

WHICH PART OF THIS SCIENTIFIC PAPER DID GOVERNMENT ADVISERS NOT READ/UNDERSTAND?

IT HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN IGNORED, AS IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN JUNE 2007

(key points emphasized by me, to make for quick reading)

<http://www.co2science.org/scripts/CO2ScienceB2C/education/reports/hansen/hansencritique.jsp>

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A critique of the 26 April 2007 testimony of James E. Hansen made to the Select Committee of Energy Independence and Global Warming of the United States House of Representatives entitled "Dangerous Human-Made Interference with Climate"

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Introductory Remarks

If there is any human enterprise that should be free of appeal to authority, it is science, where observation and impartial analysis are supposed to reign supreme. However, when the outcome of an ongoing scientific investigation is perceived to be a powerful catalyst for governmental action by the world's community of nations, and when the leading policy prescription for those actions is something akin to a massive restructuring of the way the energy that runs the modern world is produced, distributed and used - and especially if the policy is developed before all pertinent data have been acquired and properly analyzed - this principle can easily be forgotten. In such circumstances, and even more so if the subject being studied is extremely complex - such as how human activity will impact global climate centuries into the future - and when a divergence of views develops because of ambiguities in the observations and different methods of analysis, **it is important that *personal opinion* be clearly differentiated from *demonstrable fact***. Sadly, however, this distinction is hard to make on a consistent basis, even for some of the very best of the world's scientists.

Summary

After a careful study of the claims made by James Hansen in his testimony of 26 April 2007 to the Select Committee of Energy Independence and Global Warming of the US House of Representatives, **we find that much of what he contends is contradicted by real-world observations.**

Although Hansen speaks of a sea level rise *this century* measured in *meters*, due to "the likely demise of the West Antarctic ice sheet," the most recent and comprehensive review of potential sea level rise due to contributions arising from the wastage of both the Antarctic *and* Greenland ice sheets suggests a century-long rise of only 35 *millimeters*, based on the results of 14 satellite-derived estimates of imbalances of the polar ice sheets that have been obtained since 1998. In addition, **whereas Hansen claims that the rate of sea level rise is *accelerating*, century-scale data sets indicate that the mean rate-of-rise of the global ocean has either *not accelerated at all over the latter part of the 20th century* or has actually *slowed*.**

Another of Hansen's claims that is at odds with reality is that atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations are "skyrocketing," for several studies of *methane* (which has historically provided a climate forcing equivalent to approximately half that provided by CO₂) have demonstrated that its atmospheric concentration actually *stabilized* several years ago and has *ceased to rise further*. This development - which was totally unanticipated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change at the time of its last major report, and which was vehemently denied to even be occurring when it was first observed - effectively repudiates Hansen's contentions about the need to act immediately to curtail anthropogenic CO₂ emissions, for this unforeseen circumstance has *already* done more than humanity could ever hope to do in the foreseeable future in terms of reducing the atmosphere's radiative impetus for warming; and it has thereby given us considerable extra time to determine what the true status of earth's climate really is, as well as what we should, or should not, do about it.

So what *is* the "true status" of earth's climate? It is perhaps best understood by noting that the earth is not any warmer now - and is possibly a fair amount *cooler* - than it was at many other times in the past. These warmer-than-present periods include much of the Medieval Warm Period of a thousand years ago, most of the Climatic Optimum that held sway during the central portion of the current interglacial, and significant portions of all four of the prior interglacials, when - in all six cases - the air's CO₂ concentration was *much* lower than it is today.

Why are these facts important? They are important because they demonstrate that **today's temperatures are not in any way unusual, unnatural or unprecedented, contrary to what Hansen claims.** In fact, today's temperatures are just what should be expected, as a result of the *natural* (non-CO₂-induced) recovery of the planet from the global chill of the several-hundred-year-long Little Ice Age, which in many parts of the world was *the coldest period of the current interglacial*, and which was definitely *not* caused by a decline in atmospheric CO₂ concentration in the centuries that preceded it, *because there was no CO₂ decline then*, which further implies that a *reversal* of whatever *did* cause the Little Ice Age is likely what has led to its demise and the subsequent increase in mean global air temperature.

Hansen also foresees a warming-induced "extermination of a large fraction of plant and animal species," with many at high latitudes and altitudes being "pushed off the planet." However, as demonstrated by the scientific studies we cite, *warming* - especially when accompanied by an increase in the atmosphere's CO₂ concentration - typically results in an *expansion* of the ranges of terrestrial plants and animals, leading to increases in biodiversity almost everywhere on the planet. Likewise, **where Hansen sees nothing but "destruction of coral reefs and other ocean life" in response to a predicted CO₂-induced acidification of the world's oceans, real-world observations suggest just the opposite.**

One thing that Hansen does not foresee, however, is the shortfall in food production that may exist just a few short decades from now. Even considering hoped-for advancements in agricultural expertise and anticipated improvements in farming techniques, a number of knowledgeable **scientists project there will be insufficient food to support the human population of the planet expected in the year 2050, unless humanity usurps all of the earth's remaining freshwater resources, as well as a good proportion of its cultivatable land, merely to grow what we will need to sustain ourselves at that point in time.** These actions, if taken, will drastically reduce the amount of natural habitat available for the many plant and animal species with which we share the planet, insuring the extinctions of vast numbers of them, **unless** the air's CO₂ content continues to rise, so that the *crop productivity enhancement* provided by CO₂'s *aerial fertilization effect*, along with the *increase in crop water use efficiency* provided by its *anti-transpiration effect*, can obviate the need for the land and water takings that will otherwise be required to meet the predicted shortfall in agricultural production.

In light of these several observations, it is clear there is another whole side to the CO₂-climate issue in addition to the one described by Hansen; and the things that Hansen ignores *totally alter* the way the issue must be approached for a successful resolution of the multiple dilemmas confronting us. No longer can the actions that Hansen proposes be described as constituting a *no-regrets insurance policy*, as the world's climate alarmists typically characterize them. **There are "regrets" associated with these policy proposals, and they may be even more horrific than the catastrophes imagined by Hansen.** Consequently, it can be appreciated that the donning of the "cloak of morality" is not as easily accomplished in the *real world of nature* as it is in **the virtual world of climate modeling, which continues to ignore many of the non-climatic effects of atmospheric CO₂ enrichment** to - we believe - the detriment of humanity and nature alike.

Conclusion

As a result of our analysis of Hansen's testimony, we find very little evidence to justify his policy prescriptions for dealing with what he calls a "dangerous climate change," but we find significant evidence for an impending world food supply-and-demand problem that may well prove even *more* devastating to the biosphere - including both humanity and "wild nature" - than what Hansen contends will occur in response to business-as-usual anthropogenic CO₂ emissions.

A complication introduced by this more recently recognized problem is that its solution would appear to involve our *not* allowing human-induced CO₂ emissions to be restricted,

which is just the *opposite* of what Hansen's policy prescriptions encourage. Clearly, the several interrelated aspects of this many-faceted conundrum demonstrate that it is **vastly more complex than how Hansen has characterized** it in his testimony and, therefore, that **its solution is likely not to be found in the policies he prescribes.**

The full article, with clearly defined scientific scrutiny as well as five pages of references is available online at the address mentioned above. Please read it and inform yourselves.

SINCE WHEN DO COMPUTER GAMES TAKE PREFERENCE OVER REAL SCIENCE?