THE DAILY CALLER

The Real 'Consensus': Global Warming Causes FEWER Hurricanes

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Environmentalists are still trying to tie massive storms to global warming as Hurricane Patricia heads toward Mexico.

Oddly enough, the very science activists cite when claiming global warming will make hurricanes like Patricia more frequent and intense actually shows the opposite.

Scientists project fewer hurricanes in the future that may be slightly stronger. Research also suggests that even though hurricanes may become slightly stronger, wind patterns will drive them further out to sea, meaning fewer storms hitting Americans.

"I would characterize 'mainstream' science on global warming and hurricanes as thinking that there will be a slight decrease in frequency of storms but a slight increase in intensity on a global scale," climate scientist Chip Knappenberger with the libertarian Cato Institute told The Daily Caller News Foundation Thursday.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), considered the world's top climate authority by environmentalists and scientists, found "it is likely that the global frequency of tropical cyclones will either decrease or remain essentially unchanged, concurrent with a likely increase in both global mean tropical cyclone maximum wind speed and rain rates."

But IPCC notes the "future changes in storms are likely to be small compared to natural interannual variability," meaning scientists won't even be able to detect global warming's influence on storms for some time.

"By and large, the projected changes will be pretty small compared to natural variability so may not be detectable for a long time," Knappenberger said. "Recent trends, in whatever direction, are dominated by natural variability and thus very likely do not display a detectable global warming signal."

Other scientists note just how small the projected changes in hurricanes and other storms will be. Dr. Christopher Landsea, a meteorologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), argued global warming can make it harder for storms to intensify.

“All climate models predict that for every degree of warming at the ocean that the air temperature aloft will warm around twice as much,” Landsea wrote in 2011. “This is important because if global warming only affected the earth’s surface, then there would be much more energy available for hurricanes to tap into.”

“But, instead, warming the upper atmosphere more than the surface along with some additional moisture near the ocean means that the energy available for hurricanes to access increases by just a slight amount,” Landsea continued. “Moreover, the vertical wind shear is also supposed to increase, making it more difficult (not easier) for hurricanes to form and intensify.”

Studies also suggest changes in preferred Atlantic hurricane tracking will keep more storms out at sea instead of slamming in the U.S. East Coast. So even if storms were to become more intense than scientists predict, they would hit the U.S. less often.

In the last few years, nearly every major storm that forms has been tied to global warming by politicians, environmentalists and scientists. Newly-formed Patricia is no exception.

Patricia is the strongest hurricane ever measured by NOAA. The storm quickly gained strength and has scientists warning this is the size of storm we can expect to see more of in a warming world, though no scientist will come out and say Patricia is caused by global warming.

But even with all of the projections on how global warming will exacerbate extreme weather, there’s no evidence hurricanes are becoming more frequent or more intense as global temperatures rise.

University of Colorado climate researcher Dr. Roger Pielke Jr. told Congress in 2013 that “it’s misleading, and just plain incorrect, to claim that disasters associated with hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or droughts have increased on climate timescales either in the United States or globally.”

Pielke’s findings are backed by IPCC, which found “no significant observed trends in global tropical cyclone frequency over the past century. … No robust trends in annual numbers of tropical storms, hurricanes and major hurricanes counts have been identified over the past 100 years in the North Atlantic basin.”