



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on February 22, 2012

## Activist Climate Scientist Admits Stealing Documents from Heartland Institute

Peter Gleick (left), environmental activist and president of the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security, admitted Monday that he had posed as someone else in order to obtain confidential materials from the Heartland Institute, a libertarian think tank in Chicago that challenges the accuracy of the theory of manmade global warming.



According to the *New York Times*:

Dr. Gleick distributed the documents to several well-known bloggers and activists who support the work of mainstream climate scientists and who have denounced the Heartland Institute as a center of climate change denial. The document release, which lit up the Internet last week, was cast by some bloggers as the work of a whistle-blowing Heartland employee or ex-employee who had access to internal papers, when it was in fact orchestrated by Dr. Gleick, a Yale- and Berkeley-trained scientist and environmental activist who says that he was frustrated with Heartland's anti-climate-change programs.

Gleick characterized his actions as a "... serious lapse of my own and professional judgment and ethics ...." He added:

My judgment was blinded by my frustration with the ongoing efforts — often anonymous, well-funded, and coordinated — to attack climate science and scientists and prevent this debate, and by the lack of transparency of the organizations involved. Nevertheless I deeply regret my own actions in this case. I offer my personal apologies to all those affected.

Gleick went on to vouch for the accuracy of the documents he distributed:

I can explicitly confirm, as can the Heartland Institute, that the documents they emailed to me are identical to the documents that have been made public. I made no changes or alterations of any kind to any of the Heartland Institute documents or to the original anonymous communication.

The Heartland Institute, however, challenges Gleick on that point. At least one of the "leaked" documents, institute spokesman Jim Lakely says, appears to be a fake, and other documents may have



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been altered. Heartland officials also point out that criminal and civil liability may be involved, as the documents were stolen.

Even environmental activists agree that Gleick's actions constitute yet another blow to the credibility of their theory of manmade or anthropogenic global warming. The *New York Times'* Andy Revkin observed Monday on his Dot Earth blog,

One way or another, Gleick's use of deception in pursuit of his cause after years of calling out climate deception has destroyed his credibility and harmed others. That is his personal tragedy and shame (and I'm sure devastating for his colleagues, friends and family).

Ironically, as [Warren Meyer](#) has noted online in *Forbes* magazine, Dr. Gleick has often touted himself as a defender of scientific integrity and called for a more rational discussion of the theory of climate change. Meyer also observed that those purportedly genuine documents from the Heartland Institute sound more like the projection of motives by manmade global warming believers into the minds of skeptics. One such document states, "His effort will focus on providing curriculum that shows that the topic of climate change is controversial and uncertain — two key points that are effective in dissuading teachers from teaching science." Such language, Meyer says, seems atypical of previous documents Heartland Institute has produced on other policy issues.

Megan McArdle, senior editor for *The Atlantic* magazine, has discussed another reason that the documents may be forgeries: The location of the pdf file shows that it was created, not in the Central Time Zone where the Heartland Institute is located, but in the Pacific Time Zone where Dr. Gleick lives. Although McArdle notes that it would theoretically be possible for someone at the Heartland Institute to have scanned the document and sent it to another individual in the Pacific Time Zone, who then would have created the file and sent it back, she dismisses that scenario as making no sense at all.

Aside from the questions of doctored documents, Warren Meyer notes the interesting fact that, although two years ago Andy Revkin of the *New York Times* had refused to publish the notorious "Climategate" emails from East Anglia University, maintaining that they were stolen, he published Gleick's documents almost immediately, without even contacting the Heartland Institute to see if they were genuine.

Critics are saying that this small "Climategate 2" once again calls into question the already widely discredited manmade global-warming theory, in the name of which Americans are increasingly being forced to accept draconian government policies.

Photo: Peter Gleick lectures at SkeptiCalCon May 29, 2011 Berkeley, CA



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