



Written by [James Murphy](#) on October 22, 2018

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Manufacturing Immediate Fear of Climate Change

The images are just too good to pass up. A rain-soaked journalist, his wet hair plastered against his face as he struggles to stand against a fierce wind, reporting from a hurricane-besieged coastal city. Another reporter wearing hip waders, standing in a flooded street, laments the coming cresting of a river. An exhausted, soot-stained fireman pours his heart out during a long-overdue break fighting wildfires in California. A wide shot of the hot sun bearing down on brown and dusty cracked soil, foreshadowing what global warming will ultimately bring.



These scenes of disaster — real or staged — have become common whenever the mainstream media reports on extreme weather while connecting the disaster to the scourge of anthropogenic, or man-made, global warming, which is now referred to more generically as climate change. Any significant or extreme weather event is now hailed as proof of man-made climate change.

During the recent coverage of Hurricane Florence, many media outlets went even further than that. *The Washington Post* editorial board went so far as to claim that one man — President Trump — was somehow complicit with the extreme weather and that his actions were, at least in part, responsible for the destruction the storm wrought.

“Yet when it comes to extreme weather, Mr. Trump is complicit,” the *Post*’s board claimed. “He plays down humans’ role in increasing the risks. It is hard to attribute any single weather event to climate change. But there is no reasonable doubt that humans are priming the Earth’s systems to produce disasters.”

In the not-so-distant past, serious climate scientists would deny the *Post*’s assertion and tell us that individual weather events could not be reasonably blamed on global warming. To do so, they said, was to not have a proper understanding of climate vs. weather, with weather being what we experience meteorologically over short periods of time and climate being an average of how the weather behaves over long periods of time.

So neither climate alarmists nor anthropogenic global-warming skeptics should use individual weather events to further their narrative. Fair enough.

But that has become an ever-increasingly one-sided rule. As Hurricane Florence recently showed us, individual weather events can now be blamed on man-made climate change, as long as the “right” people are doing it.

Back around the year 2000, no climate scientist worth his salt would ever blame a single weather event on climate change for one reason: Climate science was not yet understood to such a degree that a link could confidently be made. The world has always experienced extreme weather, after all. The best that



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the most committed climate-change alarmist could say about a single extreme weather event vis-à-vis global warming would be something like, “We can expect more of this type of weather in the future due to climate change.” Other than that vague prediction, no link between extreme weather and climate change could be alleged.

Fast-forward to today, and such attributions are becoming quite common. “The public stance of the scientific community about individual event attribution in the year 2000 is that it’s not something that science does,” said Stanford climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh. “And so to go from that to now, that you’ll find a paper every week ... that’s why we say there’s been an explosion of research. It’s gone from zero to 60, basically.”

Why? There are a couple of reasons for the recent surge in attributing extreme weather events to so-called climate change. Perhaps the most important of these is about the public conception of what climate change actually is, and why, in the opinion of climate alarmists, it must be quickly addressed.

A January 2018 article in *Scientific American* hailed the new development. “Scientists Can Now Blame Individual Natural Disasters on Climate Change,” the headline blared. The article cited increased research into the new field of “extreme event attribution study,” which focuses on just how climate change might be responsible for current weather events.

It doesn’t matter that these attribution studies rely heavily on those much-maligned climate models, which have difficulty even in hindcasting, which is a way of testing climate models by inputting data from past weather in order to test the accuracy of any future climate modeling. Often, even when the weather conditions are conclusively known, climate models have a difficult time recreating the conditions in their computer simulations. Our weather and our climate are just too complex to predict accurately, even when scientists know the conditions that they’re attempting to recreate.

Oxford’s Myles Allen, one of the fathers of attribution science, signaled the true reason for even attempting to attribute extreme weather events to climate change. “I think the public and many policymakers don’t really take those 100-year forecasts very seriously,” Allen said. “They are much more seriously interested in the question of what is happening now and why — which boils down to attribution.”

Photo: AP Images

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So climate alarmists have found that vague predictions of doom a hundred years off tend to cause the public to tune out on climate change and become less engaged. Therefore, the fear factor must be increased. By attributing a single hurricane’s ferocity to climate change, the alarmist community hopes to frighten the masses into accepting their theories as fact and make the populace more compliant when solutions heavy on governmental controls and globalism are proposed.

This subdivision of climate science — attribution science — is a great boon to the mainstream media. Until now, climate reporters have been hamstrung on their reporting when it comes to extreme weather events such as hurricanes. It was virtually impossible to find scientists who would link a hurricane or a heat wave to climate change. That’s not true anymore, and it makes it easier for the mainstream news media to peddle their favorite commodity: fear.

And the mainstream media, always looking to please the globalists pushing the climate-change



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narrative, have jumped on the bandwagon. In late July of this year, a headline on nbcnews.com screamed, “Climate experts now cite global warming during extreme weather disasters.” The story claimed that “there is now a developing consensus that scientists can be more precise and forceful in connecting some extreme weather events to a warming planet.”

There’s that word again: consensus. It should be noted that true science is a search for evidence-based truth, not a majority opinion.

Climate alarmists have been warning us for decades that anthropogenic global warming will bring more extreme weather. Now, they have begun to point to current weather events as evidence of this.

“We have more confidence scientifically than in the past,” stated Corinne Le Quere, the director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia in England. “I feel more brave personally to say to people, ‘How was it in the past and how has it changed now?’ There are cases — especially with extreme heat and drought and fires — where the logic in everyone’s mind is correct: It’s connected to climate-change.”

Meteorologist and research scientist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville Roy Spencer doesn’t agree. On Fox News’ *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, Spencer cited facts rather than propaganda. “Since the 1950s, there has been a warming trend, but what we haven’t seen in terms of any long-term weather measurements is whether there’s been any change in severe weather,” Spencer pointed out. “There hasn’t been any increase in hurricanes — that’s on a global basis.... The frequency of hits on the United States by major hurricanes has gone down by 50 percent since the 1930s and 1940s. There’s been no increase in droughts, no increase in floods. Tornadoes are down, but still weather varies a lot, especially hurricanes, year to year, decade to decade. So, there’s a huge amount of variability.”

“This is what Mother Nature does naturally. If there’s a human influence in there, you wouldn’t know it because there’s so much natural variability,” Spencer concluded.

It’s also important to note that the past two hurricane seasons have come on the heels of a decade-long drought of significant storms. For years, climate alarmists have been telling us that such storms will increase — both in frequency and severity. Thus far, they can only point to three storms, Hurricanes Harvey and Maria of last year and Hurricane Florence of this year, as evidence of that. And while all three storms were terrible in their own way, none were unprecedented.

Another important — and rather dastardly — reason that climate scientists are now working hard to attribute single extreme weather events to climate change is the ever-increasing specter of lawsuits linking individual industries or companies to climate change. If climate-alarmist scientists can create the perception that individual weather events such as the California drought are linked to climate change, it will likely open the door to multi-billion dollar lawsuits.

Currently, several communities from New York to San Francisco are suing fossil-fuel distributors such as ExxonMobil and BP for their purported part in contributing to climate change. The communities are claiming that the companies knew as early as the 1950s about the effects that their products would have on the environment.

So climate alarmists are looking to link up with ambulance-chasing lawyers in an obvious attempt to lay blame for weather events not on “Acts of God,” as the old insurance agency vernacular would call them, but on fossil-fuel companies and anyone else they see as complicit in extreme weather events. A study



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published in the *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law* entitled “Extreme weather event attribution science and climate change litigation: an essential step in the causal chain” put it like this: “We suggest the science of event attribution may become a driver of litigation, as it shifts understanding of what weather is expected and, relevantly for law, foreseeable.”

Thus far, the courts have not looked favorably on such lawsuits. This summer, U.S. District Court Judge William Alsup dismissed lawsuits brought by Oakland and San Francisco, California, saying, “The problem [climate change] deserves a solution on a more vast scale than can be supplied by a district judge or jury in a public nuisance case.”

But while Alsup didn’t allow the suit to move forward, his decision did acknowledge that climate change was a problem. If these new “attribution” scientists can link the current weather and attribute extreme weather events to climate change, will the courts feel the same way?

Attribution science is quickly gaining credibility, not only in climate-alarmist circles, but in governments as well. Germany’s national weather agency looks to be the first in the world to offer these quick assessments as to how climate change can be blamed for current weather. As early as next year, the agency looks to post such findings on social media while the extreme weather is still happening, and therefore fresh on the mind of the public. “We want to quantify the influence of climate change on any atmospheric conditions that might bring extreme weather to Germany or Central Europe,” said Paul Becker, the vice-president of the weather agency. “The science is ripe to start doing it.”

But it won’t take until next year for the mainstream media to use this new attribution science. Where once the media could only hint that a hurricane, a heat wave, or a drought was connected to global warming, they can now quote scientists on those connections. It’s another arrow in the quiver of the climate-alarmist community. And it’s another way to scare the world’s population into taking so-called climate action.

It’s a 21st-century version of the Salem Witch Trials. These new attribution scientists, using the same climate models that can’t even simulate past weather events with much accuracy, are providing the material for the mainstream media to hysterically claim that current weather events are connected to climate change, which scientists used to tell us would only manifest decades from now. And if climate change is truly man-made, as they claim, that makes us the witches. And we all know how those trials in Salem turned out for the witches.

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