

# NZCPR Weekly

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NEW ZEALAND CENTRE FOR POLITICAL RESEARCH

## EXPOSING THE CLIMATE CHANGE AGENDA

By Muriel Newman

The climate change debate is forever shifting as science casts long shadows of doubt on the predictions of global catastrophe.

The debate gathered a world-wide audience when climate alarmists gained control of the climate science agenda. Its popularisation has given it a political momentum that is proving difficult to halt.

At first the alarmists tried to scare us with those exaggerated claims that man-made greenhouse gas emissions were causing the earth's temperature to rise. They said there was a direct causal relationship between industrialisation (and therefore CO2 emissions) and global temperatures, and that link was so serious that mankind would bring about its own demise if immediate action were not taken

These prophets of doom initially ignored the fact that while concentrations of man-made greenhouse gases have continued to rise, global temperatures stopped rising ten years ago. However, with the growing weight of scientific data now indicating the globe could be cooling, not warming, the alarmists are now talking of a 'climate change' crisis. They have broadened their rhetoric to accommodate all forms of extreme weather change - in order to hedge their bets!

When will these alarmists stop, you might well ask?

My answer is they won't. Those promoting the global warming cause will adapt their reasoning in whatever way is necessary to remain credible in the eyes of the public. Let's not forget there are powerful vested interests benefiting from global warming alarmism with vast profit opportunities and political reputations at stake. They will hang on as long as a gullible public allows them to.

And big money there is. All around the world, carbon offset schemes - many of extremely dubious quality - are growing like topsy. Companies like Al Gore's Generation Investment Management, which makes money from investing in "sustainable" businesses, now has \$5 billion in funds under management. The runaway success of his movie "An Inconvenient Truth" would have done the inflow of money into that fund no harm at all!

This global warming juggernaut, fuelled by United Nations propaganda and promoted by populist politicians who see "Green" issues as instrumental to their electoral success, will continue relentlessly until the public recognise that the ill-advised climate change policies that are being foisted on them will do nothing to change the climate, but will cost them dearly. Ironically these policies will have the greatest impact on the poorest in our community - those Labour and the Greens claim to protect and foster.

The reality is that the earth is constantly changing. While we are presently living in temperate times, throughout history the climate has been both many times hotter and many times colder than it is today. Claims that mankind is a significant enough force to change the earth's climate cycles are exaggerated: the largest proportion of the earth's surface - 71 percent - is controlled by ocean systems; a single volcanic eruption could dwarf all of mankind's emissions; and even our presence on earth is overstated when one considers that if every man, woman and child on the planet stood next to each other the whole human population could easily fit onto

an area the size of Stewart Island.

Professor Bob Carter, an environmental scientist at Queensland's James Cook University and this week's NZCPR Guest Commentator, is presently in New Zealand on a lecture tour. Professor Carter was called as an expert witness on climate change by the US Senate and by the UK High Court in the case which opposed the showing of Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" in British Schools (For more details see Politics in Schools on Trial, <http://www.nzcpr.com/weekly102.htm>). In his opinion piece "The IPCC: On the Run At Last", Bob explains how the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change used unrealistic scientific propaganda to stoke public alarm.

"The evidence for dangerous global warming adduced by the IPCC has never been strong on empirical science. Endless circumstantial scare campaigns have been run about melting glaciers, more droughts and storms and floods, sea-level rise and polar bears, but all founder on one inescapable problem - as does Mr. Al Gore's over-hyped science fiction film. And that is that we live on a naturally variable planet. Change is what planet Earth does on all scales, and so far not one of the alleged effects of human-caused global warming has been shown to lie outside normal planetary variation. Sea-level rising? Sure, it happens. And the appropriate response is adaptation, as the Dutch have known for centuries".

Professor Carter goes on to suggest, "The roughly 50 computer experts and scientists who form the core advisory group for the IPCC's stance must have realized for several years now that the game was up. There is indeed copious evidence that climate is changing, as it always has; and that natural biological and physico-chemical systems - again as always - are changing in response. But as to human causation the evidential cupboard is bare.

"For the last three years, satellite-measured average global temperature has been declining. Given the occurrence also of record low winter temperatures and massive snowfalls across both hemispheres this year, IPCC members have now entered panic mode, the whites of their eyes being clearly visible as they seek to defend their now unsustainable hypothesis of dangerous, human-caused global warming". To read the article and see details of Prof Carter's lecture tour see [www.nzcpr.com](http://www.nzcpr.com).

These issues are extremely important for New Zealand. On the basis of the IPCC's propaganda and the self-serving hype of Al Gore's convenient misrepresentations, as well as the UN's flawed Kyoto Protocol, our government is about to introduce a range of climate change policies that are not only totally unnecessary, but will cause huge damage to our economy and our livelihoods. On the agenda is the introduction of the mandatory use of biofuels, an emissions trading scheme, and a 10-year ban on the building of new base-load thermal power stations. These are all radical policies that will put New Zealand out on a limb. No other government is planning to introduce such harsh initiatives which will pass such massive costs onto businesses and ultimately consumers.

In signing up to Kyoto, Labour made a commitment that New Zealand would emit no more than 1990 levels of greenhouse gases during the period from 2008 to 2012 and that credits would be

bought for any emissions over this amount. At the time Labour claimed that the deal would result in \$500 million gain for the government. But their calculation turned out to be wrong and on current Treasury estimates, that windfall gain has become a massive \$963 million liability. In a report "How should we pay for our Kyoto liability", Business NZ explains that the government is rushing through its climate change policies in order to ensure that the cost of its political decision to sign up to the Kyoto Protocol is passed onto the public.

Business NZ believes that since the government planned to pocket the \$500 million windfall gain from Kyoto, so it should be required to pay the liability out of the consolidated account - instead of trying to force the cost of that political miscalculation onto the productive sector.

In Canada in 2006 the Conservative Party won the election on a platform which included scrapping the Kyoto Protocol. They said the cost to the country of Kyoto commitments was too high.

That is still an option for New Zealand. The Kyoto Protocol came into force on 16 February 2005, but under Article 27, any country can withdraw after three years of it coming into force. This means as from 16 February 2008 New Zealand is free to withdraw without any penalties.

In their paper, Business NZ makes a further point about the cost of the Kyoto liability. They estimate that by transferring the cost from the state onto the private sector, the total liability to New Zealand will increase seven-fold, because the private sector does not have the international purchasing power of a government. That means that the government will be responsible for the effective loss of several billion dollars from our economy.

There is some hope. Forces against the Government's radical agenda are now slowly starting to rally. On Thursday New Zealand's Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Jan Wright, told Parliament's Environment Select Committee that the Biofuel Bill is flawed and should be scrapped.

The Bill imposes a mandatory regime for the introduction of biofuel blends. Under the Bill, from July, land transport fuels must contain 0.53 percent of biofuels rising to 3.4 percent by 2012. But the problem is that the use of biofuels is now threatening world food production. Crops, traditionally grown for food supplies are being converted into biofuel production causing food riots in Mexico, Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt, Africa and the Philippines. The World Bank has estimated that more than 30 countries around the world face potential social unrest because of food shortages.

The biofuel craze has also sparked mass de-forestation,

with rain forests in Central and South America being razed to make way for biofuel production. This has brought a strong reaction from the British Government's chief science advisor who stated "The idea that you cut down rainforest to grow biofuels seems profoundly stupid". The British Government's top environmental scientist agreed, calling the policy "totally insane". Meanwhile the German Government scrapped their biofuel policy when they realised that older cars would have trouble running on the biofuel blend, forcing poorer car owners to buy more the more expensive fuel option.

The Emissions Trading Bill that is currently being rushed through the Select Committee process will expose New Zealand businesses to the most costly carbon trading scheme in the world. The scheme, which has been hastily put together and is totally untested, will fully expose New Zealand businesses to the volatile world price of carbon. A survey carried out by the Greenhouse Policy Coalition of 41 firms across a range of sectors indicates that the increase in costs from the Bill will put at risk 3000 existing jobs and 700 new jobs. With every tonne of carbon having to face the full international price of carbon some \$1.6 billion of new investment will no longer go ahead if the Bill is passed.

With huge concerns also being raised over the security of New Zealand's future electricity supplies and the excessive power price rises being predicted as a result of the moratorium on new thermal power generation contained in the Bill, the government's claims that its climate change programme will have a minimal impact on the country is patently false.

The timing of these onerous climate change measures could not be worse. Helen Clark is about to sign a free trade agreement with China, a country that has no intention of signing up to Kyoto or imposing emission controls on industry. That will put New Zealand businesses, trying to compete with low cost imported goods, at an even greater disadvantage. The most sensible move for a New Zealand Government would be to follow the lead of Canada and serve notice of our intention to withdraw from Kyoto on the basis that the cost to New Zealand is too high and the effects on the climate non-existent.

**This week's poll asks:** Do you think New Zealand should follow the lead of Canada and withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol?(The result will be sent to the Leaders of all the Parliamentary Parties.)

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