

Follow the Money

It's about time that someone once and for all puts the lie to the recurrent charges that the AGW skeptical community is supported by "Big Oil", or is populated by "flat-earthers", or by those who in the past have been complicit with "the tobacco lobby". These transparently pejorative statements are frequent inclusions in postings and commentary by AGW proponents, sometimes by less committed followers of the AGW controversy and even by some posters who are intellectually inclined to side with the skeptics. There are rarely any substantiating statements to support these allegations which in the absence of any formal repudiation by those so categorized, take on a life of their own like so many urban myths that populate the blogosphere.

The facts are that quite the opposite is the case. For example, let's take "Big Oil". BP has contributed over \$500 Million to UC Berkeley, one of the Bay Area's centers of AGW support, for its Energy Biosciences Institute.

Stanford University has received \$225 Million from ExxonMobil, Toyota and Schlumberger for its Global Climate and Energy Project. That money will be combined with a \$50 Million donation from alumnus Jay Precourt whose career as an oil engineer included such companies as Hamilton Oil and Tejas Gas Corp. The new entity will be named the Precourt Center for Energy Efficiency, see http://articles.sfgate.com/2009-01-13/news/17198474_1_energy-efficiency-greenhouse-gases-uc-berkeley

Compare these numbers with a total of ~\$6.4 Million over a 4-year period between 2002-2005 provided to non-academic and presumably more conservative think tanks by ExxonMobile according to data acquired by EDF (hardly an unbiased source). See <http://www.edf.org/article.cfm?ContentID=4870>

As for individuals active in the promotion of AGW, Susan Solomon, a Phd from Stanford and a lead author of the 2007 IPC Report was a recipient of the 2004 Blue Planet Prize, a 50 Million Yen (~\$460,000) cash award from the Asahi Glass Foundation, see <http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2004/s2249.htm>

Other high profile figures such as James Hansen and Michael Mann have received six-figure amounts from organizations such as the Theresa Heinz Foundation and the Dan David Foundation. It seems as though being a staunch proponent of AGW is a very rewarding position to have.

These are just a fractional example of the money that has flowed from the private sector to individuals and academic institutions friendly to the notion of anthropogenic influences on the environment. Over the past 10 years Government funding to such organizations has been conservatively estimated at well over \$50 Billion.

Compare these enormous sums of money with the amounts that are received by prominent and well qualified members of the skeptical community. I know from personal association that external funding for such sites as WUWT and icecap is in the *low five figures* and comes almost exclusively from individual donations from those who access these sites. It would seem that the thinly veiled assertions from those expressing an alarmist position that people who adopt a more skeptical attitude are somehow insincere and must be doing it for the money. Since this is patently untrue, I submit that such accusations are more likely to be evidence of projection than of fiscal reality and they are more designed to obfuscate than enlighten the debate.