

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES STRAY TOWARDS ADVOCACY

By Joseph D'Aleo, CCM, AMS Councilor term expiring this month

Recently the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) featured an editorial suggesting to broadcast meteorologists that they should become familiar with (and adopt) the 'consensus position' as outlined by the IPCC Fourth Assessment and the AMS in its Statement on Climate Change.

As Ross McKittrick put it in a [blog](#) on Roger Pielke Sr.'s Climate Science called "Should Scientific Societies Issue Position Statements?"

"One of the reasons economists have maintained relatively free collegiality while debating issues with controversial policy implications is that our major associations do not issue position statements." He questioned whether it was wise for professional organizations to do so, especially on such a controversial topics such as climate change.

The AMS is not alone in taking a strong stand on this issue. The Royal Meteorological Society, the National Academy of Sciences and the American Geophysical Union have also done so.

The American Meteorological Society established in 1919 and claims over 11,000 members. The Royal Meteorological Society established in 1850 and has 3,000 members worldwide. Both societies have developed programs to honor senior members who have contributed to the science which they list as fellows. The RMS has 321 fellows, the AMS 600. They also certify members in specialty areas. They have a certification for consulting meteorologists – the RMS has 55 Chartered Meteorologists, the AMS 227 active Certified Consulting Meteorologists (CCMs). The AMS also evaluates and provides Seal of Approval for TV mets (887 active TV Broadcast Seal Holders) and recently established an elite program for Broadcasters who demonstrate a stronger command of the science called the Certified Broadcast Meteorologist (CBM) program which has at latest count 227 members.

These programs benefit the members in their employment but also have a benefit to the societies in that they provide an incentive for these members to stay members even if the society drifts down paths they do not favor. These seals may be a condition of employment as well as prestige.

The National Academy of Science goes beyond just weather and climate to include all other sciences. The National Academy of Sciences was signed into being by Abraham Lincoln in 1863 with 2,100 members.

The American Geophysical Union is the largest organization with over 50,000 members. AGU is a worldwide scientific community that advances, through unselfish cooperation in research, the understanding of Earth and space for the benefit of humanity.

In the last few years, the Royal Society, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and the American Meteorological Society (AMS) have issued statements endorsing the so-called "consensus" view that man is driving global warming. This week the American Geophysical Union updated its 2003 statement on Climate Change making it firmer and providing more policy prescriptions than the one from 2003.

But what you don't hear is that these societies never allowed member scientists to vote on these climate statements. Essentially, only two dozen or so members on ad hoc committees and governing boards of these institutions produced the "consensus" statements.

It appears that the governing boards of these organizations buckled to pressure from those promoting the politically correct view of UN and Gore-inspired science. These organizations have been overtaken by alarmists. Over time, they have appointed and nominated like-minded scientists and have increased activities aimed at advocacy.

In the case of the AMS, the statement drafting process involved appointing an ad hoc committee to draft a statement and then have the council review and recommend changes and then post for comment for just 30 days on the society web site home page.

Few members frequent the home page often going to the site only to look for papers or register for upcoming conferences. Still the posted statement received a record number of comments back, many of them strongly negative. Despite an exhaustive effort to catalog the comments, in the end little substantive change was made to the statement.

Yet the society proclaimed to Dr. Roger Pielke Sr. when he inquired about the process for creating the statement that the committee simply 'facilitated the drafting and that the council and the membership owned and controlled the final statement'. Roger pushed for longer review and for a referendum. When little changed from the draft statement and no changes were made to the process, Roger responded by posting the names of the authoring committee on Climate Science. Roger believes problem of our professional organizations using their positions as political pulpits is appalling and compromises the scientific process.

CROSSING THE LINE FROM SCIENCE TO ADVOCACY

In drafting and promoting these statements and implying that they represent the consensus view of their full membership, these societies are misrepresenting the science to the decision makers.

The Royal Society actually sent a letter to Exxon Mobil demanding they [stop funding](#) skeptics. Bob Ward spoke for the society in stating *"It is now more crucial than ever that we have a debate which is properly informed by the science. For people to be still producing information that misleads people about climate change is unhelpful. The next IPCC report should give people the final push that they need to take action and we can't have people trying to undermine it."*

The National Academy of Sciences also has an activist program. On their site, [they note](#) *“Ralph J. Cicerone, president of the National Academy of Sciences, is an atmospheric scientist whose research in atmospheric chemistry and climate change has involved him in shaping science and environmental policy at the highest levels nationally and internationally.”*

The AGU Atmospheric Sciences President-Elect, Alan Robock lists global warming as one of his specialty areas. Though he is a noted expert in volcanism with much excellent peer review work, he has recently developed a newfound passion for global warming.

The AMS has gone so far as to list advocacy and efforts to influence policy in their [strategic goals](#) (goal #3) although to their credit they have softened the wording in the 2007 version.. Anthony Socci, a former Gore advisor, is leading the way for them on the climate policy issue. He has chaired regular one-sided congressional briefings or seminars including one recently by Naomi Oreskes, whose flawed document on the ‘consensus’ among climate researchers has been used by alarmists as proof of a near total consensus. Her work was debunked first by Benny Peiser and then most recently by medical researcher Dr. Klaus-Martin Schulte both have shown there is no "consensus".

The Weather Channel’s Heidi Cullen in December 2006 on her blog advocated that broadcast meteorologists be stripped of their scientific certification if they express skepticism about predictions of manmade catastrophic global warming. It was a hot topic of discussion among broadcasters at the January annual meeting in San Antonio and on the blogosphere. Because broadcasters do not stand to benefit from the research dollars and the senior members have lived through warming and cooling cycles before, they tend to be more objective and balanced on the issue, acknowledging some influence of man on climate but also recognizing the importance of natural variability and cycles.

The AMS recently hosted a webcast for CBMs and Seal holders funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund on climate change with a panel that including IPCC lead authors such as Kevin Trenberth, Gerald Meehl and Richard Somerville and moderated by Dr. Robert Corell, Senior Policy Fellow at the Policy Program of the American Meteorological Society and Global Change Program Director at the H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment. The words of Heidi Cullen must have been ringing in their ears as the broadcasters had to decide whether to participate. It was described to me by one broadcaster and seal holder as blatant intimidation.

This was followed up by copying all TV meteorologists with the earlier mentioned pro-global warming editorial from the Bulletin of the AMS by Bob Ryan and John Toohey-Morales, more subtle pressure to conform. When one member sent a note of dissatisfaction, he got a call from the AMS to enquire why he wasn’t on-board.

With my experience as chief meteorologist for two large weather companies and after having addressed the Broadcasters on Global Warming and with my many contacts in operational meteorology, climatology and broadcasting, I believe the majority of rank

and file members with those specialties (as much as 60 or 70%) do not buy the man is entirely responsible for climate change dogma. But the societies use their statements and like the IPCC imply full support of all the scientists involved. There would be a mass exodus of AMS members if their jobs didn't depend on the seals or certification or fellow designation. This kind of exodus occurred in the 1970s when the National Weather Association was formed because the AMS moved more towards Academia and no longer served the needs of the operational meteorologist.

SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM

This professional organization that prides itself in its Code of Ethics hosted a one-sided global warming session at its last annual event. The organization's Code of Ethics includes among its stated principles: (1) Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting, (2) Support the open exchange of views, even views they find repugnant, (3) Examine their own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others.

However, when the panel was confronted with the question of maintaining the balance between reporting the news and playing the role of advocacy journalist, Greenwald, one of the panelists, offered the standard talking points. "I think the facts are actually quite compelling," Greenwald said. "We advocate one thing, but a lot of what we do is just report the facts ... A lot of scientists worked on that question [if global warming was just natural] and did very sophisticated analysis that are sort of hard to explain because a lot of it is about pattern analysis and if you look at the pattern of global warming and try to find some sort of explanation, the only explanation that actually works for it is the greenhouse gases. We need help from journalists to explain to the public what is at stake and how we are going to be able to move forward."

As Christopher Alleva in the American Thinker reported in an August 2007 article entitled [Global Warming Propaganda Factory](#) "In January of this year, the SEJ published what they call [Climate change: A guide to the information and disinformation](#). The guide is neatly organized into twelve chapters. Except for the seventh chapter titled with the freighted descriptive: "Deniers, Dissenters and Skeptics", the guide is a one sided presentation that resoundingly affirms global warming and puts down anyone with a different point of view. The site is a virtual digest of the global warming industry. If you're looking for a road map to the special interest groups behind the hysteria, this is the place to go. The journalist members of this association have obviously abandoned all pretense of objectivity."

A PRICE TO PAY

Very soon when a suddenly less active sun and decadal shifts back to colder oceans cause global temperatures to clearly fall (we actually have not risen now in 9 years and some measures have already started down), these societies, the UN and the media which is violating its own code of ethics by its on-sided coverage of the issue must be held accountable for their actions and any harm their advocacy positions cause to the world's economies and its people.