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Climate Chief Staying Put Despite Calls for His Head

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"I know a lot of climate skeptics are after my blood, but I'm in no mood to oblige them," Rajendra Pachauri, head of the U.N.'s [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC), told *The Times of London*.

Pachauri spoke following revelations that an oft-cited "fact" in his panel's 2008 climate change report -- that the Himalayas were on track to melt by 2035 -- was sloppily copied from a magazine interview with a single glaciologist in 1999.

Like water flowing downhill from a melting glacier, other errors have since emerged from the report, simply titled [AR4](#).

The panel now faces fresh controversy for wrongly linking global warming to an increase in the number and severity of natural disasters, including hurricanes and floods, and for a separate section of the report that warned that the world had "suffered rapidly rising costs due to extreme weather-related events since the 1970s."

The IPCC based its claims on an unpublished report that had not been subjected to routine scientific scrutiny -- and ignored warnings from scientific advisers that the evidence supporting the link was weak, *The Sunday Times of London* reported. The newspaper has since found that the scientific paper on which the IPCC based that claim had neither been peer reviewed nor published at the time the U.N. panel issued its report.

In 2008, when the report was eventually published, it had a new caveat. It said: "We find insufficient evidence to claim a statistical relationship between global temperature increase and catastrophe losses."

But despite this change, the IPCC did not issue a clarification ahead of the Copenhagen climate summit last month.

Dr. Murari Lal, the scientist behind the bogus claim about melting Himalayan glaciers, suggested over the weekend that the panel intentionally ignored the facts.

The statement "related to several countries in this region and their water sources," [Lal told the London paper](#)

[The Mail](#). "We thought that if we can highlight it, it will impact policy-makers and politicians and encourage them to take some concrete action. It had importance for the region, so we thought we should put it in."

The Mail concluded that the comments were included "purely to put political pressure on world leaders."

Pachauri hasn't yet commented on these allegations, but he has admitted that the statement "was a collective failure by a number of people." And while he fretted that there may be other errors in the same report, Pachauri added that he was still considering whether to take action against those responsible.

"I need to consider what action to take, but that will take several weeks. It's best to think with a cool head, rather than shoot from the hip."

So far, the IPCC has issued only a comment offering regret for the poorly vetted statements. "The Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Co-chairs of the IPCC regret the poor application of well-established IPCC procedures," it said in a statement. But it fell short of issuing a full retraction or reprinting the report.

The IPCC "made a clear and obvious error when it stated that Himalayan glaciers would be gone by 2035," Patrick J. Michaels, a senior fellow in environmental policy at the libertarian Cato Institute, said in an interview.

"The absurdity was obvious to anyone who had studied the scientific literature. This was not an honest mistake. IPCC had been warned about it for a year by many scientists."

The dustup is the latest scandal in global warming science, coming after the disclosure of attempts to shade climate-science research findings at the U.K.'s East Anglia University and the failed talks in Copenhagen by environmental policymakers last month.

The Times of London contributed to this report.

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