

MIT professor: global warming is a 'religion'

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Throughout history, governments have twisted science to suit a political agenda. Global warming is no different, according to Dr. Richard Lindzen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"Global climate alarmism has been costly to society, and it has the potential to be vastly more costly. It has also been damaging to science, as scientists adjust both data and even theory to accommodate politically correct positions," [writes](#) Lindzen in the fall 2013 issue of the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons.

According to Lindzen, scientists make essentially "meaningless" claims about certain phenomenon. Activists for certain causes take up claims made by scientists and politicians respond to the alarmism spread by activists by doling out more research funding. — creating an "Iron Triangle" of poor incentives.

"How can one escape from the Iron Triangle when it produces flawed science that is immensely influential and is forcing catastrophic public policy?" Lindzen asks.

Lindzen compares global warming to past politicized scientific movements: the eugenics movement in the early 20th Century and Lysenkoism in the Soviet Union under Stalin. However, the MIT professor argues that global warming goes even beyond what these past movements in terms of twisting science.

"Global Warming has become a religion," writes Lindzen. "A surprisingly large number of people seem to have concluded that all that gives meaning to their lives is the belief that they are saving the planet by paying attention to their carbon footprint."

"There may be a growing realization that this may not add all that much meaning to one's life, but, outside the pages of the Wall Street Journal, this has not been widely promulgated, and people with no other source of meaning will defend their religion with jihadist zeal," he added.

President Obama announced his plan to tackle global warming this summer.

"I refuse to condemn your generation and future generations to a planet that's beyond fixing," Obama [said](#). "And that's why, today, I'm announcing a new national climate action plan, and I'm here to enlist your generation's help in keeping the United States of America a leader — a global leader — in the fight against climate change."

A recently leaked [report](#) by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change claims there is a 95 percent chance that human activity — mostly from burning fossil fuels — is the main cause of global warming.

However, there has been no rise in global temperatures for the past 15 years.

"[T]he cracks in the scientific claims for catastrophic warming are, I think, becoming much harder for the supporters to defend," writes Lindzen. "Despite official whitewashes, the Climategate scandal was a clear manifestation of pathology. Opposition to alarm is having some impact among certain groups including physicists."

Lindzen also muses that politicized scientific movements may have a natural life cycle before they die out, comparing the about 30 year lifespan of global warming alarmism to the roughly equal lifespans of the eugenics and Lysenkoism movements.

Activists have ratcheted up their claims about global warming as some scientists have scaled theirs back.

"Environmental advocates are responding by making increasingly extreme claims," Lindzen writes. "Politicians are recognizing that these claims are implausible, and are backing away from both the issue and support for climate science. The incentive is then for scientists to look elsewhere for support. Regardless of whether this will be sufficient, one can only hope that some path will emerge that will end the present irrational obsession with climate and carbon footprints."