



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on June 5, 2013

Cooking Climate Consensus Data: “97% of Scientists Affirm AGW” Debunked

The survey by Australian global-warming activist John Cook, released recently with a massive media sendoff, is rapidly melting, as scientists and statisticians subject it to analysis. And now it's leaking out that Cook's e-mails show he was scheming on this fraudulent survey to promote a leftist political agenda for well over a year. Cook made a big media splash in May with the publication of a study by him and several co-authors claiming to prove that climate scientists overwhelmingly support the theory that human activity is warming the planet to dangerous levels. Cook's claims received their biggest boost on May 16, when President Barack Obama tweeted: “Ninety-seven percent of scientists agree: #climate change is real, man-made and dangerous.”



The mainstream media and climate-alarmist blogosphere uncritically accepted the Cook study and trumpeted the consensus claims as gospel. We reported on May 21 (“[Global Warming ‘Consensus’: Cooking the Books](#)”) on the critiques of the Cook study by experts who show that Cook cooked the data. Out of the nearly 12,000 scientific papers Cook's team evaluated, only 65 endorsed Cook's alarmist position. That's less than one percent, not 97 percent. Moreover, as we reported, the Cook study was flawed from the beginning, using selection parameters designed to weight the outcome in favor of the alarmist position.

In a May 22 follow-up article (“[Climate ‘Consensus’ Con Game: Desperate Effort Before Release of UN Report](#)”) *The New American* reported on additional problems with the Cook study and cited a large and growing list of eminent climate scientists — including Nobel Prize recipients and scientists who served on the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) — who challenge the claim that there is any “scientific consensus” on climate change, or that “the science is settled” in favor of the Al Gore alarmist position.

Oops! Guess We Forgot Those

Now comes another devastating analysis of Cook's cooked data from a big name in the climate science community: Professor Richard S. J. Tol. Dr. Tol is a professor of the economics of climate change at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and a professor of economics at the University of Sussex, England. He has also served on the UN's IPCC.

Dr. Tol has [statistically deconstructed the 97 percent consensus myth](#) of Cook et al.

Professor Tol utilizes four graphs to demonstrate the biased methods utilized by the Cook team to skew the results of their “research.” One of the major “errors” of the study (whether intentional or the result



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of incompetence) was the use of the term “global climate change” to search the scientific database for papers that were included in the 12,000 tabulated by Cook and his co-authors.

In his first graph, Dr. Tol points out that by including “global” before “climate change,” Cook et al “dropped 75% of papers and changed disciplinary distribution.”

In his second graph, Dr. Tol demonstrates that by including “global” before “climate change,” the supposedly authoritative Cook study conveniently “dropped many papers by eminent climate researchers.” And Tol lists around 50 of those researchers who were “dropped.” These, of course, represent only a small sampling of the thousands of scientists who have expressed various levels of disagreement with the hysterical climate pronouncements of the IPCC, Al Gore, and John Cook.

Tol’s third graph shows that by including “global” before “climate change” the Cook team “dropped 33 of the 50 most cited papers.”

In his fourth graph, Dr. Tol shows that the Cook team also skewed the results of their findings by the database they chose to draw papers from, using the Web of Science (WoS) rather than SciVerse Scopus. “Choosing exclusive WoS over inclusive Scopus, Cook et al. dropped 35% of papers and changed disciplinary distribution,” Tol observes.

Another E-mail Scandal Reveals Cook’s “97 Percent” Scam

[Populartechnology.net has posted e-mails](#) from John Cook’s Skeptical Science website concerning what Cook calls “The Consensus Project” or TCP. The e-mails, from early 2012, reveal the huge promotional campaign Cook was rolling out to publicize the consensus study — before he had even done the study. It is also evident from the e-mails that Cook knew he was cooking the data to reach a preconceived conclusion. In his “Introduction to TCP” e-mail of January 19, 2012, Cook explains to team members:

It’s essential that the public understands that there’s a scientific consensus on AGW [anthropogenic (man-made) global warming]. So Jim Powell, Dana and I have been working on something over the last few months that we hope will have a game changing impact on the public perception of consensus. Basically, we hope to establish that not only is there a consensus, there is a strengthening consensus. Deniers like to portray the myth that the consensus is crumbling, that the tide is turning.

Right from the get-go, it is apparent that Cook is planning to cook up a “game changing” study that will prove the “scientific consensus” he wants the public to accept. Typical of Cook and activists of his ilk is their use of “deniers” when referring to their opposition, an attempt to smear scientists who hold different opinions by equating them with Nazi holocaust deniers. It is hardly the mark of professional civility and collegiality one expects from true scientists.

Cook’s “Introduction” admits that “TCP is basically an update and expansion of Naomi Oreskes’ survey of the peer-reviewed literature with deeper analysis.” That is an interesting admission, since the 2004 Oreskes study — which was the original source for the 97 percent claim — was exposed for the same methodological flaws. Dr. Benny Peiser, a social science professor at John Moores University and visiting fellow at the University of Buckingham, eviscerated the Oreskes study, pointing out that Oreskes had falsified the so-called consensus by her faulty selection criteria in choosing papers to include in her survey. (See [here](#) and [here](#).)

In his “Introduction to TCP,” Cook acknowledges that probably only half of the 12,000 papers they’ve selected will either explicitly or implicitly endorse AGW alarmism. But over time, he expects online



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volunteers to “process” many of the 6,000 non-endorsement papers, “converting” them into endorsements! Here’s Cook:

I anticipate there will be around 6000 “neutral” papers. So what I was thinking of doing next was a public crowd sourcing project where the public are given the list of neutral papers and links to the full paper — if they find evidence of an endorsement, they submit it to SkS (Skeptical Science).... Thus over time, we would gradually process the 6000 neutral papers, converting many of them to endorsement papers — and make regular announcements like “hey the consensus just went from 99.75% to 99.8%, here are the latest papers with quotes.”

Cook went on to sketch out an entire promotional campaign utilizing press releases, major media programs, booklets, Kindle/iBooks, blogs, etc. “We beat the consensus drum often and regularly and make SkS the home of the perceived strengthening consensus,” Cook advised.

At least one of the members of his team seems to have recognized that Cook had the emphasis all backwards. Ari Jokimäki responded:

I have to say that I find this planning of huge marketing strategies somewhat strange when we don’t even have our results in and the research subject is not that revolutionary either (just summarizing existing research).

“It’s Official; We’re All a Bunch of Leftists” — John Cook

The fanatical AGW commitment of Cook and his coauthors appears to be driven by their leftist ideological devotion. [Populartechnology.net provides downloads](#) from the Skeptical Science forum thread entitled, “Political Compass,” in which frequent Skeptical Science commentators and moderators took a political quiz revealing (much to their mock surprise) they all share the same left-wing political ideology. “I’m a damn dirty commie,” said Dana Nuccitelli, one of Cook’s coauthors, after seeing his quiz results.

Here are comments from some of the other SkS team members:

“OMG, I’m a closet Leftist!” exclaimed Daniel Bailey.

“It seems I am on par with Nelson Mandela,” remarked “perseus.”

“I’m still something of leftie, despite all those years in business,” said Andy S.

“The Criticisms of the Skeptics are right — SkSers are obviously all pinko/liberals,” admitted Glenn Tamblyn.

“It’s official, we’re all a bunch of leftists,” said John Cook.

“Consensus Drums” Aimed at Aiding UN Agenda

However, the fact that the claims of the Cook/Skeptical Science survey have been exploded as bogus and the fact that the Cook/Skeptical Science team have been exposed as self-described “commies,” “leftists,” and “pinko/liberals” haven’t stopped the MSM commentators from citing their fraudulent “research” as gospel. Incredibly, Prof. Eric Alterman of the left-wing *Nation* magazine cited the Cook survey in a June 4 posting on the left-wing ThinkProgress.org (“[Think Again: Blame The News For The Public’s Ignorance About The Climate](#)”) to condemn the mainstream media for not being sufficiently alarmist when it comes to global warming!

Yes, we’ve only been marinating 24/7 for two decades in increasingly hysterical media predictions and



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pronouncements about the coming AGW apocalypse — and the American public still hasn't bought the false "consensus." However, with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) now engaged in [another conference in Bonn, Germany](#), and the UN's IPCC set to release a new series of reports, we can expect that the Cooked-up consensus results will be cited endlessly. Or, as Cook himself put it: "We beat the consensus drum often and regularly."

Related articles:

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