



## 'Threat' to penguins pooh-pooed

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July 1, 2016

A study published this week in the journal *Scientific Reports* examines various levels of warming that the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change expects by the end of the century. According to the study's lead author, Megan Cimino, warmer water and loss of sea ice may bring a 60-percent decline in population of the Adelie penguin by 2099. *USA Today* points out that a 2009 study reported that another penguin – the emperor penguin – could face extinction by 2100 as Antarctic sea ice melts.

"I think that this paper is functioning in a data-free environment," responds Dr. Pat Michaels of the Cato Institute's Center for the Study of Science. "The fact of the matter is that everyone who has looked at Antarctic sea ice extent data from satellite knows that it's going up – and it's going up in a statistically significant fashion."

In other words, Michaels says the sign of what's happening in the computer models is different than the sign of what's happening in the real world where it's gaining ice.

"That sounds pretty good for penguins for me," says Michaels, a past president of the American Association of State Climatologists and a reviewer of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "The penguin scare stories are common as toast. Penguins are the Southern Hemisphere's iconic species, just like the polar bear is the Northern Hemisphere's iconic species."

Michaels also points out that the polar bear "survived a period of warming in the Northern Hemisphere that was much greater than any warming humans could possibly exert."