

## Dissenting Scientists Label White House Climate Report As ‘Pseudoscience’

By Michael Bastasch

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Climate scientists have said the White House’s National Climate Assessment (NCA) resembles pseudoscience more than actual science.

The National Climate Data Center [released its third NCA](#) on Tuesday, which warns of an ever-worsening environment and extreme temperature rises due to man-made carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels. But it has been panned in some quarters.

“This National Assessment is much closer to pseudoscience than it is to science,” [wrote scientists Patrick Michaels and Paul Knappenberger of the libertarian Cato Institute in their comments submitted to the Obama administration.](#)

“It clearly believes that virtually everything in our society is tremendously dependent on the surface temperature, and, because of that, we are headed towards certain and inescapable destruction, unless we take its advice and decarbonize our economy, pronto,” Michaels and Knappenberger added.

The NCA says that the U.S. average temperature has risen between 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit to 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit since 1895, with most of that increase occurring since 1980. This temperature rise, the report argues, has been linked to increased extreme weather, like hurricanes and droughts, as well as ecosystem imbalance across the country.

The NCA warns that the average temperature could increase another 4 degrees Fahrenheit in the coming decades, causing more extreme weather, sea level rises and deaths. The NCA suggests a slew of regulatory solutions from cap-and-trade to green energy subsidies to mitigate global warming.

“It is to provide cover for a massive regulatory intrusion, and concomitant enormous costs in resources and individual liberty,” Michaels and Knappenberger wrote. “History tells us that when scientists willingly endorse sweeping governmental agendas fueled by dodgy science, bad things soon happen.”

Michaels' and Knappenberger's 75-page critique of the NCA points out the many weak points and flaws present in the government's analysis of the impact of global warming. For example, the NCA relies on not only peer-reviewed scientific literature, but also non-peer reviewed work from environmental activist groups — which the government did not disclose.

The libertarian Cato scholars point to environmental and political advocacy groups cited in just the NCA's chapter on water resources. The groups include the Union of Concerned Scientists (who are not actual scientists), the Southwest Climate Alliance and the Water Climate Utility Alliance.

Michaels and Knappenberger also pointed out that the measure of climate sensitivity used by the report is 40 percent higher than what more recent scientific literature points to. Climate sensitivity is the measure of how much warming would occur if carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere were doubled. The current literature puts that number at about 1.5 degrees Celsius, but the government used estimates from the United Nations' 2007 climate report putting climate sensitivity at 2 degrees Celsius to 3.3 degrees Celsius.

One of the most pointed criticisms made by Michaels and Knappenberger hit the Obama administration's claims on extreme weather. But as the two scientists point out, even the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says there little evidence of increased extreme weather.

“There is medium evidence and high agreement that long-term trends in normalized losses have not been attributed to natural or anthropogenic climate change,” the IPCC said in its latest climate assessment.

“The assessment is woefully ignorant of humanity's ability to adapt and prosper in response to challenges,” wrote Michaels and Knappenberger. “The quintessence of this is the truly dreadful chapter on human health and climate change.”

Evidence presented by University of Colorado climate scientists Dr. Roger Pielke, Jr. also shows that there has been no increase in extreme weather events due to global warming.

“It is 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 said in his testimony before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last year](#). “It is further incorrect to associate the increasing costs of disasters with the emission of greenhouse gases.”

“Hurricanes have not increased in the U.S. in frequency, intensity or normalized damage since at least 1900,” Pielke added. “The same holds for tropical cyclones globally since at least 1970.”

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