

But Climate Scientists Say Storms, Short-Term Weather Patterns Have No Relevance To Global Warming

NASA Climatologist: "Weather Isn't Going To Go Away Because Of Climate Change." A March 2008 *New York Times* article reported that climate scientists -- including at least one who has disputed aspects of the scientific consensus on global warming -- completely reject the notion that short-term changes in weather, let alone individual storms, bear any relevance to the global warming debate. From the article:

Many scientists also say that the cool spell in no way undermines the enormous body of evidence pointing to a warming world with disrupted weather patterns, less ice and rising seas should heat-trapping greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels and forests continue to accumulate in the air.

"The current downturn is not very unusual," said Carl Mears, a scientist at Remote Sensing Systems, a private research group in Santa Rosa, Calif., that has been using satellite data to track global temperature and whose findings have been held out as reliable by a variety of climate experts. He pointed to similar drops in 1988, 1991-92, and 1998, but with a long-term warming trend clear nonetheless.

Some scientists who strongly disagree with each other on the extent of warming coming in this century, and on what to do about it, agreed that it was important not to be tempted to overinterpret short-term swings in climate, either hot or cold.

Patrick J. Michaels, a climatologist and commentator with the libertarian Cato Institute in Washington, has long chided environmentalists and the media for overstating connections between extreme weather and human-caused warming. (He is on the program at the skeptics' conference.)

But Dr. Michaels said that those now trumpeting global cooling should beware of doing the same thing, saying that the "predictable distortion" of extreme weather "goes in both directions."

Gavin A. Schmidt, a climatologist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies in Manhattan who has spoken out about the need to reduce greenhouse gases, disagrees with Dr. Michaels on many issues, but concurred on this point.'

"When I get called by CNN to comment on a big summer storm or a drought or something, I give the same answer I give a guy who asks about a blizzard," Dr. Schmidt said. "It's all in the long-

term trends. Weather isn't going to go away because of climate change. There is this desire to explain everything that we see in terms of something you think you understand, whether that's the next ice age coming or global warming." [*The New York Times*, **3/2/08**]