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Global warming may require higher dams, stilts

BY SETH BORENSTEIN, AP SCIENCE WRITER THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2009 AT 11:57 A.M.

With the world losing the battle against global warming so far, experts are warning that humans need to follow nature's example: Adapt or die.

That means elevating buildings, making taller and stronger dams and seawalls, rerouting water systems, restricting certain developments, changing farming practices and ultimately moving people, plants and animals out of harm's way.

Adapting to rising seas and higher temperatures is expected to be a big topic at the U.N. climate-change talks in Copenhagen next week, along with the projected cost - hundreds of billions of dollars, much of it going to countries that cannot afford it.

That adaptation will be a major focus is remarkable in itself. Until the past couple of years, experts avoided talking about adjusting to global warming for fear of sounding fatalistic or causing countries to back off efforts to reduce emissions.

"It's something that's been neglected, hasn't been talked about and it's something the world will have to do," said Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "Adaptation is going to be absolutely crucial for some societies."

Some biologists point to how nature has handled the changing climate. The rare Adonis blue butterfly of Britain looked as if it was going to disappear because it couldn't fly far and global warming was making its habitat unbearable. To biologists' surprise, it evolved longer thoraxes and wings, allowing it to fly farther to cooler locales.

"Society needs to be changing as much as wildlife is changing," said University of Texas at Austin biologist Camille Parmesan, an expert on how species change with global warming.

One difficulty is that climate change is happening rapidly.

"Adaptation will be particularly challenging because the rate of change is escalating and is moving outside the range to which society has adapted in the past" when more natural climate changes happened, U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



FILE- In this file photo taken Monday, June 23, 2008, floodwater from the Mississippi River surrounds a small shed behind a house in Foley, Mo. With the world losing the battle against global warming so far, experts say humans need to do what nature does: Adapt or die. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson, File)

Preparing for eventual change

Cities, states and countries around the world are starting to adapt to climate change or at least talking about it and setting aside money for the looming modifications.



Selection of climate adaptations or plans

- 1. Boston raised a sewage plant to keep it from being flooded when sea levels rise. New York is looking at similar plans. 2. England is strengthening the Thames river flood control barrier which is costing about half a billion dollars. 3. The World Bank is accessing ways for Africa to conserve water due to increasing drought conditions because of higher temperatures. 4. Bangladesh, a poor country, is spending more than \$50 million on adaptation and will include ways to fend off rising sea levels. 5. Singapore plans to reduce its flood-prone areas in half by 2011. It plans to build a \$326 million dam in the effort. 6. In 2007, the Australian government announced it will provide \$126 million to establish the Australian Center for Climate Change and Adaptation.

SOURCES: World Bank, Australian Government

Graphic shows a selection of climate adaptations due to global warming



FILE - In this Jan. 11, 2006 file photo, American and Dutch politicians visit the Maeslant Barrier gates near Hoek van Holland, Netherlands.

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chief Jane Lubchenco, a marine biologist, told Congress on Wednesday.

Cities, states and countries are scrambling to adapt or are at least talking about it and setting aside money for it. Some examples:

- England is strengthening the Thames River flood control barrier at a cost of around half a billion dollars.
- The Netherlands is making its crucial flood control system stronger.
- California is redesigning the gates that move water around the agriculturally vital Sacramento River Delta so that they can work when the sea level rises dramatically there.
- Boston elevated a sewage treatment plant to keep it from being flooded when sea level rises. New York City is looking at similar maneuvers for water plants.
- Chicago has a program to promote rooftop vegetation and reflective roofs that absorb less heat. That could keep the temperature down and ease heat waves.
- Engineers are installing "thermal siphons" along the oil pipeline in Alaska, which is built on permafrost that is thawing, to draw heat away from the ground.
- Researchers are uprooting moisture-loving trees along British Columbia's coastal rainforests and dropping their seedlings in the dry ponderosa pine forests of Idaho, where they are more likely to survive.
- Singapore plans to cut its flood-prone areas in half by 2011 by widening and deepening drains and canals and completing a \$226 million dam at the mouth of the city's main river.
- In Thailand, there are large-scale efforts to protect places from rising sea levels. Monks at one temple outside Bangkok had to raise the floor by more than 3 feet.
- Desperately poor Bangladesh is spending more than \$50 million on adaptation. It is trying to fend off the sea with flood control and buildings on stilts.

President Barack Obama and Congress are talking about \$1.2 billion a year from the U.S. for international climate aid, which includes adaptation. The U.N. climate chief, Yvo de Boer, said \$10 billion to \$12 billion a year is needed from developed countries through 2012 to "kick-start" things. Then it will get even more expensive.

The World Bank estimates adaptation costs will total \$75 billion to \$100 billion a year over the next 40 years. The International Institute for Environment and Development, a London think tank, says that number is too low.

It may even be \$200 billion a year or \$300 billion a year, said Chris Hope, a business school professor at the University of Cambridge and part of the IIED study.

Nevertheless, Hope said failing to adapt would be even more expensive - perhaps \$6 trillion a year on average over the next 200 years. Adaptation could cut that by about \$2 trillion a year, he said.

As much as three-quarters of the spending will be needed in the developing world, experts say.

"Those are not the countries that caused the problem," Hope said. "There's a pretty strong moral case for us giving them assistance for the impacts that we've largely caused."

Sending money from rich countries to poor ones raises questions of who will control the spending and whether it will be wasted or stolen.

As for helping plants and animals, British climate scientist Martin Parry said the world will have to create a triage system to figure out which living things can be saved, which can't and are effectively goners, and which don't need immediate help.

"It's a brutal way to go about things," Parry said.

And what about people?

Some islands, such as the Maldives, and some coastal cities will not be able to survive rising seas no matter what protections are put in place, said Saleemul Huq, a senior fellow at IIED who runs an adaptation center in Bangladesh. In those cases, he said, the world will need "planned relocation" of people and cities.

Parmesan said people are going to have to realize that "some areas are not going to be good enough to live in in the next 100 years."

Associated Press writers Michael Casey in Bangkok, Alex Kennedy in Singapore, and Minh Tran in Hanoi, Vietnam, contributed to this report.

On the Net

International Institute for Environment and Development report on costs of adaptation:
<http://tinyurl.com/iiedadapt>

United Nations climate change convention adaptation site: <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/items/4159.php>

U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration adaptation site: <http://tinyurl.com/noaadapt>

California adaptation strategy: <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/>

Holland, Netherlands to study flood prevention techniques. With the world losing the battle against global warming so far, experts are turning to nature about what to do next: Adapt or die. (AP Photo/Bas Czerwinski, File)

(This version CORRECTS that Parmesan is at University of Texas, not Texas A&M.)

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junkmanfoxx 12/07/2009 08:57 AM

Since the ocean has not risen at all and the data does not support warming, this is a totally stupid article. 1 person liked this comment.

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bbagot 12/05/2009 09:01 PM

Obama's response to the falsification of data to support Global Warming:

Nothing... absolutely nothing. Don't mention it, and, similar to this UT article, simply pretend like it doesn't exist and that actually data is not necessary to show global warming. 2 people liked this comment.

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BmrSnr 12/04/2009 07:58 AM

Last week John Coleman posed this question at the end of his broadcast. "How many states have set record high temps since 1980?"

Answer choices: 40, 26, 20, 6.

The answer was 6. Six states have set record high temps since 1980! 1 person liked this comment.

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JohnWayne 12/04/2009 07:55 AM

This hysteria is nothing more than the same rouse provided by Clinton and company over the Y2K deal only on a global level. I have to give credit to Fat Al for a tremendous sell job...he and his relations are going to be very wealthy for generations to come. Don't be surprised to see this elite have a son or daughter in the political mix in the future. The aristocracy is back myfriends. As they take more control of your life through government programs the wealth they accumulate off of our backs goes right in to the family kitty to keep the aristocracy in place.

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sd_blarney 12/04/2009 07:16 AM

note to self: buy stock in stilt-building company asap.

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South40 12/04/2009 12:58 AM

Big Apple's Cold Summer - It and Many Other Cities Ranking Among Coldest Ever (2009)

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/big_app...

2 people liked this comment.

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morealitylessemotion 12/04/2009 12:33 AM

now that everybody agrees...

<http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseActi...>

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Obamafacation 12/03/2009 11:23 PM

Has the UT no shame. Where have all the journalists gone?

NASA hiding climate data"

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/dec/03...>

While arnold pimps the latest GW hysteria:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/artic...>

And snow comes to Texas:

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/metropolita...>

I half expect to see snake oil ads running on the UT web page.

3 people liked this comment.

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bbagot 12/05/2009 08:57 PM

I didn't know that NASA was stonewalling and breaking the law as well.

It could certainly be damaging to them if it turns out they applied the same "science" as England and decided to make their data show 1998 and 2006 were the hottest years -- and not 1934 as they previously reported and then changed.

How tough is it to supply the raw data? How is it "good science" to suppress that? Anyone in high school doing an experiment and drawing conclusions while not showing their data would be given an "F".

1 person liked this comment.

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victhedoc 12/03/2009 11:00 PM

You do know the seas have been rasing and falling for billions of years.Just leave it to the ego of a liberal to figure its are fault.Or maybe that are job in nature, maybe we are suppose to destroy planet.So everything can start over like the planet has done so many times in the passed.So maybe just maybe all you tree huggers are interfering with nature.Now stop it or I'm going to tell Al Gore.You have been warned:))

1 person liked this comment.

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victhedoc 12/03/2009 10:42 PM

Beach front houses for sale in El Cajon, buy now and just wait for the ocean to come to you.

1 person liked this comment.

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calguy 12/03/2009 09:38 PM

I say every man for himself, survival of the fittest, like nature does.

1 person liked this comment.

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byebush 12/03/2009 09:20 PM

I remember how many people said the same things as those below about the ignorant moneygrubbing envirokooks warning about the loss of wetlands in the Mississippi Delta and how it might make New Orleans vulnerable to a hurricane... or about ignorant moneygrubbing energykooks in the 70s warning that sooner or later dependence on oil would lead to Mideast wars.... or about those ignorant moneygrubbing healthfreaks warning that cigarettes were additive... or harmful... or that the cig companies knew it all along.... etc etc etc. Well, nature's reality will bite soon enough; hopefully the comments of doubters below will be preserved eternally as a monument to wishful thinking leading to folly.

2 people liked this comment.

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GetBackInTheCloset 12/03/2009 10:20 PM

Comment removed.



byebush 12/04/2009 02:17 AM

You are making one critical assumption- that the science presented in business school classes is solid. I would contend that business schools are possibly one of the worst possible places to get accurate information on matters scientific. It would be the folks trained in biz schools and their messed up facts and flawed mathematical models that just about drove the train off the tracks just last fall. So, no surprise you got a bum steer there.

At my undergrad school (graduated 1979 so same time period), we started with 122 in chemistry curriculum and finished with 23- 6 of whom had perfect SAT scores (not me, unfortunately). The first to flunk out the curriculum then progressed through increasingly softer sciences until many ended up in the prebusiness curriculum where they were superstars. One of their greatest weaknesses was the ability to critically evaluate statistics.

Let's see- might you fit this mold? Let's take your projection about square meter of land per person. The US has a land mass of about 9.6 million square km, which is 9.6 trillion square meters. The population of the entire world in 1980 was 4.5 billion people and that of the US was about 230 million. Hmm, without even resorting to advanced math one can figure out that the population of the world would have to double every two years for your statement to have any chance of being true. And, if one looks at only the population of the US, it would have to double every 1.5 years. Either way that would mean that every female would have to be continuously pregnant for 20 years regardless of age and that no one could die to make even those numbers. And you believed them??? OK I'm getting the picture now- no one I knew believed this- and I'm wondering of the people who did, which side of the global warming argument they are on now? They certainly weren't credible scientists back then.

OK silicone implants I will give you- that's one. I guess a 6 billion dollar settlement and ~3000 deaths per year isn't dire enough to be catastrophic- give you 1/2 on that one. So, you are 1.5 for 4, or 1.5 for 9 if you add in my examples. Now in biz school you must have worked out how to calculate risk-adjusted rates of return....

OK let's trot out some more: "we will be greeted as liberators", "the Iraq war will cost 60 billion tops", "people who warn of a housing bubble are alarmist- prices always go up", "seatbelts won't save lives and will make cars prohibitively expensive", "gas prices can stay low essentially forever", "overfishing is a myth", etc etc etc. Yeah, we should listen to those biz school grads....BTW, if you knew they were teaching you nonsense, why didn't you leave and get trained somewhere where you knew they were telling you the truth?

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Ivar 12/05/2009 05:34 PM

Maybe you could explain to me how my smoking a cigarette outdoors can harm a non-smoker, assuming I'm not literally blowing the smoke in his face.

I think you'll need to calculate the volume of the earth's atmosphere in cubic miles (or kilometers if you prefer) and then analyze how the smoke disperses and the percentage of the atmosphere that it takes up.

Anyway, we now have "scientists" from our own California State Department of Public Health who have classified cigarette smoke as a major carcinogenic air pollutant.

It would be interesting to know what percentage of total human-caused air pollution is caused by cigarette smoke, and what amount of cigarette smoke (in terms of a toxicity analysis that analyzes parts per million) in the atmosphere would be needed to harm or kill non-smokers.

I would also be interested in knowing how outdoor cigarette smoke as a cause of cancer in non-smokers can be isolated from all the other possible causes of cancer by other pollutants, by diet, by exposure to chemicals, and by genetic predisposition.

I think my point should be clear.

Scientists have lost credibility.

So just telling us how great you are at science isn't going to impress me -- and shouldn't impress anyone else.

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bybyebush 12/05/2009 10:22 PM

One other point to add to my reply below (and I am doing it this way to ensure it reaches your Email). Let me remind you that after all is said and done, neither you nor Baja have been willing to debate by standard rules of evidence and logic the original premise of the article that started this string. This has less to do with who is scientifically literate and who is not- it's more about who is willing to stand and argue a position properly and who is only comfortable to divert and allege or attempt to argue in an elliptical way. So, I repeat the challenge to you that I made to Baja- state your concrete evidence that global warming is not happening and we can begin. I guarantee you the fun will be all mine- one of the reasons I will enjoy it is that by seeing how your mind works (or rather doesn't) in territory I am able to negotiate with ease, I can see how best to expose the weaknesses in your assertions on the many other subjects you are fond of holding forth. This will be the Rosette Stone for me in terms of calling you out forever more in this forum, so please by all means begin! BTW Baja I'm still waiting!!!

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"So, I repeat the challenge to you that I made to Baja- state your concrete evidence that global warming is not happening and we can begin."

I except your challenge. I would love to prove global warming isn't ...er I mean climate change isn't caused by man as soon as your beloved group of scientists release their data to the rest of the world. Don't you watch the news? ???

Nobody outside the IPCC can verify ANY of their findings or predictions. NASA has refused to release their data after 2 yrs of people trying. Nor have they EVER released their data showing how they achieve their spectacular climate model simulations.

Please explain why the worlds leading authority on climate change is hiding behind the Freedom of Information ACT???

How about YOU prove global warming is happening?

1 person liked this comment.

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Hi doomed- Acually I didn't watch the news tonight- power went out about 4:15 and only recently came back on. I managed to deal with one of lvar's postings before that and have one more of his below to deal with before I get to you, but I will- probably tomorrow evening since I am now behind with some things. In the meantime, I will point out the following:

- 1) I stated the terms of my challenge- and in my response to lvar I will outline why I choose to issue it that way. The short version is that there are so many independent lines of evidence in support of global warming as real that it is more efficient to work on the points of contention. The second is that we already know what kinds of dendritic dilutive argument come from the model you propose and so I'm interested in trying something different in hopes it can be somewhat more conclusive.
- 2) There have been a lot of folks trying to cook books about this, some from both sides. On your side you can count the previous administration which forced scientists to rewrite reports to downplay it, and outright blocked the release of reports until court orders recently undid it. Forget about that, conveniently? Care to explain why the records of Cheney's conversations with the energy companies still aren't public? They may be germane... Once I get caught up I will post the link to a 1.5 hour video from Feb of this year where Republican strategists go through a description of many of the things we are seeing now-what I really love in that report is about at the 30 minute point where the fellow who ran McCain's campaign bemoans how the cooking of the books on climate by Bush hurt Repub's chances in the election. Not explicit proof that they did, (I grant you that), but highly leading testimony. Like I said, I will post probably tomorrow evening.
- 3) The data in support of global warming comes from many agencies around the world. There is plenty of data in the public domain already to adequately debate the matter.
- 4) Your arguments are already misfocussed- my premise is that global warming is happening and people are part of the problem- verbatim. That is a statement that does not focus on forward models (because one in fact can quibble with them). That's why I purposely focussed on the stuff where the data already exist- no projections or smoke blowing from either side. And, immediately, what do you choose to comment on? Exactly the stuff that's unprovable until time passes. So, let's get right to the meat- looking at public, available data, what actual data (not hearsay, not "such and so won't talk about blahblahblah" junior high school argument) convinces you warming isn't happening?

Those are my terms as originally stated, and as I also stated, I will explain tomorrow the reasons why- you can read lvar's ramblings as a foreshadowing.

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Ivar 12/06/2009 02:08 PM

The standard rules of logic and evidence require that someone making a positive empirical claim -- e.g., "Human activity has caused significant global warming, and that warming is catastrophic and can and must be reversed" -- provide sufficient evidence in support of that claim to convince others to accept it as true.

The evidence of global warming in the sense described above has not been provided.

Go to youtube and search for Richard Lindzen of MIT. That would be a good place to start.

Argue with Professor Lindzen, not with me. But feel free to tell me how "wrong" he is -- lol.

I get especially suspicious when people say that the scientific facts are "irrefutable" or that the time for questioning is over. Sorry, that's not the way science works. The only irrefutable facts are mathematical and logical facts that tell us nothing about the empirical world because they are based on "if...then" statements. A scientific claim about the empirical world is always in danger of being refuted, and the best scientists actively try to overthrow their own theories, not tell people who question them to shut up.

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byebush 12/06/2009 05:52 PM

You're super-funny, Ivar- The arguments about global warming are all statistically based. The rules of statistical argument are that the experiment must be designed to disprove the null hypothesis and conclusive failure to disprove the null hypothesis proves the opposite. So, you don't know the first thing about statistics- you must be confusing it with politics. Here's a link on the null hypothesis.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Null_hypothesis

Hint- it might be a good idea for you to read up on this carefully since one or two rounds from now I will revisit this subject, much to your dismay.

So, to go to something that might resonate with your level of thinking a little better, here's a link to a fellow who attempted to negotiate a wager with your expert on future temperatures.

<http://www.jamstec.go.jp/frgcr/research/d5/jdan...>

The fact that this took place is widely reported and not disputed by either parties.

It's also not in dispute that Lindzen believes that global temperatures have in fact increased in the last Century- he has written so.

<http://meteo.lcd.lu/globalwarming/Lindzen/canad...> So, if that fellow is

what you are going to claim as you proof, in your terms, then I have proven the first part of my two part statement- exactly as I stated it- the earth is warming. So easy- thanks!

As for the second part, your expert contends that although the earth is warming and although the levels of greenhouse gases could be responsible, he is a) not sure of the magnitude of the effect and b) whether if that is in fact the case, whether the Kyoto protocol would alter things enough to help.

He presents no data on the latter point, merely states he is sceptical. That's not really helpful unless you have specifically the data he is citing counter to the point. Of course there are also many equally qualified scientist who do believe the data is good enough- and then we can get into the whole numbers game- I have gone there before and it runs something like 95% to 5% for people versed in the field- actually better than the number who believe in evolution or that mad cow disease is caused by prions. BTW there is still one prominent scientist who does not believe AIDS is caused by HIV. Doesn't make it not so.

Your statement about "the only irrefutable facts are mathematical and logical ones that tell us nothing about the empirical world" is laughable to it's core. Almost all useful science has been rooted in and tested against observations of empirical results- from the existence of oxygen to the electromagnetic effect to the theory of relativity (in part tested by astronomical observations of light bending due the sun's gravity warping space-time). You're simply and totally wrong on this.

Finally you are simply and totally wrong about asserting that anyone should shut up. Read again my posts- I am explicitly asking you to actively debate- the exact opposite! That is exactly what the scientific method entails- if someone says they disagree, the first thing one does is ask them for their data and their rationale! Do you know anything about science at all?

BTW at this point I have provided about 8-10 links to what I say (including stuff from the fellow you cited which proves part of my point- maybe that is

why you refused to post any links at all....?????)

Last BTW- in science, it's simply not enough to hide behind the assertions of someone else, if for no other reason than that the opponent can do the same which leads nowhere.

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Ivar 12/07/2009 01:22 PM

Sorry, the rules of logic determine everything else, including the proper use of statistics.

The burden of proof lies with the claimant, not the person questioning the claim. The science of statistics doesn't alter that rule.

I don't believe that guy who says Lindzen would only bet with him if Lindzen got fifty times as much if Lindzen won as his opponent would get if his opponent won. I'd like to hear Lindzen's side of that story, which you don't provide. Anyone can accuse anyone else of anything. So what? Character assassination does appear to be a part of the global warming alarmists' armamentarium. In this case, it's a very childish attempt at character assassination.

I also don't buy your claims that Lindzen has failed as a scientist by not presenting his data, etc. Lindzen is a professor at MIT. Who the heck are you?

Contrary to what you say about what Lindzen wrote in your link, he does NOT say that the earth's temperature is warming. He only says that the very limited evidence we have indicates that it is warmer than it was a little over a century ago. Big whoop. He then talks about the medieval warm period that global warming alarmists somehow never get into their hockey sticks. He also criticizes the computer models used to forecast climate change and says we simply don't know enough about all the variables and how they interact. In addition, and very damningly, he notes that the IPCC report as a whole does NOT establish a scientific consensus on climate change. Furthermore, he has the backing of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences in making this claim. You need to read his article again, and more carefully.

You've actually done a pretty good job of refuting your own claims by linking to the Lindzen article. It reveals the lack of scientific consensus that the global warming alarmists (including you) claim that they possess. Now it appears that a lot of the global warming alarmists even have serious disagreements with each other. Go check out this week's edition of "The Weekly Standard", which has an article on the University of East Anglia scandal -- that should give you some food for thought.

Saying that I'm wrong when I claim that the only irrefutable claims are logical and mathematical in nature shows that you lack an understanding of epistemology. Did you never take a class in philosophy? "You're simply and totally wrong on this" -- No, you're the one who is simply and totally wrong. There are two kinds of knowledge, analytic and empirical. Analytic knowledge is irrefutable. It is based on "if/then" statements that tell us nothing about the empirical world -- e.g.: If A is greater than B, and B is greater than C, then A is (and must be) greater than C." That is an example of an irrefutable claim. When it comes to the actual world, what we consider to be true about it can only be considered probably true, not certainly true. This is partly due to the fact that we operate from a limited perspective with limited sensory capacities. And some things that we consider true from ordinary experience are not true at all. Example: a three dimensional space enduring through time, with space and time as distinct entities.

That is why the scientific method requires that theories subject themselves to efforts to overthrow them. They also must be falsifiable. This requires the sharing of data, not the concealment of it. It requires allowing debate, not dissing those who question the mainstream view.

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byebush 12/05/2009 10:05 PM

Nice job Ivar of creating your own strawman, shooting it down, then pretending it proves something. Of course you know I won't let you off the hook that easily. There are quite a number of problems with your presentation, not the least of which is that you have not provided a link of any sort to read the documents you are referring to. Did they in fact classify it as a "major carcinogenic air pollutant" as you state? Or did they realize (as you should) that emissions of every sort do not dilute immediately to the maximum possible- perhaps you haven't ever driven up to Big Bear and out of the LA Basin and seen how stuff gets trapped locally? What is easily observed on a macroscale of that sort happens on even smaller scales- like in crowded public places, even if outdoors. So, unless you can produce a document proving they say what you said, I would guess it quite likely any regulations would be based on the local effects shortly after smoke is generated and the people in the immediate vicinity. As you may or may not know, the volume goes up with the cube of the distance from point of emission. And, as you probably don't know, the volume of the troposphere is about 8×10^{18} cubic meters.

It's especially indicative of your apparent ignorance of local dilution effects and also history that you raise a nonsensical argument about dilution effects so close to the 25th anniversary of the methyl isocyanate disaster in Bhopal India. About 400 tons of the chemical were accidentally released from a Dow Chemical Plant. By the silly calculation you propose, (and yes the inhalation LD50 of this chemical is known) no one should have been harmed. Yet, somehow between 15000 and 25000 people have died as a result. Oops, guess your cred is going in the dumper...

OK now to return to the most salient bit of the discussion. Produce the link to the document from the Cal State Dept of Public Health and if it exists show that this classification was made by scientists and not politicians. That's the only way to know if you have accurately represented what was done. If you can't do that, we will simply have to conclude that you are full of whatever you are choosing to inhale when writing such drivel.

BTW do strongly consider giving up the cancer sticks- although I deeply disagree with you on many subjects, I don't wish you the kind of fate you may be creating for yourself.

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Ivar 12/06/2009 01:43 PM

Google California State Air Resources Board and do the research yourself.

I'm not putting in a link because what I'm referring to was widely reported when the CARB classified cigarette smoke as a major carcinogenic air pollutant.

I would be happy to link to something that wasn't widely reported and therefore difficult to find out about, but this doesn't qualify.

Also I don't notice you providing links to support your claims about dispersion and Bhopal.

The lack of dispersion you mention is not something that "just happens", it is the result of physical forces and circumstances that you are conveniently omitting, like Los Angeles being largely surrounded by MOUNTAINS that trap its air pollution.

I would also ask you to rely on your common sense. If I'm standing a few feet away from you in an outdoor area, and my cigarette smoke isn't literally blowing in your direction, then that smoke in terms of parts per million (and potential toxicity) simply cannot harm you. And in an urban area, it will comprise a relatively insignificant portion of the total amount of air pollution that you are experiencing from passing cars, etc.

The smell may annoy you; but being annoyed on a temporary basis is not a threat to your physical health.

And throwing a lot of technical information at me doesn't alter that obvious and simple fact.

So what gives with the smoking bans -- largely justified on the basis of protecting the health of nonsmokers -- in Balboa Park here in San Diego, on the beach, or in ANY public area of Calabasas, California?

It's sheer nonsense, that's what it is. The obvious motive behind such bans is to make things uncomfortable and difficult for smokers "for their own good" so that they'll stop smoking. In other words, lies are being told by so-called scientists in order to achieve what they consider to be a moral end.

I'll look into what you say about Bhopal, India. I have my doubts about the way you portray that disaster.

By the way, in regard to some of your phrases ("...when writing such drivel...your cred is going in the dumper...indicative of your apparent ignorance...") cheer-leading for your own argument doesn't add to your credibility; it detracts from it.

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byebush 12/06/2009 05:28 PM

Ivar, starting from the bottom- the reason I used those phrases is to emphasize how weak your arguments were getting- and they did not involve namecalling- I restricted my comments to your arguments.

Here is a decent link to a detailed description of the Bhopal disaster, written by a VP of one of the Union Carbide execs in charge at the time of the event. I figure that's a good one to start you on because it's completely written from the point of view of the company and therefore puts the best possible face on things. <http://www.bhopal.com/pdfs/browning.pdf>

Here's another- direct from Union Carbide

<http://www.bhopal.com/chrono.htm>

Here's one from NIH

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC114...>

You see, I actually have my hands on the stuff I cite (although I did misquote the number of tons- 40 not 400 but it actually improves my argument) and am freely willing to provide the facts whereas you will not, most probably because you don't have them at hand.

With that said, I did go to CARB and there is no legislation I can find (searched list of passed bills from 2007, 2008, and 2009 that classify cigs as "major carcinogenic air pollutants". If there were such documents it would allow you to try to make your argument about dilution. But, just as I suspected, they classify it as something distinctly different- a "toxic air contaminant". Here is the link I found to a facts sheet about that. www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/ets/factsheetets.pdf

And, exactly as I figured, they based it on measured levels of contaminants from smoke in areas local to smokers, not in the global atmosphere, which was your original point of argument. They do not have the link to the study they cite about those levels but the argument was exactly what I thought it was and it is exactly not the one you tried to use. Now if you know of different legislation, point it out. I looked and as far as I can see it's not there. Here's the link I searched and it goes all the way back to 1998- all laws proposed, passed and failed.

So, your argument fails on several levels- 1) it was diversionary from the main point of the original article, which was about global warming, and therefore largely irrelevant. 2) it misrepresents the actual classification CARB gave it and misunderstood the reasoning for the classification. Although I hadn't even read the CARB material, I correctly anticipated what their point would be and have provided material proof of their thinking. 3) Although your argument about wind is appropriately windy, there are any number of things that seem logical to nonscientists that in fact do not prove true, once tested. In this case, the argument about passing cars is largely irrelevant because the actual chemicals emitted are completely different. In addition, your model invokes the existence of significant wind that does not change direction, both of which often do not pertain and in addition you have no quantitative data at all.

Finally, my example of Los Angeles was illustrative by analogy and clearly labeled as such. Your speculation about the motives of scientists is just that. And, your statement about what duration of exposure is and is not epidemiologically significant is made completely without reference to any data whatsoever- it's just your hunch or your feeling and so it must be true. Sorry, that's not science and that's not a decent argument. Lots of other fables about cigarettes "made sense" to people, until they were proven false. And, quite a number of tobacco companies have been found criminally liable for their lies about the safety of cigarettes- (and yes if you insist I can provide links). I know of no scientists who have asserted risks of cigs who have been failed or fined-do you? That's the only data we have as to which side has been lying.

Now, back to the global warming topic. I thought I'd deal with this one first and will return to the other one once I look up your Professor Lindzen. Remember- so far I have provided links to the specifics of what I claim- you have done none and appear to be hiding behind a "look it up yourself" defense, which is also extremely weak.

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Ivar 12/07/2009 01:43 PM

Your Bhopal links don't prove what you say about dispersion; they don't even really mention it.

Your mistake here is comparing apples with oranges. A cloud of concentrated toxic MIC gas is obviously not the same thing as smoke from scattered people smoking outdoors.

That smoke does not form a singular cloud, so it is not going to behave in the localized way that the toxic cloud at Bhopal behaved.

Also, I suspect that there are major differences between the behavior of smoke and the behavior of gasses based on density, etc.

The CARB rule didn't come from legislation -- and I never said it did come from legislation. So let's dispense with that red-herring

Let's also dispense with your red herring about an "air contaminant" being different than an "air pollutant".

There is no difference that I can see.

Press coverage at the time said that CARB had found cigarette smoke to be an "air pollutant."
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4652878.stm>

Let's also dispense with your red-herring to the effect that my bringing up the pseudo-science (e.g., the CARB determination) behind a lot of anti-smoking legislation is irrelevant to the debate about global warming.

It's not irrelevant because it shows how eager some "scientists" are to distort science in order to achieve what they consider to be a moral end (discouraging smoking in general) or in order -- say -- to win government research grants that Washington bureaucrats and government scientists have carefully rigged in order to empire build, reward their friends, promote their desired expansion of government, increase taxes, and give favors to lobbyists and special interests who see lots of money to be made in anthropogenic global warming (AGW) hysteria.

Looking at the CARB document you referenced, one can see the absurdity of CARB's claims -- giving ACTUAL NUMBERS of deaths and injuries supposedly caused by ETS (Environmental Tobacco Smoke) -- even including such things as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

How are they to isolate ETS as the cause of these injuries and deaths? There is no way they can, considering the many possible environmental and genetic causes of disease and death.

As for the concentration of smoke in certain places, I never said that CARB said that smoke generated from smoking outdoors doesn't disperse quickly into the atmosphere. I just pointed out that it DOES quickly disperse into the atmosphere. By denying this, you are simply denying common sense. And by not acknowledging what I've said, so is CARB.

Again, if I light a cigarette a few feet away from you outdoors, and the smoke isn't blowing right in your face, it's not going to harm you. Period. Even if it does blow in your face, it's not going to harm you unless you're having an asthma attack. And even then, the harm should be relatively minor.

By classifying ETS as a toxic air pollutant and then citing imaginary injuries and deaths that were "caused" by ETS (with the implication that these injuries and deaths can even take place as a result of smoking outdoors), CARB is in effect saying that even those who are occasionally exposed to ETS outdoors are in danger of being seriously injured or killed. That is utter absurdity.

For you to keep defending this shows that you lack common sense are not to be taken seriously. And I brought it up as an example of how scientists in general are losing their credibility -- deservedly so.

And your statement to the effect that cars don't matter "because the chemicals that come out of them are completely different" -- What?!? Are you suggesting that what comes out of cars is not harmful? And that there isn't a lot more air pollution caused by cars than by cigarettes?

You refuse to accept common sense. That is your problem. As long as you have that problem -- and in addition, provide links that don't support your case -- then you are not going to get anywhere, I'm afraid.

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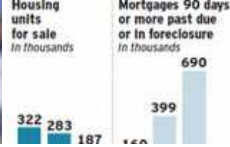
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