



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on December 9, 2008

Obama Cap-and-trade Plan Uncaps Federal Power

Sen. Obama told the attendees: "Few challenges facing America — and the world — are more urgent than combating climate change. The science is beyond dispute and the facts are clear. Sea levels are rising. Coastlines are shrinking. We've seen record drought, spreading famine and storms that are growing stronger with each passing hurricane season.... And once I take office, you can be sure that the United States will once again engage vigorously in these [UN climate] negotiations, and help lead the world toward a new era of global cooperation on climate change."



ITEM: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger told the Associated Press on November 19: "We have no choice. In the end, we are going to destroy the world" if greenhouse gases are not reduced.

ITEM: Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) President Fred Krupp praised President-elect Obama's global-warming message, saying Obama "got it exactly right.... His approach to dealing with our economic, energy, and environmental problems together makes a huge amount of sense."

ITEM: World Wildlife Fund (WWF) CEO Carter Roberts applauded Obama for his remarks to the Governors' Summit: "Today President-elect Obama gave us his first official statements on climate and without a doubt he nailed it. He sees clearly the huge risk that climate change poses to our economy and our future, and he understands that solving climate change is a foundation for a global economic recovery."

CORRECTION: President-elect Obama and his militant environmental supporters hope to quickly ram through a number of very



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stringent restrictions on greenhouse gases (GHG) — with carbon dioxide (CO₂) being the primary target — via legislation, executive orders, and treaty. Obama, Schwarzenegger, and their fellow alarmists know that even with dependable help from the major media, their continuing apocalyptic predictions about global warming probably will not win sufficient public support to enact the sweeping proposals they envision. The public is finding out that: 1) There is no "scientific consensus" that man-made GHGs have significant impact on global climate, or that the measured warming of the past century is outside natural variation or anything to be alarmed about; and, 2) The economic costs of various climate-change "solutions" are enormous, while the supposed environmental benefits are virtually immeasurable (i.e., horrendous pain vs. minuscule gain).

Contrary to Obama's assertions, the "science" for anthropogenic (man-made) global warming (AGW) is far from "beyond dispute." In fact, it is steadily being repudiated by some of its erstwhile strongest supporters. Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.) provides an impressive roundup of some of the eminent defectors from global-warming alarmism in an article entitled "Growing Number of Scientists Convert to Skeptics After Reviewing New Research," at the website of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. The list includes renowned climatologists, meteorologists, astrophysicists, paleoclimatologists, glaciologists, geologists, chemists, and biologists from the United States and around the world (including Nobel Prize winners who are scientists, not mere politicians like Al Gore). Then there is the Petition Project launched by the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine (www.oism.org), which has gathered more than 31,000 signatures from American scientists contesting AGW alarmism and urging the U.S. government to reject Kyoto and any similar proposals. Scientific websites and published scientific papers challenging much of the AGW "consensus" have been proliferating; the scientific momentum is swinging *against* the Al Gore "end of the world as we know it" alarmist position.

Moreover, the most reliable global temperature data — from the Earth-orbiting satellites of the University of Alabama at Huntsville (UAH) and Remote Sensing Systems (RSS) — shows that global temperatures have been *declining* for the past decade. The UAH temperatures for June 2008 were the ninth coldest for the past 30 years of satellite records. The RSS satellite records put June 2008 at the 13th coldest June in 30 years. Many parts of the world have been experiencing record cold temps and record snowfall. And, contrary to the hyperventilating reports on the evening television news, the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps *are not* in danger of melting. In fact, as ICECAP, Climate Audit, and other scientific sites have reported, by mid-October of this year Arctic sea ice had *increased* by more than 30



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percent over 2007. These data trends, along with solar-cycle activity, have led some scientists to conclude that we may even be headed into a global cooling period.

Nevertheless, President-elect Obama told the Governors' Summit in November: "My presidency ... will start with a federal cap and trade system. We will establish strong annual targets that set us on a course to reduce emissions to their 1990 levels by 2020 and reduce them an additional 80 percent by 2050." That is even more ambitious than the Lieberman-Warner bill, S. 2191, that was pulled from the Senate calendar last June because there wasn't enough public support for it. Lieberman-Warner, which called for a 70-percent reduction by 2050, was recognized as a job killer, an industry killer, and an economy killer that would create a regulatory nightmare that would cost consumers and taxpayers *trillions* of dollars.

"Cap and trade" schemes view CO₂ as a "pollutant" rather than the beneficial, essential, naturally occurring gas that it is. The federal government would place a "cap" on the maximum allowable CO₂ that may be emitted and then issue permits (by auction, sale, or giveaway) to emit a certain amount. Those who do not emit their allotted amount may trade or sell the remainder to others. Since all human activity (even merely breathing) involves production of CO₂, the potential to expand the scope of government control under cap-and-trade goes beyond virtually anything else ever proposed.

Claiming a scientific basis for such incredible assumptions of power is absurd, claim many scientists. "Carbon dioxide is not the dreaded greenhouse gas that the global warmers crack it up to be," note Dr. David Bellamy, a famed environmentalist, plant ecologist, author, and documentary producer for the BBC, and Dr. Jack Barrett, professor of physical chemistry at London's Imperial College. "It is in fact," write Bellamy and Barrett, "the most important airborne fertiliser in the world and without it there would be no green plants at all. In fact, a doubling of the levels of this gas in the atmosphere would bring about a marked rise in plant production — good news for everyone, especially those malnourished millions who can't afford chemical fertilisers." Moreover, as numerous scientists, scientific bodies and scientific journals are pointing out, CO₂ increases have been lagging behind temperature increases, not leading, so cannot be considered the cause of any observable temperature increases.

Evaluations of the less onerous Lieberman-Warner cap-and-trade scheme found that far from being a boon to the economy, as Obama and his fans at the WWF and EDF claim, it would be disastrous to our economy. On May 15, 2008 Sen. James Inhofe released a Senate White Paper which found:

Under this legislation, America stands to lose millions of jobs.... Within only seven years of enactment, up to 1.2 million net jobs will be lost. Many of these will be going offshore, where restrictions on emissions are nonexistent, to countries such as China. Worse, by 2020 up to 3.4 million net jobs may be lost.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon has acknowledged that switching to "clean" energy sources will cost the global economy \$15 trillion to \$20 trillion over the next two decades. Because there are so many uncertainties and variables involved with any cap-and-trade scheme, cost analyses of Lieberman-Warner show losses to the U.S. GDP of \$1.7 trillion to \$4.8 trillion over the next 20 years.

However, the costs, undoubtedly, would be much higher than predicted, as the European experience with cap-and-trade has proven. Spanish economist Dr. Gabriel Calzada of the King Juan Carlos University in Madrid testified before the U.S. Senate in 2007. When the European market for GHGs began, said Prof. Calzada, Spain's Environment Minister Cristina Narbona told the Spanish business community the maximum that companies would have to pay on entering the Emissions Trading System



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would not be above 85 million per year. Like most politicians' promises, that turned out to be a lie. "One year later," noted Prof. Calzada, "Spanish companies paid about 300 million (about \$388 million), 3 1/2 times the minister's avowed cost ceiling. And this is just the tip of the iceberg." A

PriceWaterhouseCoopers study concluded that the cost to Spain of the Emissions Trading System for the years 2008-2012 could end up being 35 *times* Minister Narbona's predicted price tag!

Far from being the "foundation for a global economic recovery," as the WWF's Roberts claims, the Obama cap-and-trade is a prescription for economic disaster.

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