

We Might As Well Try To Stop Clouds Scudding Across The Sky

Complex climate models are in effect sophisticated computer games, and their particular outputs are to a large degree predetermined by programmers' predelictions. It cannot be overemphasised, therefore, that computer climate projections, or scenarios, are not evidence. Nor are they suitable for environmental or political planning. Moving from virtual reality to real observations and evidence, many of the manifestations of living on a dynamic planet that are cited as evidence for global warming are, at best, circumstantial. The current rates of sea-level change, for example, fall well within the known natural range of past changes. Should we adapt to the rise? Of course.

Should we try to "stop climate change"? To moderate, possibly, the expected sea-level rise? Of course not; we might as well try to stop clouds scudding across the sky. The first sentence of the "Why we need to act" section of the green paper is followed by five further short paragraphs that are similarly riddled with science misrepresentation and error. In essence, the section reads like a policy manual for green climate activists. It represents a parody of our true knowledge of climate change.

The following letter appeared in theage.com.au.

The Government's advisory channels are clogged with rent seekers, special pleaders and green activists who have misadvised the minister. CLIMATE Minister Penny Wong published an astonishing green paper in response to what she perceives to be the threat of global warming. The first sentence of the opening section of her paper, entitled "Why we need to act", contains seven scientific errors - almost one error for every two words.

Here is the sentence: "Carbon pollution is causing climate change, resulting in higher temperatures, more droughts, rising sea levels and more extreme weather." And here are the errors. First, the debate is not about carbon, but human carbon dioxide emissions and their potential effect on climate.

It makes no more sense for Wong to talk about carbon in the atmosphere than it would for her to talk about hydrogen comprising most of Sydney's water supply. Use of the term carbon in this way is, of course, a deliberate political gambit, derived from the green ecosalvationist vocabulary and intended to convey a subliminal message about "dirty" coal.

Next, carbon dioxide is not a pollutant but a naturally occurring, beneficial trace gas in the atmosphere. For the past few million years, the Earth has existed in a state of relative carbon dioxide starvation compared with earlier periods. There is no empirical evidence that levels double or even treble those of today will be harmful, climatically or otherwise.

Indeed, a trebled level is roughly what commercial greenhouse tomato growers aim for to enhance growth. As a vital element in plant photosynthesis, carbon dioxide is the basis of the planetary food chain - literally the staff of life. Its increase in the atmosphere leads mainly to the greening of the planet. To label carbon dioxide a "pollutant" is an abuse of language, logic and science.

Third, that enhanced human carbon dioxide emissions are causing dangerous global warming ("carbon pollution is causing climate change") is an interesting and important hypothesis. Detailed consideration of its truth started with the formation of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 1988. Since then, Western nations have spent more than \$50 billion on research into the matter. Despite all the fulminations of the IPCC, 20 years on, the result has been a failure to identify the human climate signal at global (as opposed to local) level.

Accordingly, independent scientists have long since concluded that the most appropriate null hypothesis is that the human global signal lies submerged within natural climate variability. In

other words, our interesting initial hypothesis was wrong.

Fourth, the specific claim that carbon dioxide emissions are causing temperature increase is intended to convey the impression that the phase of gentle (and entirely unalarming) global warming that occurred during the late 20th century continues today. Nothing could be further from the truth, in that all official measures of global temperature show that it peaked in 1998 and has been declining since at least 2002. And this in the face of an almost 5% increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide since 1998. Spot the problem?

Fifth, sixth and seventh, the statement that human carbon dioxide emissions will cause "more droughts, rising sea levels and more extreme weather" is unbridled nonsense. Such confident predictions are derived from unvalidated, unsuccessful computer models that even their proponents agree cannot predict the future. Rather, a model projection represents just one preferred, virtual reality future out of the many millions of alternatives that could have been generated. Complex climate models are in effect sophisticated computer games, and their particular outputs are to a large degree predetermined by programmers' predelictions. It cannot be overemphasised, therefore, that computer climate projections, or scenarios, are not evidence. Nor are they suitable for environmental or political planning.

Moving from virtual reality to real observations and evidence, many of the manifestations of living on a dynamic planet that are cited as evidence for global warming are, at best, circumstantial. The current rates of sea-level change, for example, fall well within the known natural range of past changes. Should we adapt to the rise? Of course. Should we try to "stop climate change" to moderate, possibly, the expected sea-level rise? Of course not; we might as well try to stop clouds scudding across the sky.

The first sentence of the "Why we need to act" section of the green paper is followed by five further short paragraphs that are similarly riddled with science misrepresentation and error. In essence, the section reads like a policy manual for green climate activists. It represents a parody of our true knowledge of climate change. Never has a policy document of such importance been released in Australia That is so profoundly out of touch with known facts of the real world. It is a matter for national alarm that the Government's advisory channels should be clogged with the rent seekers, special pleaders and green activists who have so obviously misadvised Wong on the content of her green paper on climate change. Time for some due diligence, Minister.

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