

WHAT TREE RINGS ARE SAYING ABOUT RECENT DECADES

Steve McIntyre's Climate Audit March 19th blog on [Up-to-Date White Spruce Ring Widths](http://www.climateaudit.org/?p=1278) <http://www.climateaudit.org/?p=1278> is an excellent read and has some very insightful comments. One comment from Doug Hoyt, I thought was worth bringing to your attention. He starts with a review of a relevant paper in the 2006 Journal of Climate by CO2science.com.

Douglas Hoyt says:

March 20th, 2007 at 6:57 am

Interesting that tree rings show the present time is not as warm as earlier years in Canada. A similar result is found in Europe where the 1940s are warmer than now as described in a paper by Buntgen et al. and I copy the review from CO2science.com:

“A 1250-Year History of Summer Temperature in the European Alps

Reference

Buntgen, U., Frank, D.C., Nievergelt, D. and Esper, J. 2006. Summer temperature variations in the European Alps, A.D. 755-2004. Journal of Climate 19: 5606-5623.

What was done

An annually-resolved mean summer (June-September) temperature record for the European Alps, covering the period AD 755-2004 and based on 180 recent and historic larch (*Larix decidua* Mill.) maximum latewood density series, was developed using the regional curve standardization method that preserves interannual to multi-centennial temperature-related variations.

What was learned

Among a number of other things, notable features identified by the authors were high temperatures in the late tenth, early thirteenth, and twentieth centuries and a prolonged cooling from ~1350 to 1700, or as they describe it: “warmth during medieval and recent times, and cold in between.” Also of great interest, they report that the coldest decade of the record was the 1810s, and that even though the record extended all the way through 2004, the warmest decade of the record was the 1940s. In addition, they observed that “warm summers seem to coincide with periods of high solar activity, and cold summers vice versa.” Finally, they report that comparing their newest temperature record with other regional- and large-scale reconstructions “reveals similar decadal to longer-term variability.”

What it means

Buntgen et al. conclude - in the final sentence of their paper - that based upon their findings and the similar findings many others, “the twentieth-century contribution of anthropogenic greenhouse gases and aerosol remains insecure.” Since these words appear to be particularly carefully chosen, we feel we should not attempt to rephrase or clarify

them any further, assuming that most rational people will be able to correctly determine for themselves both what they mean and what they imply.”

Note that, in the review above, they say “the warmest decade of the record was the 1940s”. This result is quite different than what you get using thermometers which have the present day as warmest. The obvious conclusion is that European thermometers are UHI contaminated compared to rural trees and that the thermometers are not recording climate change accurately.

Another comment in the same blog thread by Edouard notes the same paper on the Climate Science site <http://climatesci.colorado.edu/2007/03/16/two-papers-on-the-urban-heat-island-effect-on-temperatures/>