

## Here's Why Scientists Hide Their Doubts About Global Warming In The Media

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A recent study looking into how scientists explain global warming uncertainty to the public has some interesting findings: Many scientists don't actually talk about uncertainty when speaking to journalists.

In fact, scientists who regularly talk to the press are more likely to sound the alarm on global warming, and are often reluctant to publish research results in the media that don't conform to the narrative of catastrophic warming.

Researcher Senja Post surveyed 300 German scientists and found that “the more climate scientists are engaged with the media the less they intend to point out uncertainties about climate change and the more unambiguously they confirm the publicly held convictions that it is man-made, historically unique, dangerous and calculable.”

Post also found that “climate scientists object to publishing a result in the media significantly more when it indicates that climate change proceeds more slowly rather than faster than expected,” which finding, in her words, “gives reason to assume that the German climate scientists are more inclined to communicate their results in public when they confirm rather than contradict that climate change is dramatic.”

“Such findings are saddening and shameful, highlighting a near-ubiquitous bias among climate scientists (at least in Germany) who willfully suppress the communication of research findings and uncertainties to the public when they do not support the alarmist narrative of CO<sub>2</sub>-induced global warming,” Craig Idso, a climate scientist at the libertarian Cato Institute, wrote in a Thursday blog post commenting on the study.

For German scientists, the more worried they were that human activities were causing catastrophic warming, the more likely they were to use the media to promote that narrative.

“Such deceit has no place in science,” Idso wrote.

That sort of arrangement makes sense to a degree. Reporters need people to read their articles, and if a reporter is covering global warming, the more alarming the headline — and quotes backing it up — the more eyes it's likely to attract.

Scientists benefit from this by getting their name and research out there in a way that's not mired in scientific jargon that immediately makes people's eyes glaze over.

Dr. Richard Lindzen, a climate scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has written a lot on the perverse incentive faced by scientists in research fields as politicized as climate science.

In a 2013 paper, Lindzen argued scientists make “meaningless” claims about certain phenomenon. Activists and the media then take up claims made by scientists, and politicians respond to this alarmism by doling out more research funding. Lindzen called this cycle the “Iron Triangle.”

“Although there are many reasons why some scientists might want to bring their field into the public square, the cases described here appear, instead, to be cases in which those with political agendas found it useful to employ science,” Lindzen wrote.

“This immediately involves a distortion of science at a very basic level: namely, science becomes a source of authority rather than a mode of inquiry,” he added. “The real utility of science stems from the latter; the political utility stems from the former.”