



Written by [William P. Hoar](#) on September 3, 2021

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Correction, Please!

Media Portray Misleading UN Climate Report as Proof of World's End



Nothing out of the ordinary: Liberals claim that the number of natural disasters, such as wildfires, is increasing due to human-caused climate change, but a study of historical records shows that wildfires, hurricanes, and floods are not occurring with abnormal frequency. *(Photo credit: AP Images)*

Item: *The New York Times, in its August 9 print edition, blared this leading Page One headline: “A Hotter Future Is Now Inevitable, a U.N. Report Says.” Nations, says the piece, “have delayed curbing their fossil-fuel emissions for so long that they can no longer stop global warming from intensifying over the next 30 years, though there is still a short window to prevent the most harrowing future, a major new United Nations scientific report has concluded.”*

According to the leftist paper: “Humans have already heated the planet by roughly 1.1 degrees Celsius, or 2 degrees Fahrenheit, since the 19th century, largely by burning coal, oil and gas for energy. And the consequences can be felt across the globe: This summer alone, blistering heat waves have killed hundreds of people in the United States and Canada, floods have devastated Germany and China, and wildfires have raged out of control in Siberia, Turkey and Greece.”

Item: *The latest United Nations climate report, insisted the Boston Globe for August 9, says the “world is on fire.” The report, “with its devastating assessment of the impacts already wrought by a warming world and dire predictions for what’s to come, is simultaneously terrifying, depressing, and overwhelming,” said the paper. Yet, concluded this left-wing newspaper, it also produced “a call to arms.”*

Item: *BloombergBusiness.com for August 9 boomed out a matching message: “United Nations Secretary General António Guterres has just proclaimed ‘a code red for humanity.’ The unequivocal consensus of the world’s top climate scientists — unveiled in a landmark report Monday — is that not only are humans responsible for the catastrophes befalling the atmosphere, the oceans, the ice packs and the forests, but that without drastic moves by the planet’s leaders to eliminate greenhouse gas pollution, things are going to get a lot worse, and quite soon.”*



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The publication concluded: “‘This report,’ Guterres warned the world, ‘must sound a death knell for coal and fossil fuels before they destroy our planet.’”

Correction: If you want a straight account, the would-be world government is the last place to go, though the UN secretary-general — the former president of the Socialist International — is undoubtedly a “code red” aficionado. Indeed, he’s well-nigh wild-eyed in this regard, continuing, “The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: Greenhouse gas emissions from fossil-fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk.”

In a statement launching the “Summary for Policymakers” for the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we are instructed: “On a warming planet, no one is safe.” And climate change is, of course, “getting worse faster.”

Though the most recent IPCC report is certainly feverish, the mainstream media’s embellished coverage about climate change has bordered on hysterical. A few typical headlines hint at the amplified reportage: “Wildfires rage across the world as U.N. releases damning climate change report” (Yahoo News); “Greek wildfires are the ‘harsh reality of climate change,’ experts warn” (NBC News); and “Major climate changes inevitable and irreversible — IPCC’s starkest warning yet” (*Guardian*). The British *Guardian* even (falsely) indicated that the report found mankind “guilty as hell” of “climate crimes of humanity.”

The finger gets pointed at rising levels of carbon dioxide for seemingly every adverse weather-related event. Yet, as the *Washington Examiner* has pointed out, it is unlikely that you heard that the new IPCC report “specifically throws cold water on the idea recent flooding in Europe was related to climate change. This is true of nearly all recent weather phenomena because climate isn’t weather. Yet, in their coverage of this report, the media endlessly indulge this classic fallacy.”

The new assessment is misleading enough not to require the avalanche of mainstream media exaggerations. However, the report and the press accounts are paired politically, not for measured scientific discourse, but to terrify the hoi polloi into acquiescing in the face of increased government actions and controls.

Stephen Koonin, a professor at New York University and author of the recent book *Unsettled: What Climate Science Tells Us, What It Doesn’t, and Why It Matters*, notes that this IPCC report “emphasizes climate change in recent decades but obscures, or fails to mention, historical precedents that weaken the case that humanity’s influence on the climate has been catastrophic.” Its “Summary for Policymakers” section “says the rate of global sea-level rise has been increasing over the past 50 years. It doesn’t mention that it was increasing almost as rapidly 90 years ago before decreasing strongly for 40 years.”

As Koonin puts it:

Extreme weather events are invoked as proof of impending disaster. But the floods in Europe and China and record temperatures across regions of the U.S. are weather, not climate — singular events, not decades-long trends. Both Europe and China have experienced equally devastating floods in past centuries, but these are forgotten or deliberately ignored. The drought and wildfires in the Western U.S. are part of a trend going back a few decades, but forest management and expanding human presence in the forests



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are perhaps more important than climate change in causing these events.

Nonetheless, one can be sure that the distortions will boost reactions at November's United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland.

Roger Pielke, Jr., a political scientist and professor of climate studies at the University of Colorado, is sometimes called a "contrarian" because he looks at facts carefully. Among other points, he has observed that the IPCC's most terrifying scenario is the one that gets the most attention — even though it is least likely to occur.



Tilting at windmills: Despite incessant claims by environmentalists to the contrary, eliminating fossil-fuel use will not "save the planet." It will have little, if any, effect on global temperatures. (*Photo credit: koddai/Stock/Getty Images Plus*)

Pielke discussed such scenarios recently with the online British magazine *Spiked*. (For the record, Pielke maintains, "Climate change is real — but it's not the apocalypse.") As the professor told the publication:

At some point, the IPCC went down the path of favouring extreme scenarios. Not extreme climate scenarios, but extreme *societal* scenarios. Imagine a future, for example, where the only energy source we rely on is coal. We get rid of solar, wind, nuclear and natural gas. That's pretty extreme. And it's pretty out of line with where the world actually is now and where it's headed. But still, this scenario is then fed into the climate models that produce projections of future impacts. There's a 'catastrophe bias' baked into the IPCC. [Emphasis in original.]

The IPCC finally has recognized this problem in its latest report, according to Pielke. However, "it hasn't corrected it, which is unfortunate. The dynamic of the IPCC favouring the extreme scenario has been overlaid with the media, which takes an 'if it bleeds, it leads' approach to discussing the climate. It has also been overlaid with climate politics, which favours the extremes, too."

The scare tactics seem to affect the brain functions of Chicken Littles. They run in circles rather than backing actual solutions about emissions. If the doomsayers really were truly terrified about "carbon



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pollution,” as noted by the editors of the *Washington Examiner*, they would

zealously support fracking so that natural gas becomes an ever-cheaper reliable substitute for coal. After all, natural gas emits half the carbon, and its adoption has done more to reduce carbon emissions than all of the environmentalists in history combined.

They would pursue rapid expansion of reliable nuclear and hydroelectric power. After all, endangered salmon will not survive if the Earth perishes. And even the thorny issue of nuclear waste would pale in significance to the possibility that we have only 12 — or, sorry, 10 — years left to act before Earth cannot be saved.

Bjørn Lomborg, president of the Copenhagen Consensus and a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution, doesn't think the sky is falling. He has, however, taken a clear-eyed note of those who have said that is the case. Some examples follow, as compiled by Lomborg, of how the UN has been trying to scare people into drawing that false conclusion.

For instance: In 1972, the late Canadian billionaire oil man Maurice Strong, an environmental official with the UN, said, “We have 10 years to stop catastrophe”; a decade later, in 1982, Mostafa Tolba, who led the UN's environmental program, maintained there would be “an environmental catastrophe which will witness devastation as complete, as irreversible, as any nuclear holocaust” by the year 2000; and, in 1989, a senior UN official told the Associated Press that we had to fix climate change by 1999 or it would be beyond human control.

In contrast to the publicity-seeking catastrophe-mongers, Lomborg presents facts. For example, he cites global deaths — including those related to floods, droughts, storms, and fire — as collected by the International Disaster Database. This reveals, for instance, that

In the 1920s, these disasters killed almost half a million people on average each year. The current climate narrative would suggest that natural disasters are ever deadlier, but that isn't true. Over the past century, climate-related deaths have dropped to fewer than 20,000 on average each year, even though the global population has quadrupled since 1920.

In a recent *New York Post* article, Lomborg pushed back against climate-change alarmism — separating the actual IPCC report and reporting by the “hyperventilating media.” In his view, “the scare stories on climate impacts are vastly overblown and not supported by this new climate report.” He noted:

One of the clearest ways to see this is through climate economics. Because of climate change, the average person worldwide will be “only” 436 percent as well off in 2100 as they are now, instead of 450 percent.

This is not the apocalypse but a problem we should fix smartly.

That of course assumes “smart” governing.

That's not what we have when, for example, a \$93 trillion Green New Deal is considered a viable climate-driven goal for the United States.



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What sometimes gets lost in the rhetoric is that there isn't going to be a decrease of global emissions in the foreseeable future. President Biden and his climate envoy (and private jet/carbon-emitting devotee) John Kerry, among others, know that is the case.

While not trumpeted by the mass media, this isn't a secret. Kerry, for example, has told the *Washington Post*: "The United States could go to zero [emissions] tomorrow. I mean we can't, but if you, figuratively speaking could go to zero. We'd still have a problem; the world would still have a problem. If China went to zero tomorrow with the United States, we'd still have a problem." Nonetheless, Kerry and his boss are still more than willing to spend trillions of our tax dollars because of the "crisis."



Steve Milloy — the publisher of *JunkScience.com* and author of *Scare Pollution* — has written on this situation for the online *Real Clear Energy*. As he put it, both Biden and Kerry

... have openly admitted that unilateral US action on climate will achieve nothing. China has no plans to cut emissions and the G-20 just failed to agree on quitting coal and climate targets.

Yet Democrats nevertheless insist on massive climate spending and changes to our energy system even though there is no conceivable way they will accomplish their supposed underlying goal of controlling the weather.

Methinks control over people is considered more important.

The real point, to ruling elitists, is for them to ultimately hold sway. They're not geniuses. These are people who display an unexpected talent when it comes to acting the fool. We're talking, for example, about an occupant in the White House who stopped the Keystone XL pipeline in this country, ended new fossil fuel leasing on federal lands, canceled oil leasing in Alaska — but then waived sanctions for the Russian Nord Stream 2 pipeline and begged OPEC for more foreign oil.

Meanwhile, India and Communist China will assuredly not cripple their economies with unnecessarily jacked-up energy prices. Yet, that essentially is the political platform for this country's left-wing Democrats, progressives and, importantly, their media enablers.



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