of Ocean Acidification

Enochs, I.C., Formel, N., Manzello, D., Morris, J., Mayfield, A.B., Boyd, A., Kolodziej, G., Adams, G. and Hendee, J. 2020. Coral persistence despite extreme periodic pH fluctuations at a volcanically acidified Caribbean reef. *Coral Reefs* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-020-01927-5>. May 4, 2020

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V23/may/a2.php>

Model Issues

Brutal Takedown of Neil Ferguson's Model

By Charles Rotter, WUWT, May 6, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/06/brutal-takedown-of-fergusons-model/>

Breaking: Climate Models Don't Work

By Tony Heller, His Blog, May 4, 2020

<https://realclimatescience.com/2020/05/breaking-climate-models-dont-work/>

"Predictive models" rarely are predictive

By David Middleton, WUWT, May 8, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/08/predictive-models-rarely-are-predictive/>

A fiery blast from the past

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/a-fiery-blast-from-the-past/>

Measurement Issues -- Surface

April 2020 tied for warmest on record: EU climate service

By Marlowe Hood, Paris (AFP), May 5, 2020

https://www.terraviva.com/reports/April_2020_tied_for_warmest_on_record_EU_climate_service_999.html

Link to Climate bulletin, May 5, 2020

Surface air temperature for April 2020

By Staff, Copernicus Climate Change Service, (CCCS) May 5, 2020

<https://climate.copernicus.eu/surface-air-temperature-april-2020>

"Atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ -- which causes global warming -- are now at their highest level in at least 800,000 years."

[SEPP Comment: Why not use atmospheric temperatures to measure the warming effect of CO₂? CCCS uses surface-air temperatures, yet the global map by CCCS shows warming where there are no surface-air instruments.]

1919 or 2019? Atlin BC

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/1919-or-2019-atlin-bc/>

Shedding light on the ocean's living carbon pump

By Staff Writers, Paris (ESA), May 07, 2020

https://www.terraviva.com/reports/Shedding_light_on_the_oceans_living_carbon_pump_999.html

Link to full description: BICEP (Biological Pump and Carbon Exchange Processes)

By Staff, European Space Agency (ESA), Accessed May 8, 2020

<https://eo4society.esa.int/projects/bicep/>

[SEPP Comment: The UN IPCC uses satellite-based assessments of the carbon cycle but refuses to use satellite-based assessments of temperature trends?]

Measurement Issues -- Atmosphere

Monthly Average Mauna Loa CO₂

Trends in Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide, Accessed May 7, 2020

Can we see a change in the CO2 record because of COVID-19?

<https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/ccgg/covid2.html>

[SEPP Comment: No. For April 2020, 416.21 parts per million; April 2019, 413.33 ppm]

Pandemic taking toll on weather and climate watch: UN

By Staff Writers, Geneva (AFP), May 7, 2020

https://www.terraviva.com/reports/Pandemic_taking_toll_on_weather_and_climate_watch_UN_99.html

[SEPP Comment: The WMO cannot make good weather forecasts from surface data, but it accepts climate forecasts from surface data!]

Changing Weather

Heat Wave over the Northwest, Cold Wave over the Northeast

By Cliff Mass Weather Blog, May 4, 2020

<https://cliffmass.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2020-05-06T19:06:00-07:00&max-results=2>

[SEPP Comment: On May 8, a temperature range of almost 100 degrees F from the lows in the Northeast to the highs in the Southwest. There must be a special name for such an event – Spring?]

Polar vortex to bring 100-degree difference across the US

By Peter Aitken, Fox News, May 8, 2020

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/polar-vortex-to-bring-100-degree-difference-across-the-us>

Frigid Friday (and Sat.) On The Way

By Paul Dorian, Perspecta, Inc. Via WUWT, May 7, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/07/frigid-friday-and-sat-on-the-way/>

Chilly down there?

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/chilly-down-there/>

Changing Climate

HH Lamb On The 20thC Climatic Changes

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 4, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/04/hh-lamb-on-the-20thc-climatic-changes/>

Changing Seas

Shrinking snowcaps fuel harmful algal blooms in Arabian Sea

By Staff Writers, New York NY (SPX), May 05, 2020

https://www.terraviva.com/reports/Shrinking_snowcaps_fuel_harmful_algal_blooms_in_Arabian_Sea_999.html

No link to paper

[SEPP Comment: Life in the seas has never been disturbed before?]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Sea ice more than 1.2m thick over Hudson Bay portends a good year for polar bears

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, May 8, 2020

<https://polarbears.com/2020/05/08/sea-ice-more-than-1-2m-thick-over-hudson-bay-ports-a-good-year-for-polar-bears/>

New Paper: Body condition of Barents Sea polar bears increased since 2004 despite sea ice loss

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, May 5, 2020

<https://polarbears.com/2020/05/05/new-paper-body-condition-of-barents-sea-polar-bears-increased-since-2004-despite-sea-ice-loss/#more-122079>

Link to paper: Temporal trends of persistent organic pollutants in Barents Sea polar bears

By Lippold A. et al. Environmental Science Technology, Dec 26, 2018

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30548071>

Antarctic Avery Ice Shelf “Prograding [Advancing] Considerably In Last 2 Decades”, Team Of Scientists Find

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, May 6, 2020

<https://notrickszone.com/2020/05/06/antarctic-avery-ice-shelf-prograding-considerably-in-last-2-decades-team-of-scientists-find/>

Link to paper: Spatio-temporal changes and prediction of Amery ice shelf, east Antarctica: A remote sensing and statistics-based approach

By Avinash Kumar, et al., Journal of Environmental Management, Aug 2020

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479720305806?via%3Dihub#!>

Claim: Antarctic Sea Ice Growth Caused by Meltwater

By Eric Worrall, WUWT, May 7, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/07/claim-antarctic-sea-ice-growth-caused-by-meltwater/>

Acidic Waters

Ocean acidification prediction now possible years in advance

By Staff Writers. Boulder CO (SPX), May 04, 2020

https://www.terradaily.com/reports/Ocean_acidification_prediction_now_possible_years_in_advance_999.html

Link to paper: Skillful multiyear predictions of ocean acidification in the California Current System

By Riley X. Brady, et al. Nature Communications, May 1, 2020

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-15722-x>

Communicating Better to the Public – Use Yellow (Green) Journalism?

Renewable energy topped coal in US for 40 days straight

By Rebecca Beitsch, The Hill, May 5, 2020

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/496181-renewable-generation-surpasses-coal-for-40-straight-days>

“Wind, solar and hydroelectricity have produced more electricity than coal since March 25, according to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration analyzed by the Institute for Energy Economics & Financial Analysis (IEEFA).”

[SEPP Comment: Leaving out hydro, did wind and solar produce electricity 24/7 for 40 days?]

No Climate Facts Permitted At ABC

By Tony Heller, His Blog, May 7, 2020

<https://realclimatescience.com/2020/05/no-climate-facts-permitted-at-abc/>

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

Wetter climate to trigger global warming feedback loop in the tropics

By Brooks Hays, Washington DC (UPI), May 06, 2020

https://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Wetter_climate_to_trigger_global_warming_feedback_loop_in_the_tropics_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Unable to locate study on lead author's website.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Harvard Howler: Study claims PM2.5 increases risk of death from COVID19

Never waste a crisis. A new study from Harvard claims that 1 microgram per cubic meter increase in PM2.5 is associated with a 15% increase in deaths from COVID19. This is totally absurd.

By Steve Milloy, JunkScience.com, Apr 7, 2020

<https://junkscience.com/2020/04/harvard-howler-study-claims-pm2-5-increases-risk-of-death-from-covid19/#more-102370>

Matt McGrath & The Carbon Crash

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 6, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/06/matt-mcgrath-the-carbon-crash/>

“Final word goes to Prof Gail Whiteman, who apparently is Director of the Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business – a non-job if I ever saw one:

“It was almost impossible to believe that governments around the world, when faced with a health emergency, would put humanity ahead of the economy. But they did.”

“Unfortunately, Gail, humanity and the economy ultimately go hand in hand. You cannot separate them.

“The economy is not some abstract phenomenon, but is made up of the livelihoods of ordinary people. Damage one and you damage the other.

“Is that what you want?”

[SEPP Comment: Useful graph of estimated CO2 emissions from 1900 to 2020.]

11,000 Fewer Deaths In Europe Due To Clean Air

By Niall McCarthy, Statista, May 4, 2020 [H/t Miall McCarthy]

<https://www.statista.com/chart/21587/deaths-avoided-due-to-lower-air-pollutant-exposure/>

Link to questionable study: 11,000 air pollution-related deaths avoided in Europe as coal, oil consumption plummet

By Lauri Myllyvirta, Centre on Research on Energy and Clean Air, Apr 30, 2020

<https://energyandcleanair.org/air-pollution-deaths-avoided-in-europe-as-coal-oil-plummet/>

[SEPP Comment: The same issues apply to this study as to the Harvard study, as discussed above under COVID-19, Bloomberg and McCarthy.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Protest

Revealed: Extinction Rebellion's plot to 'sabotage the economy' by staging rent strikes, halting tax payments and taking out bank loans they don't intend to repay

By David Rose, Daily Mail, May 2, 2020

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8280801/Extinction-Rebellions-plot-sabotage-economy-coronavirus-crisis.html>

[SEPP Comment: In a government-free market economy no one would rent or lend to them.]

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Oceans should have a place in climate 'green new deal' policies, scientists suggest

By Staff Writers, Corvallis OR (SPX) May 06, 2020

https://www.terraily.com/reports/Oceans_should_have_a_place_in_climate_green_new_deal_policies_scientists_suggest_999.html

Link to paper: Integrating oceans into climate policy: Any green new deal needs a splash of blue

By Steven J. Dundas, et al. Conservation Letters, Apr 21, 2020

<https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/conl.12716>

[SEPP Comment: Considering that the technologies involved with the Green New Deal are unreliable and unpredictable, with true cost incalculable, is it wise to associate ocean policies with them?]

Questioning European Green

Facing Economic Disaster, EU Declares Oil And Gas Are No Longer 'Fossil Fuels'

By Staff, Financial Times, May 3, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/economic-emergency-eu-declares-oil-and-gas-are-no-longer-fossil-fuels/>

[SEPP Comment: Using weasel words – more to come.]

Blackout Risk As Renewables Threaten To Destabilise National Grid [UK]

By Staff, The Times, Via GWPF, May 2, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/blackout-risk-as-renewables-threaten-to-destabilise-national-grid/>

“National Grid asked the regulator yesterday for emergency powers to switch off solar and wind farms to prevent the grid from being swamped on the May 8 bank holiday, when demand is expected to be especially low.”

Questioning Green Elsewhere

A Malthusian Confronts Renewables (review of 'Planet of the Humans')

By Sherri Lange, Master Resource, May 7, 2020

<https://www.masterresource.org/moore-michael-planet-of-the-humans/a-malthusian-confronts-renewables-a-review-of-planet-of-the-humans/>

A miraculous turn of events

By Paul Driessen, WUWT, May 8, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/08/a-miraculous-turn-of-events/>

Climate change for the birds

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/climate-change-for-the-birds/>

“Another important point concerns the environmental crisis at the turn of the century. No, not the most recent one. The one around 1900 as cities in the advanced industrial world found themselves choking on the by-products of ubiquitous horses whose consumption of hay required massive deforestation for farmland. Luckily Henry Ford and others saved us from ‘peak hay’.”

More on Moore

By John Robson, Climate Discussion Nexus, May 6, 2020

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2020/05/06/more-on-moore/>

CLINTEL says “Don’t fight nature, but adapt to it”

By David Wojick, CFACT, May 6, 2020

<https://www.cfact.org/2020/05/06/clintel-says-dont-fight-nature-but-adapt-to-it/>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Sizewell To Halve Output To Prevent Blackouts

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 8, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/08/sizewell-to-halve-output-to-prevent-blackouts/>

“And this is the real scandal here. By shutting down half of Sizewell B and removing a chunk of cheap, reliable power, the grid is forced to rely on much dearer renewable energy instead.

“Whereas Sizewell would have sold their electricity at the market price of £25/MWh, offshore wind generators will be paid £122/MWh if they are on the Renewable Obligation scheme, or up to £173/MWh for CfDs.

“In other words, the loss of nuclear power during the next four months will cost consumers in the region of £300m. Such a decision is criminal.”

[SEPP Comment: Contracts for Difference (CfD) in the UK are a system of reverse auctions intended to give investors the confidence and certainty they need to invest in low carbon electricity generation. Supposedly, CfDs reduce costs by fixing the price consumers pay for low carbon electricity, without regard of high costs of low carbon electricity!]

Subsidising renewables is not the way to boost the UK economy

By Andrew Montford and Gordon Hughes, CapX, May 4, 2020

<https://capx.co/subsidising-renewables-is-not-the-way-to-boost-the-uk-economy/>

Linowes on a 13th Extension of the Wind PTC (crony coronas exposed)

By Robert Bradley Jr. Master Resource, May 5, 2020

<https://www.masterresource.org/production-tax-credit-ptc/linowes-on-a-13th-extension-of-the-wind-ptc/>

Energy Issues – Non-US

Low Electricity Demand and Renewables in the United Kingdom

By John Constable, GWPF, May 8, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/low-electricity-demand-and-renewables-in-the-united-kingdom/>

Net Zero mania threatens to derail our lockdown recovery

By Rupert Darwall, The Daily Telegraph, Via GWPF, May 5, 2020

<https://www.thegwpf.com/net-zero-mania-threatens-to-derail-our-lockdown-recovery/>

Mexico’s President Is Betting Big Against Renewables

By Irina Slav, Oil Price.com, May 7, 2020

<https://oilprice.com/Alternative-Energy/Renewable-Energy/Mexicos-President-Is-Betting-Big-Against-Renewables.html>

Energy Issues – Australia

Aussie Resources Minister on the Green Covid-19 Recovery: “Coal can power the restart”

By Eric Worrall, WUWT, May 6, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/06/aussie-resources-minister-on-the-green-covid-19-recovery-coal-can-power-the-restart/>

Energy Issues -- US

10 states ask energy regulators to postpone pipeline approvals amid pandemic

By Rachel Frazin, The Hill, May 7, 2020

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/496673-10-states-ask-energy-regulators-to-postpone-pipeline-approvals-amid>

Link to letter from: Attorneys General of Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, May 7, 2020

https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/news%20documents/050720_FERC_Moratorium.pdf

[SEPP Comment: Will the virus eat natural gas and multiply? Do the politicians in these states desire to deny reliable electricity to hospitals, emergency rooms, isolation wards, etc.?)

Dominion Energy plan: Electric bills could rise 3% a year over the next decade to pay for net-zero carbon emissions [to meet new legal requirements in Virginia.]

By Dave Ress, Daily Press, May 2, 2020

<https://www.dailypress.com/business/dp-nw-dominion-irp-20200502-cw745cokzvae3dutvjwtpdkzjm-story.html>

“The plan does not assume any changes in technology, although the company believes that improved batteries for storing electricity, using hydrogen fuel and capturing carbon dioxide at gas plants will speed progress towards net-zero carbon emissions — its goal by 2050.”

[SEPP Comment: None of the suggested technologies have been commercially demonstrated. The estimated costs are wildly low guesses. How many millions will it cost to deliver 1MWh of PV electric power at midnight when the wind is not blowing consistently, such as in August?]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Why Oil Is Critical To U.S. Survival

By Gregory R. Copley, Oil Price.com, May 6, 2020

https://oilprice.com/Energy/General/Why-Oil-Is-Critical-To-US-Survival.html?utm_source=CCNet+Newsletter&utm_campaign=0260afa0d5-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_12_46_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fe4b2f45ef-0260afa0d5-20137121&mc_cid=0260afa0d5&mc_eid=2206e9995b

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

OFGEM Backs £600m Subsea Cable–To Connect One Wind Farm In Shetlands!

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 6, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/06/ofgem-backs-600-subsea-cable-to-connect-one-wind-farm-in-shetlands/>

Energy & Environmental Newsletter: May 4, 2020

By John Droz, Master Resource, May 4, 2020

<https://www.masterresource.org/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/energy-environmental-newsletter-may-4-2020/>

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

Drax Subsidies Cost £789m Last Year

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 4, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/04/drax-subsidies-cost-789m-last-year/>

[SEPP Comment: It’s costly to burn US forests in the UK. See link below.]

Michael Moore on Biomass

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, May 5, 2020

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2020/05/05/michael-moore-on-biomass/>

“The Sierra Club’s green fund’s biggest holding, for instance, is in Viva, the world’s largest consumer of forests, to be incinerated in green energy biomass plants.”

Global Warming Solved! Scientists Find Reforestation Can Cool The Surface By 2-6°C Relative To Grassland Area

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, May 4, 2020

<https://notrickszone.com/2020/05/04/global-warming-solved-scientists-find-reforestation-can-cool-the-surface-by-2-6c-relative-to-grassland-area/>

Link to one paper: Predominant regional biophysical cooling from recent land cover changes in Europe

By Bo Huang, et al. Nature Communications, Feb 26, 2020

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-14890-0>

[SEPP Comment: See link immediately above.]

In The Name Of Climate Protection: Deforesting The US To Make Europe Greener!

Burned – in the name of climate protection – How the US is destroying its forests and environment

By Die kalte Sonne (Text translated by P Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, May 2, 2020

<https://notrickszone.com/2020/05/02/in-the-name-of-climate-protection-deforesting-the-us-to-make-europe-greener/>

Health, Energy, and Climate

Anxiety From Reactions to Covid-19 Will Destroy At Least Seven Times More Years of Life Than Can Be Saved by Lockdowns

By Andrew Glen, Ph.D. and James D. Agresti, WUWT, May 7, 2020

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/05/07/anxiety-from-reactions-to-covid-19-will-destroy-at-least-seven-times-more-years-of-life-than-can-be-saved-by-lockdowns/>

Other Scientific News

GPS celebrates 25th year of operation

By 1st Lt Tyler Whiting, Peterson AFB CO (SPX), Apr 28, 2020

https://www.gpsdaily.com/reports/GPS_celebrates_25th_year_of_operation_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

Forecasting Bird Migration with Weather Radar and Models

By Cliff Mass Weather Blog, May 2, 2020

<https://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2020/05/forecasting-bird-migration-with-weather.html>

New map highlights China's export-driven CO2 emissions

By Brooks Hays, Washington DC (UPI), May 07, 2020

https://www.energy-daily.com/reports/New_map_highlights_Chinas_export-driven_CO2_emissions_999.html

Nearly 100,000 evacuated after Uzbekistan dam bursts

By Staff Writers, Tashkent (AFP), May 3, 2020

https://www.terraily.com/reports/Nearly_100000_evacuated_after_Uzbekistan_dam_bursts_999.html

Unlike Jurassic Park, real raptors may not have hunted in packs

By Brooks Hays, Washington DC (UPI), May 06, 2020

https://www.terraily.com/reports/Unlike_Jurassic_Park_real_raptors_may_not_have_hunted_in_packs_999.html

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

New group positions itself as watchdog over major electric company

By Rachel Frazin, The Hill, May 7, 2020

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/496690-new-group-aims-to-be-watchdog-over-major-electric-company>

“The new group, called the Duke Energy Accountability Coalition, says it will fact-check documents released by the company and highlight customer concerns.”

[SEPP Comment: Should the new group be named Duke Reliable Energy Abolitionists?]

ARTICLES

1. The Fossil Fuel-Virus Nexus? Not

Biden embraces a flawed study to attack oil and gas production.

Editorial, WSJ, May 4, 2020

https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-fossil-fuel-virus-nexus-not-11588630987?mod=opinion_lead_pos2

TWTW Summary: The editorial states:

You knew it was coming—the political link between the coronavirus and climate change. And right on time the opponents of fossil fuels are flogging a sloppy study that ties pollutants to coronavirus deaths.

Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health last week published a study claiming that an infinitesimal increase in long-term exposure to fine particulate matter (PM 2.5)—one microgram per cubic meter—increases the risk of dying from the coronavirus by 8%. The Environmental Protection Agency says that 35 micrograms of PM 2.5 is unhealthy for sensitive groups, so the study’s findings would be alarming—if they were true.

Joe Biden cites the study in a new environmental justice policy paper, and liberals are attacking the EPA for deciding last month not to tighten PM 2.5 limits in its air quality standards. Michael Bloomberg and Obama EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy flogged the study in an op-ed Monday: ‘Scientists are warning us that air pollution makes Covid-19, which strikes at the lungs, more deadly. Nonetheless, in the space of about a month, the president has repeatedly undermined rules limiting air pollution. Tens of thousands of Americans will die as a result.’

The study’s conclusions are plausible at surface glance. Pollutants including PM 2.5 have been linked to higher incidences of respiratory diseases, which have also been found to increase the risk of dying from coronavirus. Mr. Biden’s campaign notes that minorities tend to live in areas with higher pollution and are dying from coronavirus in greater numbers.

But drill deeper and the study is riddled with flaws. For starters, it utilizes county-wide data that doesn't adjust for individual health differences. The authors say they control for county population size, age distribution, beginning of the outbreak, time since a state's issuance of stay-at-home order, weather and socioeconomic status. Yet they don't examine how death rates differ among individuals who are exposed to different levels of PM 2.5 or how pollution levels vary across neighborhoods in cities. Nor do they count deaths after April 22, though fatalities have since increased by nearly 50% while the virus has spread to rural areas.

'As epidemiologists who have studied air pollution for more than two decades, we found [the study's] impacts staggering,' note Carleton University's Paul Villeneuve and McGill University's Mark Goldberg. 'When we looked closely at the research, we saw so many shortcomings that we were not convinced of the results.' Mr. Goldberg, by the way, has supported a fracking moratorium.

PM 2.5 levels across the U.S. have fallen 40% since 2000 as power plants and cars have become more efficient, and coal has been replaced with cleaner-burning natural gas. Only nine or so counties now don't meet the EPA's PM 2.5 national standard. Hence the left is now pressing the EPA to tighten PM 2.5 limits.

They know regulating PM 2.5 is a back door to restricting CO2 emissions from power plants, which the Supreme Court in 2015 blocked the Obama EPA from doing. It may be that long-term exposure to PM 2.5 modestly raises the coronavirus death risk, but more rigorous studies are needed to prove this, and shutting down fossil-fuel production now won't save lives. It will deny livelihoods to hundreds of thousands of people.

2. Norman Borlaug's Green Revolution Saved Millions

Scripture tells us that we are all sinners—even the saints. Apparently, according to PBS, Borlaug's sin is that he saved too many lives.

Letters, WSJ, May 4, 2020

https://www.wsj.com/articles/norman-borlaugs-green-revolution-saved-millions-11588605284?mod=opinion_major_pos16

TWTW Summary: R. James Nicholson, former U.S. ambassador to the Holy See (2001-05) writes:

Regarding your editorial 'Battering Norman Borlaug' (April 25): Shortly after becoming the U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, I was made aware that desperate, starving people in Zambia had broken into a convoy of trucks carrying U.S.-donated sacks of food out of their country. I was dumbfounded, and found a Jesuit missionary in Zambia to speak with about this unbelievable occurrence. He said: 'Yes, ambassador, that cable was correct—that food was a product of GMO (genetically modified organism) seeds, and if they allow it into Zambia the people here will want to grow it, and they would never after be able to export food to Europe.'

I couldn't accept that food technology was being used to deny food to starving people. This led me to Dr. Borlaug. I arranged a conference and many meetings in Rome for this man to explain the wonders of new food technology and its promise to thwart the curse of starvation and malnutrition in Africa. This was in 2002 and people there were dying at the rate of 25,000 a day.

The controversy over GMO food persists today, although there is still no proof that it causes anyone ill effects. The credibility of Dr. Borlaug in Rome convinced the Holy Father to task the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on the question of GMO food. After exhaustive research, the Academy of Sciences reported to the pope that they found no harmful effects to people who ate GMO food, and that it offered great promise to end world food shortages.

One senior member of the Roman Curia, who came to know Dr. Borlaug through this experience (he came to Rome twice at my request, at his own expense), said, ‘This man is a saint!’

Scripture tells us that we are all sinners—even the saints. Apparently, according to PBS, Borlaug’s sin is that he saved too many lives.

May he rest in peace.

Joe Bouton of Athens, GA writes:

“I heard Borlaug give a speech late in his career where he addressed criticism of his work. His position was simple—he had met many, many well-meaning (and well-fed) critics over the years, but had never met any willing to starve to death for their beliefs.”
