

Leo vs. science: vanishing evidence for climate change

By Tom Harris and Bob Carter September 14, 2014

In the run-up to the Sept. 23 UN Climate Summit in New York, Leonardo DiCaprio is releasing a series of films about the “climate crisis.”

The first is “Carbon,” which tells us the world is threatened by a “carbon monster.” Coal, oil, natural gas and other carbon-based forms of energy are causing dangerous climate change and must be turned off as soon as possible, DiCaprio says.

But he has identified the wrong monster. It is the climate scare itself that is the real threat to civilization.

DiCaprio is an actor, not a scientist; it’s no real surprise that his film is sensationalistic and error-riddled. Other climate-change fantasists, who do have a scientific background, have far less excuse.

Science is never settled, but the current state of “climate change” science is quite clear: There is essentially zero evidence that carbon dioxide from human activities is causing catastrophic climate change.

Yes, the “executive summary” of reports from the UN’s International Panel on Climate Change continues to sound the alarm — but the summary is written by the politicians. The scientific bulk of the report, while still tinged with improper advocacy, has all but thrown in the towel.

And the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change lists thousands of scientific papers that either debunk or cast serious doubt on the supposed “consensus” model.

Oregon-based physicist Gordon Fulks sums it up well: “CO₂ is said to be responsible for global warming that is not occurring, for accelerated sea-level rise that is not occurring, for net glacial and sea ice melt that is not occurring . . . and for increasing extreme weather that is not occurring.”

Consider:

- According to NASA satellites and all ground-based temperature measurements, global warming ceased in the late 1990s. This when CO₂ levels have risen almost 10 percent since 1997. The post-1997 CO₂ emissions represent an astonishing 30 percent of all human-related emissions since the Industrial Revolution began. That we’ve seen no warming contradicts all CO₂-based climate models upon which global-warming concerns are founded.

- Rates of sea-level rise remain small and are even slowing, over recent decades averaging about 1 millimeter per year as measured by tide gauges and 2 to 3 mm/year as inferred from “adjusted” satellite data. Again, this is far less than what the alarmists suggested.
- Satellites also show that a greater area of Antarctic sea ice exists now than any time since space-based measurements began in 1979. In other words, the ice caps aren’t melting.
- A 2012 IPCC report concluded that there has been no significant increase in either the frequency or intensity of extreme weather events in the modern era. The NIPCC 2013 report concluded the same. Yes, Hurricane Sandy was devastating — but it’s not part of any new trend.

The climate scare, Fulks sighs, has “become a sort of societal pathogen that virulently spreads misinformation in tiny packages like a virus.” He’s right — and DiCaprio’s film is just another vector for spreading the virus.

The costs of feeding the climate-change “monster” are staggering. According to the Congressional Research Service, from 2001 to 2014 the US government spent \$131 billion on projects meant to combat human-caused climate change, plus \$176 billion for breaks for anti-CO₂ energy initiatives.

Federal anti-climate-change spending is now running at \$11 billion a year, plus tax breaks of \$20 billion a year. That adds up to more than double the \$14.4 billion worth of wheat produced in the United States in 2013.

Dr. Bjørn Lomborg, director of the Copenhagen Consensus Center, calculates that the European Union’s goal of a 20 percent reduction in CO₂ emissions below 1990 levels by 2020, currently the most severe target in the world, will cost almost \$100 billion a year by 2020, or more than \$7 trillion over the course of this century.

Lomborg, a supporter of the UN’s climate science, notes that this would buy imperceptible improvement: “After spending all that money, we would not even be able to tell the difference.”

Al Gore was right in one respect: Climate change is a moral issue — but that’s because there is nothing quite so immoral as well-fed, well-housed Westerners assuaging their consciences by wasting huge amounts of money on futile anti-global-warming policies, using money that could instead go to improve living standards in developing countries.

That is where the moral outrage should lie. Perhaps DiCaprio would like to make a film about it?

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