



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on November 5, 2015

Climate Fraud? Rep. Warns NOAA of Hiding Subpoenaed Data

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is under investigation for suspicion of fudging its data to support global warming alarmism — [again](#).

NOAA is refusing to hand over data, including e-mail communications, subpoenaed by a congressional committee that is tasked with overseeing the multi-billion dollar agency. In July, Representative Lamar Smith (R-Texas; shown), chairman of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, asked NOAA to provide his committee with the data. On October 13, because the agency had not been fully forthcoming, the committee issued a subpoena to NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan. On November 4, Chairman Smith warned Sullivan that continued stonewalling could subject her to criminal prosecution. “To date, you have neither produced all documents responsive to the subpoena, nor invoked a valid legal privilege to justify withholding them,” Rep. Smith wrote in a [letter](#).



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“Your failure to comply with the Committee’s subpoena has delayed the Committee’s investigation and thwarted the Committee’s constitutional obligation to conduct oversight of the Executive Branch,” he continued. “Furthermore, your failure to comply with a duly issued subpoena may expose you to civil and/or criminal enforcement mechanisms,” Smith advised.

Chairman Smith noted in the letter that, according to media accounts, a NOAA spokesman had said the agency would not release the subpoenaed staff e-mails and communications because they are considered “confidential.” “Contrary to NOAA’s public comments,” Smith said, “it is not the position of NOAA to determine what is, or is not, responsive to the Committee’s investigation or whether certain communications are confidential.”

Smith called on Administrator Sullivan to comply with the committee’s subpoena “no later than Friday, November 6, 2015,” and to make Dr. Thomas Karl and other named NOAA staff members available for transcribed interviews with the committee “no later than November 13, 2015.”

At issue is something known in climate circles as the “hiatus” or “pause.” Running completely contrary



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to the non-stop fright peddling by climate activists and their allies in the major media is the fact that the most reliable data sets for global temperatures, provided by orbiting satellites, show [no global warming for the past 18-plus years](#).

However a [report](#) issued by NOAA in June claimed to have “corrected” the global temperature data to eliminate the “hiatus” in global warming. This is a big deal, since over the past several years even many of the most diehard proponents of anthropogenic (manmade) global warming (AGW) have been forced by the evidence [publicly to admit](#) there has been [no measurable global warming for almost 19 years \(18 years, 8 months\)](#).

Obviously, it is difficult to project the urgency needed to convince American taxpayers — not to mention taxpayers throughout the rest of the world — that governments should be empowered to confiscate their wealth and regulate every aspect of their lives, if the actual temperature record contradicts the scary scenarios of a (supposedly) melting planet. A recent [Associated Press survey](#) finds that in spite of a relentless media barrage of fright-peddling stories about global warming, most Americans are not very concerned about climate change.

With the United Nations Climate Summit in Paris fast approaching, the outcome of this tug-of-war could prove to be as significant as the [Climategate scandal](#) that upended the [UN’s 2009 Climate Summit in Copenhagen](#).

That could mean plans for a Paris deal that produces a gigantic global regulatory regime and [trillions of dollars](#) for “[climate justice](#)” are in dire jeopardy. Obviously, a lot is at stake here.

Hiatus “Deniers” on Thin Ice

For the past several years, the most fanatical AGW alarmists have been cursing and fuming at the hiatus and attempting to discredit it. They are the hiatus “deniers.” Other veteran alarmists— whether due to a spirit of genuine scientific inquiry or a recognition of the futility of denial — have been trying to explain it away. One of the most common attempts at explaining the inconvenient “pause” (another widely-used name for the hiatus) insists that the manmade heat has been absorbed by the oceans (“[the oceans ate the heat](#)”). But it will be “[belched back into the atmosphere](#)” with a vengeance, they say, so don’t get out of AGW panic mode just yet.

The alarmists were relieved (and claimed vindication) when NOAA came to the rescue with its “new analysis.” NOAA’s June 4 [press release](#) claims to have disposed of the troublesome hiatus, stating:

A new study published online today in the journal *Science* finds that the rate of global warming during the last 15 years has been as fast as or faster than that seen during the latter half of the 20th Century. The study refutes the notion that there has been a slowdown or “hiatus” in the rate of global warming in recent years.

The study is the work of a team of scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Centers for Environmental Information* (NCEI) using the latest global surface temperature data.

“Our new analysis suggests that the apparent hiatus may have been largely the result of limitations in past datasets, and that the rate of warming over the first 15 years of this century has, in fact, been as fast or faster than that seen over the last half of the 20th century,” said Thomas R. Karl, Director, NOAA’s National Centers for Environmental Information.

However, to say the least, the NOAA analysis does not mean “the science is settled” regarding the



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hiatus. Not by a long shot. Soon after the NOAA report was issued, Professor Judith Curry [commented](#) on her widely read blog site: “Color me ‘unconvinced.’”

Dr. Curry, formerly known as the “high priestess of global warming,” said further: “This short paper in *Science* is not adequate to explain and explore the very large changes that have been made to the NOAA data set.... So while I’m sure this latest analysis from NOAA will be regarded as politically useful for the Obama administration, I don’t regard it as a particularly useful contribution to our scientific understanding of what is going on.”

Renowned climate scientists Patrick Michaels, Richard Lindzen, and Paul Knappenberger have pointed out the “questionable” and “dubious” methods used by the NOAA authors to make the hiatus disappear, including their “homogenization” of temperature data to arrive at the desired outcome. “The main claim by the [NOAA] authors that they have uncovered a significant recent warming trend is dubious,” they [write](#).

Michaels, et al continue:

The significance level they report on their findings (.10) is hardly normative, and the use of it should prompt members of the scientific community to question the reasoning behind the use of such a lax standard.

In addition, the authors’ treatment of buoy sea-surface temperature (SST) data was guaranteed to create a warming trend. The data were adjusted upward by 0.12°C to make them “homogeneous” with the longer-running temperature records taken from engine intake channels in marine vessels.

As has been acknowledged by numerous scientists, the engine intake data are clearly contaminated by heat conduction from the engine itself, and as such, never intended for scientific use. On the other hand, environmental monitoring is the specific purpose of the buoys. Adjusting good data upward to match bad data seems questionable, and the fact that the buoy network becomes increasingly dense in the last two decades means that this adjustment must put a warming trend in the data.

Additional expert critiques of the NOAA report are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

“NOAA Needs to Come Clean”

NOAA’s website [says](#) the agency’s “mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth’s environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.” NOAA insists its scientists are above reproach in the “hiatus” matter. “We stand behind our scientists, who conduct their work in an objective manner,” NOAA spokeswoman Claran Clayton said. “We have provided all of the information the Committee needs to understand this issue.”

Climate alarmists are characterizing Rep. Smith’s inquiry and subpoena request as a case of malicious harassment for a political agenda. However, Smith is insistent that it is the NOAA “scientists” and their political bosses who are politicizing the process. “It was inconvenient for this administration that climate data has clearly showed no warming for the past two decades,” Smith told *Nature*, a journal that is heavily biased in the alarmist direction. “The American people have every right to be suspicious when NOAA alters data to get the politically correct results they want and then refuses to reveal how those decisions were made. NOAA needs to come clean about why they altered the data to get the results they needed to advance this administration’s extreme climate change agenda. The agency has yet to identify any legal basis for withholding these documents. The Committee intends to use all tools



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at its disposal to undertake its Constitutionally-mandated oversight responsibilities.”

Photo of Rep. Lamar Smith: AP Images

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