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Scientific Panel Concludes That the Earth Remains in the Holocene Epoch

In a stunning rebuke of the notion that mankind is having such a deleterious effect on the planet that our current age should be reclassified as a new geological time unit, a team of two dozen geologists has concluded that the Earth, for better or worse, remains in the Holocene Epoch and that a new contender, the Anthropocene Epoch, cannot be officially recognized.

According to geologists, the Holocene began some 11,000 to 12,000 years ago, when the last widespread

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glaciation ended. The term “Anthropocene” was coined around the year 2000 to correlate to an era some call “[the Great Acceleration](#),” in which things such as nuclear weapons and man’s supposed influence on the climate have led to a new dividing line between the geological ages.

Proponents of the new geological time unit claim that the Anthropocene probably began in the 1950s, and that human activity through emissions, pollution, terraforming, and population growth has changed Earth’s ecosystems and climate to such a point that the Holocene has now ended.

But not so, says the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS, which governs the geologic timescale).

“The decision is definitive,” says Philip Gibbard, a geologist at Cambridge and a member of the ICS. “There are no outstanding issues to be resolved. Case closed.”

Anthropocene zealots, most notably the Anthropocene Working Group ([AWG](#)), a research group dedicated to the recognition of the new epoch, loudly cried foul and claimed that the vote to nix the new geologic epoch was marred by voting irregularities.

The AWG asserts that “the Anthropocene possesses geological reality, that it is best considered at epoch/series level, that it is best defined beginning in the mid-twentieth century with the “Great Acceleration,” and that it should be defined by a Global Stratotype Section and Point (GSSP).”

Member of the AWG Jan Zalasiewicz, a geologist and paleontologist from the University of Leicester, claimed that the ICS treated the AWG and the Anthropocene unfairly and may have rushed to judgment on the matter.

“The AWG, in preparing its proposal, was unfairly treated, via conflicts of interest, application of different standards than to other working groups, and unreasonable requests and restrictions, while insufficient time was allowed for comment on the proposal, and the AWG were not asked to provide feedback on the discussions as would be normal practice,” Zalasiewicz reported. “The Geoethics Commission further observed that the process as a whole ... was dysfunctional; it thus recommended the urgent suspension of any voting procedures (though not examining their validity).”

Those who back the Anthropocene will now have to wait a decade before it can again be considered as a new epoch. This doesn’t seem like a long time, since what’s being considered is a geologic period of time, but nevertheless they’re hopping mad about it.

“There remain several issues that need to be resolved about the validity of the vote and the circumstances surrounding it,” said Colin Waters, another geologist at the University of Leicester.

Others claim that the new epoch was more about publicity than an honest attempt to properly determine geologic time.

“The Anthropocene epoch was pushed through the media from the beginning — a publicity drive,” said Stanley Finney, a stratigrapher at Cal State Long Beach and the head of the International Union of Geological Sciences.

According to Finney, the Anthropocene could have been recognized with a less formal designation had the proponents been willing to accept a status less than “epoch,” such as “event.” Finney also contended that Anthropocene proponents stalled in their presentation.

“It would have been rejected 10 years earlier if they had not avoided presenting it to the stratigraphic community for careful consideration.”

While it’s not explicitly stated, the notion that those who would like to see a new geologic epoch named for a time when mankind is causing havoc on the Earth bears striking similarities to the climate cult, which blames mankind for every degree of global temperature and every storm, wildfire, or heatwave that happens anywhere.

The repudiation of the Anthropocene Epoch shows that there is still some science that isn’t necessarily beholden to the notion that mankind bears the blame for every single evil in this world.