



What Consensus? Public, Scientists Doubt Climate Crisis

According to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the "Climategate" e-mails leaked from a British university have done nothing to undermine the United Nations' view that climate change is accelerating due to humans.

"Nothing that has come out in the public as a result of the recent email hackings has cast doubt on the basic scientific message on climate change and that message is quite clear — that climate change is happening much, much faster than we realized and we human beings are the primary cause," he said on December 8, the second day of the UN's conference on global warming taking place in Copenhagen, Denmark.



His message is one that has been echoed repeatedly by UN officials, climate activists, government officials, and journalists since the [e-mail scandal](#) broke in November.

Of this much we can be sure, the same message will be re-echoed many more times before the Copenhagen summit ends. However, despite these repeated assertions, evidence from polls and public statements indicates that large sections of the public and the scientific community strongly disagree with the UN on this issue. Public support for a Copenhagen agreement on climate change had been dropping rapidly even before the "Climategate" e-mail scandal, as had public belief in UN claims that climatic change is accelerating due to human activities, and that stopping climate change must be a top-priority issue.

Doubt About "Consensus"

As reported here in October ([More Americans Skeptical of Global Warming](#)), a survey conducted over the past year by the Pew Research Center found that the percentage of Americans who believe there's solid evidence that the Earth is warming has plummeted from 77 percent to 57 percent since April 2008. And those who believe that global warming is a very serious problem fell during the same period from 44 percent to 35 percent.

The Pew study also noted that the increased skepticism crossed party lines (though Republicans remain the most skeptical) and geographical location. A more [recent Rasmussen poll](#) released on December 3 reported that most Americans believe there is "significant disagreement within the scientific community" over both the extent of global warming and the degree to which humans are responsible. The poll also found that most Americans distrust the United Nations, which is the lead organization promoting climate alarmism. The Rasmussen survey reported:

Most Americans (52%) believe that there continues to be significant disagreement within the scientific community over global warming. While many advocates of aggressive policy responses to global warming say a consensus exists, the latest Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on December 10, 2009

finds that just 25% of adults think most scientists agree on the topic. Twenty-three percent (23%) are not sure.

The poll also found: "Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Americans say it's at least somewhat likely that some scientists have falsified research data to support their own theories and beliefs about global warming. Thirty-five percent (35%) say it's Very Likely. Just 26% say it's not very or not at all likely that some scientists falsified data."

The skepticism concerning the scientific integrity of claims of a global warming crisis seems to have arisen independently of the recent Climategate revelations. The Rasmussen Report states:

This skepticism does not appear to be the result of the recent disclosure of e-mails confirming such data falsification as part of the so-called "Climategate" scandal. Just 20% of Americans say they've followed news reports about those e-mails Very Closely, while another 29% have followed them Somewhat Closely.

Public Distrust of the UN

One reason so few Americans have followed Climategate is that CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and other media gatekeepers have virtually blacked out coverage of the scandal, and when they have deigned to cover it have been inclined to minimize its significance. The gatekeeper media have lavished far more coverage on Tiger Woods' marital crack-up and other celebrity news than they have allowed out on Climategate. Why then, do so many Americans question the science behind the "climate crisis"? Rasmussen Reports offers this possible explanation:

One reason for this skepticism may be the role the United Nations has played in promoting the global warming issue. Only 22% of Americans consider the UN to be a reliable source of information on global warming. Forty-nine percent (49%) disagree and say the international organization is not reliable on that topic. Twenty-nine percent (29%) aren't sure.

Widespread Scientific Dissent

Another reason for this skepticism, in spite of more than a decade of heavy-handed global warming alarmism by politicians, environmental activists, and the major media, is that reputable scientific dissenters have become more assertive in speaking out against the outlandish global-warming claims being made in the name of "science," and they have become more successful in getting their voices heard and their scientific research publicly presented.

This development has coincided with the fact that the Earth has cooled, not warmed, over the past 10 years, [as noted in scientific circles](#) and even reported in some of the major media. (See, for instance, the BBC's ["What happened to global warming?"](#))

Many scientists have been pointing out that even the observed warming during the past century, contrary to claims of the IPCC, is nothing extraordinary and doesn't exceed past trends and natural variability. This is the position, for instance, of the group of distinguished scientists at the Science and Environmental Policy Project who produced the important report ["Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate,"](#) in 2008.

Other calm voices of reason include Dr. Syun-Ichi Akasofu, a professor of geophysics and founding director of the International Arctic Research Center of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, who wrote ["The Recovery from the Little Ice Age and Global Warming"](#) for *The New American* last year.

Large numbers of climatologists, paleoclimatologists, meteorologists, atmospheric physicists,



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geophysicists, oceanographers, geologists, and scientists in every virtually every field have been calling into question the claims of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the politicization of IPCC "science" to promote costly and draconian global policies. Some of the IPCC's most severe critics are scientists who have served as authors and expert reviewers of IPCC reports and have witnessed from the inside the blatant, hardball politics masquerading as science.

A major compendium of statements from eminent scientists can be found in the recently released ["U. S. Senate Minority Report: More Than 700 International Scientists Dissent Over Man-Made Global Warming Claims."](#) As eye-opening as this Senate report is, it does not begin to tell the full story of the breadth and depth of the ranks of scientists who take issue with the IPCC "consensus."

[More than 31,000 scientists](#) in the United States have signed a petition urging the U.S. government to reject the kinds of actions being proposed in Copenhagen. The Petition Project, organized by Dr. Arthur Robinson of the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine and Dr. Frederick Seitz, past president of the National Academy of Sciences, demonstrates a resounding rejection of claims that the science is "settled," or that there is any kind of "overwhelming consensus" that anthropogenic global warming (AGW) is a crisis or serious threat.

The petition reads, in part:

The proposed limits on greenhouse gases would harm the environment, hinder the advance of science and technology, and damage the health and welfare of mankind.

There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gasses is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate.

The fact that more than 31,000 American scientists have challenged the supposed consensus has not dampened the zeal of the politicized global warming alarmists. However, as this information continues to leak out and as more and more Americans become aware of the magnitude of the scientific dissent to the IPCC dogma, support will continue to decline for a Copenhagen agreement and for the current Congressional legislation on global warming.

"Authoritarian" Politics, Not Science

Criticism of the politics driving the IPCC has come, of late, from some of the IPCC's leading minds, such as Prof. Judith Curry, Chair of the Georgia Institute of Technology's School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, and Prof. Mike Hulme, a prominent climate scientist at East Anglia University where the Climategate e-mails were hacked.

Both Curry and Hulme were featured on [Andrew Revkin's New York Times blog, "Dot Earth"](#) on November 27. Revkin, who is a major AGW alarmist (he figures fairly prominently in the Climategate e-mails), allows Curry and Hulme to unbosom themselves of concerns they have over climate-science politics.

According to Prof. Hulme, himself an IPCC author and reviewer, the IPCC politicizes science and tends in the "authoritarian" direction. He said:

The I.P.C.C. itself, through its structural tendency to politicize climate change science, has perhaps helped to foster a more authoritarian and exclusive form of knowledge production.

Professor Hulme has expanded on this theme in news interviews. "I think there is a serious problem with the way scientists are used, and the way they position themselves, in climate-policy debates,"



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Hulme told the Toronto [Globe and Mail](#). "Wherever you look around climate change, people are bringing their ideologies, beliefs and values to bear on the science."

The *Globe and Mail* story continues:

Prof. Hulme leads a group of CRU scientists who believe that the extraordinary political importance placed on their research, and the activist, ideological way that research has been used by the IPCC, has put scientists in the position of being the authors of policy — a position that distorts the role of science in society.

"If we simply believe that science dictates policy, then I'm afraid we're living in an unreal world," Prof. Hulme said. "If people are arguing that science policy should flow seamlessly from the science, then science becomes a battleground, where people start saying that we must get the science on our side. We have lost an openness and a transparency that leads to good science."

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