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Tico Moreno: Climate change policy has heavy cost, uncertain benefits

Tico Moreno - Guest Opinion

A meeting in Copenhagen is being held with the purpose of trying to establish accords to reduce emissions of anthropogenic carbon dioxide (CO₂). If those accords are reached they will be a brake on the prosperity, nutrition and health of humans, especially the poor.

There is no consensus amongst scientists that human action is the cause of climate change, as so many would have us believe. Documents signed by scientists affirm that climate change is not a consequence of human action. References: 31,478 scientists including 9,020 Ph.D.s of The Global Petition Project; more than 400 in the minority report of The Environmental Committee of the U.S. Senate; 588 in a Seminar of The Heartland Institute; 120 in publication of The Cato Institute in main U.S. newspapers.

Recently we found out about climategate, where some "scientists" had written e-mails acknowledging the inconvenient truth that they had doctored their data since it did not confirm to their global warming thesis. Amongst the culprits were two main contributors to the report of the UN's Inter Governmental Panel of Climate Change. It is incredible that given this revelation, the U.S. still presses for controls.

Of the annually emitted CO₂, 3.5 percent is due to human action; the remaining 96.5 percent is due to natural phenomena. In any event, atmospheric CO₂ is not the cause of climate change, but rather the effect of climate change. The cause is a combination of factors amongst which are solar activity, marine currents, and clouds. Warming of the Earth produces CO₂ and not the other way around. The correlation between solar activity and earth temperature is much higher than the one between CO₂ and earth temperature.

Global warming during the 20th century is within the limits of the global warmings of the last 3,000 years. In that time period, global average temperatures have held within a range of 3 degrees centigrade.

Feedback mechanisms of control, acting as thermostats, hold the temperature within a range. When ocean surface temperature increases, cloud formation increases, which has the effect of reflecting solar radiation, and thus the planet cools.

Increases of CO₂ in the atmosphere allow, via photosynthesis, for accelerated flora, and consequently fauna, formation, increasing the green footprint on the planet. This means more area for agriculture which in turn allows for delivering better nutrition to more people. According to the Department of Agriculture in the U.S., hard and softwood forests have increased 40 percent since 1950.

As cited in the report of the NIPCC, the adverse effects on mortality of cardiovascular and respiratory disease of global warming are milder than the ones of global cooling.

A very efficient stimulant of prosperity is inexpensive and abundant energy. In the U.K., for instance, energy from nuclear and fossil sources are the ones that generate one kilowatt-hour at the lowest costs. Different energy sources should be evaluated on their own merits, without subsidies, mandates, or impediments.

Even though renewable energy alternatives generate new jobs, the net effect is negative due to the jobs they destroy such as has been the experience with windmills in Spain.

We are under a moderate global warming period, coming out of the little ice age, all within a normal historical range, not driven by human action, and with positive effects on the health and prosperity of mankind. The costs of countering that warming are high and certain, while the benefits are uncertain.
