

# FINANCIAL POST

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## Climate policy bust

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The Copenhagen meeting in December from which a successor to Kyoto was meant to emerge will obviously be a bust. The G20 has at last caught on that the global economy doesn't really need another policy shock right now. Rich nations are reluctant to ship more billions to corruptly-governed poor nations under the cover of "green development." China and India -- rightly -- aren't going to curtail their growth in order to cater to the self-serving nightmares of would-be global governors.

Desperation was obvious last week in the appearance of yet another hysterical report from the UN. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon wailed that, "The science has become more irrevocable than ever: climate change is happening. The evidence is all around us. And unless we act, we will see catastrophic consequences, including rising sea-levels, droughts and famine, and the loss of up to a third of the world's plant and animal species."

Ho hum. More irrevocable? In fact, the science is falling apart faster than the policy. Evidence is appearing not merely of major flaws in the computer models on which apocalyptic scenarios are based, but of blunders in the numbers behind the history of global temperatures.

The most obvious problem for warmists is that there has been no warming this millennium, and possibly since 1997, depending on which data you use. They have been scrambling to suggest that there was always a possibility of a period of stable temperatures, but that was never their message before. It was always: Act now or fry! And now some scientists say there's a possibility of continued temperature stability for up to another two decades. That makes global warming hard to sell as a policy emergency.

Meanwhile the case against drastic action goes well beyond finding holes in the science. There also appears to be chicanery afoot, and not for the first time.

There have been several glaring examples of the IPCC's politicization, including its officials making public statements -- for example, about hurricane severity -- that they knew contradicted their experts. There was also that famous e-mail from a senior IPCC researcher to someone he thought was a Fellow Traveller saying that the "Medieval Warm Period" -- when the Vikings were farming Greenland-- was an inconvenient truth that had somehow to be dispensed with because it ruined the iconic "hockey stick."

The hockey stick was once the IPCC's poster graph. It showed global temperatures ostensibly steady for nine hundred years then swooshing upwards in the past century. The assumptions behind the graph had already been severely undermined by Canadian researchers Stephen McIntyre and Ross McKittrick,

whose findings were supported by a U.S. Congressional inquiry. But now come revelations that the IPCC's hockey stick researchers may also have cherry picked data to produce the required results.

This follows hard on the astonishing story that key global temperature data had been "lost" by the Climatic Research Unit at the British University of East Anglia, which supplies the IPCC. For years the CRU had refused to release data. Indeed, four years ago CRU researcher Phil Jones responded to a request with the immortal words: "Why should I make the data available to you, when your aim is to try and find something wrong with it?"

Now it can't be made public because it's gone missing -- or, as climatologist Patrick Michaels suggested in an article in the National Review, "the dog ate global warming."

True scientists make data available precisely so that it can be rigorously tested to see if it fits their hypotheses. However, this issue has been buried under claims that IPCC studies are "peer reviewed" and thus beyond reproach.

In fact, the peers in question may sometimes, if not often, be committed to a political position rather than a scientific hypothesis. These issues need a thorough airing, but are unlikely to get it from the IPCC.

Meanwhile most people are not even aware that there is any scientific debate. Much of the above will come as news to many readers who rely upon mainstream media True Believers who simply ignore what is inconvenient, or perhaps are not even aware of it.

A typical example appeared in a column last Friday by the Globe and Mail's veteran Jeffrey Simpson, who sounded remarkably like Ban Ki-moon: "The world faces its greatest tragedy of the commons with the warming of the planet's atmosphere that is overwhelmingly caused by human activities...Crank scientists and their dwindling band of supporters contest this warming, but the overwhelming majority of scientists have declared it to be a fact. Indeed, the latest scientific evidence suggests an acceleration of warming trends."

But the latest scientific evidence shows that the warming has stopped -- for whatever reason. "You might think," he concludes, "that for a country bathing in its own moral superiority, believing 'the world needs more Canada,' this record would be a source of national shame, such that citizens would demand the government take a leading role in reversing the domestic record while urging the world to do much more to reverse the ominous trends."

But then you might also wonder why journalists bathing in their own moral superiority seem incapable of understanding why citizens are skeptical of UN science, and reluctant to beg to be put out of work.

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