THE DAILY CALLER

Scientists Question Obama's Global Warming Target Of 1.5 Degrees Celsius

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Scientists are warning the United Nations that its global warming goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius is both politically motivated and not scientifically plausible.

"2.0°C is theoretically possible, with or without the Paris Agreement… 1.5°C is almost assuredly not," climate scientist at the libertarian Cato Institute wrote Friday commenting on an article published in Nature earlier this month. The Nature article claimed any attempt to calculate how such a low target would be reached "may be well short of being robust" and that any "signal is likely to get lost in the noise."

Many scientists defined a temperature increase of 2 degrees Celsius as the threshold of "dangerous global warming" and believe that a lower target is unfeasible and even"naive." United Nations delegates at the Paris climate conference in December, however, chose a 1.5 degrees Celsius target for political reasons.

Lowering the threshold in this manner represents a major policy change and will result in even stricter environmental controls. The goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius is essentially impossible to meet by just reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Existing national policies won't even get close to the target set by President Barack Obama and the United Nations.

"When it comes to a mitigation option to attempt to avoid a 1.5C global temperature rise, there basically are none that anyone in their right mind should be willing to try (i.e., large-scale geoengineering). Basically, 1.5C is already a done deal," Chip Knappenberger, a climate scientist at the Cato Institute, told The Daily Caller News Foundation." The best way to address this is to figure out best ways to live with it (i.e. pursue adaptive measures)…which become much easier in wealthier, healthier societies (in other words, let's make sure (ill-advised) mitigation efforts don't interfere with societal development)."

Essentially, the new targets are so close to temperatures today, they are effectively impossible to meet according to the best available science and unlikely to be dangerous. The goals are estimated to cost a minimum of $12.1 trillion dollars, with the cost likely rising as high as $16.5 trillion between now and 2030 when energy efficiency measures are included.

The benefits of actually reaching such a low target would mostly benefit very small island nations threatened by rising sea levels. When these nations proposed such a low target at a previous climate conference, they were met with vehement opposition as such a low limit was perceived as unrealistic.

" If you want to know what 1.5C of global surface temperature rise looks like, at least in the short term (multiple decades) all you really need to do is look out the window…because the weather aspect of the 1.5C climate will look much like that of today's climate (which is a rise pretty near 1.0C over pre-induustral temperatures)," Knappenberger, continued. "Over the longer term, centuries or more, I expect that the ongoing sea level rise will pose challenges that will require an additional adaptive response of some type."