

## A Convenient Error?

A story is told of a little boy walking with his mother across Hampstead Heath in a gale. The wind kept blowing off the little lad's cap and, as he looked at the bending trees, he turned to his mother and exclaimed, "Mummy, if the trees didn't wave it wouldn't wind!"

We are amused at this childish misunderstanding of the relationship between cause and effect. However if an adult were to put forward such fancies as factual we would not be so amused and indeed might become very alarmed if the grown-up then announced that all the trees on Hampstead Heath must be cut down to prevent the gales.

I tell this story for a reason: those currently promoting the Enhanced Greenhouse Hypothesis (that man-made CO<sub>2</sub> is warming the planet) are guilty of precisely the elementary error of that little boy. Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Truth* is based entirely upon it.

The EGH has always been on shaky ground scientifically. In science a hypothesis (that's an idea not a fact) is developed and tested against observations. When observations fail to support a hypothesis, then it is either modified or abandoned. The Enhanced Greenhouse Hypothesis (EGH) came to the fore about twenty years ago as a *possible* explanation of the mild warming observed over the last 150 years (about 1°C). Because it is a simple idea - that man-made CO<sub>2</sub> from burning fossil fuels is warming the planet, it quite caught the public's imagination. Unfortunately this has now developed into a form of hysteria, pushed forward by those for whom such an agenda is of benefit. The IPCC reports are regarded by most reputable scientists as mere political propaganda dressed up as science<sup>1</sup>. Because scary headlines are the food of journalism, they too have jumped on the bandwagon - the BBC perhaps being one of the worst culprits.

Meanwhile, serious climate scientists have been patiently testing the hypothesis against the evidence.

The hypothesis drew on the Greenhouse effect, well known to science. The effect is very small but crucial to our survival on the planet - without the effect of CO<sub>2</sub> and other gases such as methane the planet would probably be an iceblock.

The Enhanced Greenhouse Hypothesis suggested that the extra CO<sub>2</sub> put into the atmosphere by human industrial activity etc. would therefore warm the planet. The computer models (and this is really the only support the hypothesis has: computer models, as it turns out, that totally fail to explain past temperatures, let alone forecast future ones) predicted that this warming would affect the atmosphere (more than the ground) and the polar icecaps most strongly.

So far so good. Here's an hypothesis which is making predictions whereby the hypothesis can be tested against reality. This is the normal way any scientific idea progresses. However...

**Inconvenient truth No. 1:** When these two predictions were tested against reality *neither* of them were found to be occurring, which should have suggested to its proponents that something wasn't right.

**Inconvenient truth No. 2:** It did not explain the rapid (relatively: we are looking at mere points of a degree) warming in the late 19th cent. and again in the 1920s and 30s, but the sudden *cooling* for thirty years between 1945 and 1975 at a time when man-made emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> were most rapidly *increasing*<sup>2</sup> - and the complete absence of any warming since 1998.

**Inconvenient truth No. 3:** The discovery that the greenhouse effect of CO<sub>2</sub> is not linear but rapidly tails off: going from 0 to 200ppm the effect is relatively substantial, from then on each incremental increase in CO<sub>2</sub> has less and less further effect. The CO<sub>2</sub> levels could double to 800ppm without much difference to its greenhouse effect.

**Inconvenient truth No. 4:** If what is happening today in the atmosphere is unusual or man driven, then studying the past climate of the Earth should highlight today's changes as anomalous. Unfortunately studies from around the globe of ice cores and hundreds of other proxy measurements show that it is not anomalous at all and, *what is fatal for the EGH* and for the premise of Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, that earlier periods of warming are also associated with rises in CO<sub>2</sub> levels like today - but that these rises invariably *follow* the warming (sometimes lagging by up to a thousand years), as melting ice and warming oceans deliver up dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> in quantities that dwarf all human emissions. Therefore **CO<sub>2</sub> rises cannot be what is driving the warming.** "If the trees didn't wave it wouldn't wind."

**Inconvenient truth No.5:** NASA report the fact that all the planets (and their moons) are showing signs of warming - this clearly cannot be as a result of human CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

This accumulated evidence renders the EGH dead in the water. It has ceased to be a viable hypothesis for global warming in serious science. Nor is the increase in CO<sub>2</sub> anything but a bonus - it causes more plants and crops to grow (there is has been a steady increase in vegetation globally of about 4% per decade), helping to feed hungry mouths - as has happened globally in past warm periods such as the Roman Warm period and the Medieval warm period - both warmer than today.<sup>3</sup>

So what *is* the prime forcing factor for planetary warming? It is the sun.

It has been discovered (by satellite measurement) that the sun is not a constant but has periods of higher and lower intensity. The sun's energy has been increasing since the 1970s by about .05% per decade. Strangely such variations in the sun and the warmth of the globe with its knock on effect of better harvests were observed by the astronomer William Herschel when he noted the connection between corn prices and the number of sun spots. When he published this result in 1801 he was laughed at by all the scientists of his day - an instance, by the bye, of consensus! They all were wrong and he was right. What he didn't know was the subtle mechanism that connected these two things. Today this is beginning to become clearer and a very intriguing mechanism it looks to be.

Cosmic rays, as they pass through the atmosphere, cause cloud seeding. A hotter sun shields us from some of this cosmic radiation, thus reducing the cloud cover and thereby warming the planet.<sup>4</sup> Clouds are a far more significant factor for global temperatures than greenhouse gases. If one were to compare the complex interaction of forces in the climate to a large Wagnerian orchestra, then cloud cover compared to CO<sub>2</sub> warming is as the whole brass section in full flood to a single triangle.

If this matter were merely a debate within academia, the whole thing would be of only moderate interest - theories in science come and go. However in this instance, incredibly expensive and highly dangerous policies based on a discredited idea are being enacted which will have appalling consequences for the world's poorest peoples. One thinks of the terrible consequences of Lysenko's 'science' in the old USSR, where similarly a discredited science, amplified by a not wholly dissimilar hardened ideology, led to the starvation and death of millions. Or the manslaughter of upward of 30 million people from malaria since the 1970s when DDT was effectively banned after hysteria about its supposed dangers - which proved to be baseless.

Affordable and reliable energy is what helps brings people out of subsistence living and enables them to have access to clean water, safe cooking and heating, education, effective crop management, health care, communications and good transport. The only reliable source of energy available today is fossil fuel - of which there is no shortage. So why are those, who would appear to be concerned for the underdeveloped nations, so set on denying them the very resource that would get them on their feet - just because they believe in the discredited dogma of man-made global warming?

*The Skeptical Environmentalist*, Bjørn Lomborg, C.U.P.

*Unstoppable Global Warming - every 1500 years*, S.F.Singer & D.T.Avery, Rowman & Littlefield 2007

*The March of Unreason*, Lord Dick Taverne, O.U.P.

*The Great Global Warming Swindle* Channel 4 - a polemic - but an accurate one. For DVD email: gw@wagtv.com

*Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death* Paul Dreissen Merrill Press

Rev Philip Foster MA (Nat.Sci.)

1. For example, Prof. Frederick Seitz, former President of the American National Academy of Science, stated, "I have never witnessed a more disturbing corruption of the peer review process than the events that led to this IPCC report."
2. The IPCC produced a hypothesis about sulphate aerosols causing cooling - which has turned out to be false. However the cooling fits neatly with sun spot data - see the graph opposite
3. The Third Assessment Report of the IPCC in 2000 published the now infamous 'Hockeystick' graph produced by Dr Michael Mann in an attempt to erase evidence of the global Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age from Earth's climate history. It was never properly peer reviewed. The graph has turned out to be spurious - bad statistical methodology and shoddy science - but, like so much misinformation, it got all round the world before the truth even got its boots on.
4. Of considerable interest also is the Pacific Ocean Heat Vent discovered in 2001 by the study of data from Japan's GMS-5 geostationary satellite, whereby the Earth seems to have this extra means of losing heat into space - like a huge safety valve. A quite remarkable phenomenon, but apparently unknown and certainly unpredicted in Greenhouse circles.

