



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on October 31, 2011

Self-Proclaimed Climate Change Convert Accused of Deception

Two authors of a new study hailed to end the climate change debate once and for all are at odds over what the report actually does prove. Climatologist Judith Curry (left) accuses her colleague and scientific director Richard Muller of another Climategate trick to “hide the decline.” Curry and Muller belong to a team of researchers at the University of California known as the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature (BEST) project. While Muller claims their research shows global warming of nearly 1°C since 1950, Curry told *The Mail on Sunday*, “There is no scientific basis for saying that warming hasn’t stopped. To say that there is detracts from the credibility of the data.”



The BEST graph of global temperatures over the past 200 years reveals a pronounced spike in temperatures since the mid-20th century. Ignoring the fact that climate change skeptics mainly question whether [humans are responsible](#) for global warming (and not whether warming is occurring), Muller asserted in the *Wall Street Journal* that the data proves “why you should not be a skeptic, at least not any longer.”

But now that other climatologists have had time to analyze BEST’s research, a different picture has emerged. Science editor Dr. David Whitehouse of the Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF) charted a new graph based on the raw data from BEST. “It is a statistically perfect straight line of zero gradient,” announced Whitehouse. “Could it really be the case that Professor Muller has not looked at the data in an appropriate way to see the last ten years clearly?”

How could the two graphs differ so dramatically? Whitehouse explains the BEST methodology as follows:

[D]ata covering almost 200 years is presented with a short x-axis and a stretched y-axis to accentuate the increase. The data is then smoothed using a ten-year average which is ideally suited to removing the past five years of the past decade and mix[ing] the earlier standstill years with years when there was an increase. This is an ideal formula for suppressing the past decade’s data.

GWPF’s analysis confirmed the past decade has witnessed a global temperature standstill, which Whitehouse believes is much more worthy of making headlines. “In my view we should make a bigger scientific deal about temperature flatlining for a decade or more in the face of rising CO₂ levels,” Whitehouse pointed out.

Adding an extra dimension to Muller’s argument is the credit he gives oceans for absorbing heat, thereby masking the rise in land temperatures. Acknowledging an apparent leveling off of global



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temperatures over the past decade, Muller blames the phenomenon on the fact that land and ocean readings are combined. "In our data, which is only on the land, we see no evidence of it [global warming] having slowed down," Muller told BBC's [Today](#) program.

Whitehouse questions this argument. "Could we really have the very special situation whereby the oceans sequester just enough heat at just the right time to keep the land temperature flat?" He reiterated that the BEST raw data confirms a global temperature hiatus in land-only data and called it a "major scientific finding" much more significant than Muller's statistically skewed graph indicates. "It is puzzling that they missed it," Whitehouse mused.



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