

The Confused Climate Change Consensus

By Art Horn

What is the definition of consensus? According to Webster it's "General agreement. The judgment arrived at by most of those concerned." It would appear that the much claimed consensus among leading climate scientists is, shall I say, not in such general agreement these days. If there really is such a consensus, than the opinions from leading climate scientists should be reasonably consistent among them. What I am seeing instead is an increasing divergence among the man made climate doom community.

Let's set one thing strait from the get go. The data from all of the sources of earth's [measured average global temperature](#) clearly show that there has been a pause in global temperature increase since 1998. People who claim otherwise simply don't look at the data or believe someone who wrote a story that said warming is accelerating and it's really, really bad. Don't trust me on this, look for yourself.

There are those who see the pause and as a reaction to it, have now begun to focus on "extreme weather events" to keep the public engaged and convinced that civilization is gagging Mother Earth with its carbon dioxide pollution. Since the temperature is no longer increasing some other scare tactic needs to be employed to keep the research funding from drying up. In a time of economic turmoil research funding is threatened. For instance at Penn State University [funds allocated](#) for research for 2010/11 were \$805,000,000, more than half of that lofty sum, \$470,000,000 was Federal grants and contracts. An undetermined amount of that money goes to climate research at Penn State. If the lack of warming for over a decade begins to influence how congress doles out money for global warming research, large cuts in grants and contracts could result. Claims of increases in "extreme weather" due to global warming could be the prod that keeps the government funding spigot open.

The problem with trying to compare weather events today to the past is that observational networks have improved dramatically in the years after World War Two. Weather events in the past were vastly underreported due to a lack of reporting stations and primitive communications technologies. In its 2007 report the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [said](#) "At continental, regional, and ocean basin scales, numerous long-term changes in climate have been observed. These include changes in Arctic temperatures and ice, widespread changes in precipitation amounts, ocean salinity, wind patterns and aspects of extreme weather including droughts, heavy precipitation, heat waves and the intensity of tropical cyclones."

What the report does not say is that multi-decadal ocean temperature oscillations lasting 60 years or more reveal climate fluctuates on time scales that overwhelm our relatively short period of reliable observations. What the report also does not say is that changes in Arctic temperature and ice, widespread changes in precipitation amounts, ocean salinity, wind patterns and aspects of extreme weather including droughts, heavy precipitation, heat waves and the intensity of tropical cyclones are just as likely to be from natural

variability as any man made global warming. The attempt to attribute changes in weather over decadal time scales to man made global warming is extremely limited by our short period of reliable weather records and a fundamental lack of understanding what causes climate to change in the first place.

What some would call an unprecedented storm or heat wave today, more experienced observers would simply remind us that severe storms or unusual weather events sometime repeat only once every 50, 100, 200 or 500 years or more. There are vastly more rain gauges today than in the past. These gauges record heavy rain events that were missed decades ago. Satellites in space record every tropical cyclone whereas in the past many were missed by a primitive observational network. It is highly unlikely that in just a few decades the world has experienced anything remotely near the full range of what Mother Nature can dish out.

Recently Dr. James Hansen of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies published a new paper, *Climate Variability and Climate Change: The New Climate Dice*. [In the paper he said](#) “Thus there is no need to equivocate about the summer heat waves in Texas in 2011 and Moscow in 2010...it is nearly certain that they would not have occurred in the absence of global warming.” He is saying that these heat waves were extreme and unquestionably caused by man made global warming. He went on to say “The increasing greenhouse gases will cause the rapid global warming of the past three decades to continue and this warming will cause the dice to become more and more loaded with greater and greater extreme events.”

Enter Dr. Ben Santer climate researcher at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and former researcher at the University of East Anglia’s Climate Research Unit. He [recently said](#) “Looking at a single, noisy 10-year period is cherry picking, and does not provide reliable information about the presence or absence of human effects on climate.” Dr. Santer went on to say “A single decade of observational temperature data is inadequate for identifying a slowly evolving human caused warming signal.” Very interesting, on the one hand we have the head of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies saying that “Thus there is no need to equivocate about the summer heat waves in Texas in 2011 and Moscow in 2010...it is nearly certain that they would not have occurred in the absence of global warming.” And then we have the lead author of a new paper from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory saying “Looking at a single, noisy 10-year period is cherry picking, and does not provide reliable information about the presence or absence of human effects on climate.”

These two statements by leading climate researchers, both of whom have testified before congress as to the severity of global warming, are in complete opposition to each other. Dr. Hansen is saying the man made global warming signal is clear and is revealed in the summer heat waves in Moscow in 2010 and Texas in 2011. Dr. Santer is saying that looking at short term temperature trends and calling them a sign of man made global warming is “cherry picking” and that you can’t draw conclusions about man made global warming in such short periods of time. It would seem the “consensus” is not so generally agreed upon by two leading climate scientists.

Another example of the not so agreed upon consensus comes from a recently [published summary](#) from the IPCC. It says “It is virtually certain that increases in the frequency and magnitude of warm daily temperature extremes and decreases in cold extremes will occur in the 21st century on the global scale.” The report continued with “It is likely that the frequency of heavy precipitation or the proportion of total rainfall from heavy falls will increase over the 21st century over many areas of the globe.”

Incredibly in the same summary [the IPCC says](#) “Projected changes in climate extremes under different emissions scenarios generally do not strongly diverge in the coming two to three decades, but these signals are relatively small compared to natural climate variability over this time frame. Even the sign (higher or lower) of projected changes in some climate extremes over this time frame is uncertain.” They are saying that up to the year 2040 the climate changes from the emissions of carbon dioxide will be so small as to be virtually undetectable from natural climate variability. This also strongly implies that any effects from global warming on extreme weather now are so small, compared with natural variability, that they are undetectable. This IPCC statement also leads to the conclusion that any claims that global warming is causing noticeable extreme weather events today is false. However, after 2040 the effects of global warming will then overwhelm nature and extreme events will be increasing due to carbon dioxide emissions. It appears the IPCC is worried about the lack of recent warming and is pushing the climate calamity farther into the future. To the general public this must send a very confusing mixed message.

Dr. Richard Muller, a physics professor at the University of California, Berkley recently attempted to clarify what the measured temperature record reveals about global warming. His BEST (Berkley Earth Surface Temperature project) report generated a lot of [media attention](#). On a BBC radio program [Muller said](#) “we see no evidence of it (global warming) having slowed down, no leveling off.” But his own [BEST data](#) says it has. The BEST data shows no warming since 2001. So what is it, is it warming or not? Give it your BEST guess. Apparently Dr. Muller is so confused about the whole thing that he doesn’t even know what his own report shows! In mid-November Dr. Muller was on MSNBC and [said](#) “We’re getting very steep warming” then in almost the same breath he said on a [different day](#) “Right now we don’t know that it’s warming. It may be constant, we don’t know.”

Real world temperature data shows that the warming of the earth’s average temperature that started in the mid 1970s stopped near the turn of the millennium. The years have progressed and warming has not resumed as predicted. As a direct result of this the government funded university system and the radical environmental movement climate doom industry is having big problems figuring out how to keep the fear alive. There appears to be a growing confusion among some of the world’s most prominent climate scientists and the IPCC as to just what is going on.

Some say it’s warming, some say it’s not. Some say global warming is causing extreme weather right now, some say it’s not going to happen until we’re nearly halfway through

the 21st century. It's time for these scientists and the IPCC to fess up to the fact that they really don't know what is going on and that there is no "overwhelming consensus" as to what causes climate change. The implications of coming clean on this confusion are massive. Our energy policy and future prosperity are being shaped by fear of man made global warming. If the "experts" aren't sure of what's happening, how can we make sound decisions about what is the BEST path to insure plentiful and affordable energy in the future?