

The inconvenient truth is that catastrophists are wrong

By Maurice Newman, *The Australian*, 17 January 2017

It should come as a great relief to know the freezing temperatures recently experienced in the northern hemisphere do not signal an end to global warming.

Imagine if mankind's increasingly costly attempts to arrest CO2 emissions were unnecessary. That the misallocation of productive resources, prolonging the misery of the world's most vulnerable people, was nothing more than a cynical ideological exercise?

Hopefully, those global warming doubters in Florida watching frozen iguanas falling stiff from the trees now know that while they were freezing, according to Australia's Bureau of Meteorology, little old Penrith in Sydney, Australia, was the warmest spot on the planet, recording its highest temperature ever, having "broken the all-time maximum temperature record for ... the Sydney metropolitan area".

Well, perhaps in all that excitement the bureau can be forgiven for overlooking the fact Penrith Lakes started recording temperatures only in 1995 and for missing a much higher temperature recorded in nearby Richmond in 1939. But they were right. It was hot.

In a hurried piece in Fairfax publications, the Climate Council of Australia's Will Steffen throws hot water on any misconceptions that may have been drawn from abnormal snowfalls in Britain, Switzerland and Japan, the record-breaking cold snap in Canada and the US, and the expansion of the East Antarctic Ice Sheet.

He says: "Terms like 'global warming' and the mental images they trigger can be misleading when people attempt to understand what is happening to the climate. A far better term is 'climate disruption', which captures the real nature of the vast array of changes, many of them abrupt and unexpected, that are occurring." So, fire and ice, it's to be expected.

Of course, you won't be surprised to learn Steffen claims "the climate disruption we are increasingly experiencing is not natural. It is caused by the heat-trapping gases we humans are pouring into the atmosphere primarily by the burning of coal, oil and gas."

On the day Steffen's opinion piece appeared, [this newspaper republished Matt Ridley's article](#) in *The Times* claiming "the Earth is very slowly slipping back into a proper ice age". This confirms research by Henrik Svensmark, Australia's David Evans and others, who correlated low solar activity (fewer sunspots) and increased cloud cover (as modulated by cosmic rays), with a cooling climate.

Indeed, last year scientists submitted 120 papers linking historical and modern climate change to variations in solar activity.

Steffen wasn't among them. He says: "Whole ecosystems are succumbing to (human-induced) climate disruption. In 2016 unusually dry and hot conditions triggered massive fires in Tasmania's World Heritage forests, while ocean circulation patterns have moved - unprecedented underwater heatwaves around the world, driving the tragic coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef."

Yet the chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Russell Reichelt, dismisses many of the claims that he says “misrepresent the extent and impact of coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef.”

Peter Ridd from James Cook University goes further, saying: “We can no longer trust the scientific organisations like the ARC (Australian Research Council) Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies. The science is coming out not properly checked, tested or replicated, and this is a great shame.”

Steffen’s work could fit this description. He spends much time pushing eco-catastrophism. “Climate disruption” he says “brings growing risks of large-scale migration and conflict as people, particularly the most vulnerable, are forced to deal with increasingly difficult conditions where they live. Some security analysts warn that climate disruption will dwarf terrorism and other conventional threats if present trends continue or worsen.

“Had enough of climate disruption? Then let’s leave our 20th-century thinking behind and get on with the job of rapidly building innovative, clever, carbon-neutral 21st-century societies.”

But Ridley questions the influence of carbon dioxide. He reminds us that: “In 1895 the Swede, Svante Arrhenius, one of the scientists who first championed the greenhouse theory, suggested that the ice retreated because carbon dioxide levels rose, and advanced because they fell. If this was true, then industrial emissions could head off the next ice age. There is indeed a correlation in the ice cores between temperature and carbon dioxide, but inconveniently it is the wrong way round: carbon dioxide follows rather than leads temperature downward when the ice returns.”

But where would manmade global warming “science” be if it relied on just facts? For decades, climate science has been plagued by scandals, deceit and the confessions of whistleblowers.

Penrith’s hyped recording is not new. Scientist and long-time BOM critic Jennifer Marohasy has been calling for an audit and urging Energy and Environment Minister Josh Frydenberg “to inform the World Meteorological Organisation that the temperatures recorded by our bureau are not consistent with calibration, nor any international standard”, and, to “direct the bureau to desist from announcing new record hot days”.

Still, institutionalised data bias is a handy default for radical-left eco-catastrophists who have a tendency to extract worst-case scenarios from every weather event.

But despite their best efforts, in the public’s eyes their story is wearing thin. There have been too many false predictions and unwarranted alarmism. People are wising up to the reality that climate science has become an unfalsifiable ideology and resent having their moral conscience questioned should they disagree.

If Ridley is right and the earth is slowly slipping back into a proper ice age, it will be literally cold comfort, not to mention lethal, to keep passing it off as climate disruption.

To survive such an event, our successors will need a plentiful supply of cheap, reliable energy, impossible given today’s intelligentsia’s religious objection to low-cost fossil and nuclear fuels.

It’s not carbon dioxide that threatens us with extinction but blind ideology dressed up as science.