



The New Zealand Climate Science Coalition

Commonsense about Climate Change

Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get – Mark Twain

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9 April 2018

The Council.
Royal Society of New Zealand,
PO Box 598,
Wellington 6140. (by email)

Complaint to the Council of the Royal Society of New Zealand

Complainants

Professor Emeritus Geoffrey G. Duffy, DEng, PhD, BSc, ASTC Dip., FRSNZ, FICHEM
Dr D.C. Edmeades, ONZM, MRSNZ
Bryan Leyland, MSc, DistFEngNZ, FIMechE, FIEE(rtd), MRSNZ
Dr Gerrit J. van der Lingen, PhD (Utrecht)
Dr Jock Allison, ONZM, FNZIPIM
Professor Geoff Austin, BA Camb., MSc PhD Cant. (rtd), FRSNZ
Gary Kerkin, BE (Hons) Cant., MEngSc Melb.
Terry Dunleavy, MBE, MRSNZ
Richard Treadgold
David Finney B.Tech. (Hons, Ind Chem) C. Chem.
Professor Timothy Ball, Ph.D, Shaw University, Canada
John Scarry ME(Civil), CPEng
John McLean PhD, Melbourne, Australia, reviewer of IPCC 5AR
Ross Muir LFNZEI, MIEE, MRNZS
Don Esslemont

Ethics complaint against Professor Richard Bedford

We the undersigned, wish to make a formal ethics complaint against Prof Richard Bedford.

In the New Zealand Herald of 12 March 2018 Prof Bedford is reported as making the following statements:

1 *"Even if all the country commitments from the Paris Agreement are met, the latest data shows that by the end of the century the global climate is likely to be 3C above pre-industrial levels," Bedford said. "This is substantially higher than the Paris target to limit warming to less than 2C, and would have profound impacts affecting billions of people throughout the world."*

and

2 *"Here in the South Pacific, we are acutely aware of the risks of climate change and sea level rise to our Pacific Island neighbours and we urge all nations to take immediate action on climate change."*

The first statement is in conflict with Section 2, Section 3 and Section 6 of the Code of Ethics as indicated below in bold italics type:

2.1 Integrity and professionalism

1. A member must behave with integrity using their knowledge and skills in a professional manner so as to competently pursue their work.
2. Consistent with rule 2.1(1), a member must—
 - ***endeavour to obtain and present facts and interpretations in an objective and open manner; and***
 - strive to be fair and unbiased in all aspects of their research and in their application of their knowledge in science, technology, or the humanities; and
 - ***strive to enhance the reputation of their profession; and***
 - ***strive not to compromise the health, safety or welfare of the community or of colleagues and others directly associated with science, technology, or the humanities; and***

3.1 Honesty

- A member must conduct themselves honestly and with integrity at all times. This applies to dealings with clients, colleagues and the public as well as to ensuring personal integrity in the recording of data, the drawing of conclusions and in other professional actions.
- Consistent with rule 3.1.2(10), a member must—
- ***ensure that all speculative and interpretive statements in their reports are clearly identified as such.***

6.1 Respect for communities

3. A member must endeavour to make the results of their work as widely available to the public as possible and to present those results in an honest, straightforward and unbiased manner.
4. Consistent with rule 6.1(1), a member must—
 - endeavour to communicate the results of their work to the wider community without distortion arising from misleading or unjustified simplification or extrapolation; and
 - endeavour to ensure that all public statements are correct and supported by competent research and/or scholarship; and
 - ensure that all speculative and interpretative statements are identified as such; and
 - ***avoid attempting to influence public policy in situations where the available evidence is contradictory or inconclusive without making the state of that evidence clear; and***
 - support the publication and dissemination of all competent research even when the conclusions drawn by the authors are contrary to a member's own opinions or to the currently accepted consensus.

Claiming that "the latest data shows" is not correct. According to the Oxford English dictionary "data" means "Facts and statistics collected together for reference or analysis." The output of computer models fall into neither category.

A correct statement would be "the latest projections by the IPCC computer models project a temperature rise between about 1.5° and 3° by the end of the century." He could also have pointed out that the models have never been validated and have consistently failed to make accurate projections.

Section 3 shows that the uncertainties should have been made public. He is not in compliance with Section 6 a, b, c and f because his statements include unjustified simplification and extrapolation, he neglected to point out that, as the Royal Society has recently failed to provide convincing evidence that man-made greenhouse gases cause dangerous global warming, no

certainty can be attached to any statement regarding global warming. (Prof Bedford was aware of the fact that the Royal Society were unable to produce any convincing evidence that man-made greenhouse gases cause dangerous global warming.)

The second statement implies that "climate change" (dangerous man-made global warming) and sea level rise are hazards to Pacific Island nations and that they can be mitigated if all nations take immediate action.

This is simply not true. Prof Paul Kench of Auckland University has shown that most Pacific atolls are expanding in area. The accurate Australian government sea level gauges in the Pacific including at Tuvalu, show negligible sea level rise over the last 20 years. Also there is the undeniable fact that all these atolls survived the rapid rise in sea levels coming out of the last ice age – at up to 3m per century. Had these atolls not being able to cope with rapid sea level rise, atolls would not exist. They do exist, and this is undeniable proof that they can cope with rapid sea level rise. Hence Prof Bedford's statement is seriously misleading. (See below for records of the Tuvalu tide gauge and sea levels coming out of the ice age.)

We therefore contend that the second statement quoted above is in conflict with Clause 2.1 a and c, Clause 6.1 a, b and f.

We would also point out that the Pacific Islands do have real problems related to overpopulation, dynamiting of reefs, coral extraction from lagoons and building causeways between islands. By failing to point this out he has done a serious disservice to the unfortunate populations. If he had admitted that this is the case he and the Royal Society could have used their influence to promote actions that New Zealand and other countries could take to help the Pacific islanders overcome their real and serious problems. So we would also contend that his second statement is in breach of Clause 2.1 2 d.

To sum up, we believe that Prof Bedford's statement's are far more serious than those of the Chief Executive that we complained about because Prof Bedford was well aware that the Royal Society of New Zealand was unable to provide convincing evidence that man-made greenhouse gases caused dangerous global warming. Under these circumstances, a reasonable and ethical scientist would have made it clear that uncertainties existed and would have acted in the real interests of the Pacific Island populations.

Signed by:

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Tuvalu graph overleaf

