

Submission – Dr. Sonja A Boehmer-Christiansen

Concerning your recent Garnaut Review (which I have read in the context of the Stern review and IPCC pronouncements), I would like to make brief comments based on

1. My own research and publications on the politics of climate change (see attachment)
2. My editorial experience as editor of Energy and Environment (Multi-science, UK) since 1997.
"Energy & Environment" has published well researched critiques of both the IPCC and the Stern Review.
3. My private research since mid-1990s into the arguments and politics of climate scepticism/IPCC critiques.

Comments for your consideration:

1. Beware of the IPCC consensus

This is not primarily a consensus among climate scientists, but a negotiated agreement among policy-makers and their selected advisors, some government funded scientists. The objective is to support the 1992 Climate Change Framework Convention (UNFCCC) and its 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

As such this consensus reflects the aspirations, political agendas and interests of several UN agencies, the UN bureaucracy and supportive governments, as well as a large number of globally 'networking' (but nationally financed) research bodies.

2. Beware of the Stern Review

This is not an independent piece of academic research, but a UK government document closely tied to a major diplomatic effort.

Argument:

International law as laid down in 1992 defines climate change as man-made, dangerous and subject to mitigation by reducing emissions from fossil fuel combustion.

As such the Convention asked the scientific community to select knowledge and theory to 'underpin' it. Dissident voices were either ignored, excluded or even ridiculed.

The UNFCCC did not ask for a scientific examination of climate and climate variability. It did not ask for an examination of the natural influences on climatic variability. As a result the so-called science of climate change consists to a large degree of 'cherry picking'.

Both the IPCC 'consensus' and Stern are products of alliances of

interests that are not primarily concerned about 'climate' - a poorly understood natural system that may be subject to anthropogenic as well as galactic influences - but are interested in the benefits the proposed 'solutions' to the postulated dangerous warming.

The solutions include giving 'carbon' a price, global and national emission trading and subsidising of low carbon dioxide emitting technologies and practises, as well as taxation and exporting 'green' energy technologies to developing countries. Several of these 'solutions' de facto increase water use, compete with land used for food production, reduce employment opportunities in specific areas, and raise energy costs further.

'Other' factors causing problems in specific areas are likely to be neglected as global 'blame games' become substitutes for genuine problem solving.

As it stands, the Climate Change convention and the supporting rhetoric about catastrophe and serious future risks to humanity, and even to 'the creation', serve a number of political, ideological and now financial interests that far outweigh the influences of 'science'.

Science, together with green ideology, are used by assorted lobbies, including some governments, to legitimise a large agenda which ranging from energy policy objectives to political aspirations. For example, several energy industries, assorted energy R&D objectives, and energy policy objectives hope to benefit from 'tackling' climate change, which de facto means a transition to low carbon economies. (This transition may well be desirable in some parts of the world.)

Both nuclear power and alternative/green energy sources stand to gain much from tougher regulations of fossil fuels. Energy security considerations have jumped on the bandwagon, and the UK government and EU are now defending London as the centre for carbon trading and clean energy finance. Large consultancy empires as well as regulatory and aid ambitions have grown up developed around the carbon dioxide emission reduction project.

A country like Australia would be wise to consider the costs and benefits of this potential 'green' bubble. Should the climate link proof false (see below) and should climate cease to 'warm globally', large amounts of capital and human effort might have been wasted. Competitiveness in world markets would be lost to the providers of carbon credits.

One alternative is adaptation, as ABARE has recognised. However, here the issue is - adaptation to what? To model forecasts or actual measurements of climatic change? The observational record of climatic change has declined in recent decades, while model 'predictions' have dominated research, forecasts that suffer from the usual weaknesses of computer modelling. The literature here is large, and includes critiques of the Stern Review.

To conclude:

I am pretty certain that the link between fossil fuel use and climate remains speculative and hypothetical. (See quotes at end) Before such model forecasts, be they scientific or economics, are accepted as credible inputs to policy, they should be tested for their political motivations and promises. These should be discussed in public.

My journal has published contributions to this debate, both scientific and economic, since the early 1990s. In my personal opinion, both types of modelling have made considerable academic progress, but their contributions to policy-related decisions must still be treated with scepticism. Neither Stern nor the IPCC final summaries reflect true academic opinion, they are the products of civil servants. They have been exaggerated the climate 'threat' in order to serve the interests primarily of fossil fuel-poor industrialised countries. Australia's interests, and those of the world, lie elsewhere.

Yours sincerely
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Additional quotes from material about to be published/recently published:

1. Draft abstract to a manuscript I received recently (not attributed).

"Alarming statements from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on global warming are being challenged by a considerable number of independent scientists from different disciplines, with a variety of arguments. The disputes comprise collection and interpretation of data, the validation of hypotheses and climate models and their uses for scientific decision making, and also the quality of the scientific discourse on these matters

Many of the opposing scientists are not directly involved in climate research and this brings into focus the weight to be given to views of experts and non-experts when the use of the scientific method is discussed in general and, thus, a critique on the use of the peer review system in scientific journals that is supposed to safeguard the quality of science is needed. The 'whistle blowers' concern is that supposed dangerous warming seems to be exaggerated which may do damage to the image of science as a whole.

The possible causes of exaggerated conclusions are investigated. It is concluded that the general practice of parameterization of computer models in climate change research shows an element of pseudo science

because it leads to self confirmation of input hypotheses (dogmas) and insufficient challenge of theories. The theory of the enhanced greenhouse effect of increasing CO2 concentrations in the atmosphere - the very basis for alarming messages concerning future climate change - is itself largely a modelling concept. It is suggested, that for the sake of progress of science, this theory requires reinvestigation. "

2. From: An inconvenient new peer-reviewed study published in the December 2007 issue of the International Journal of Climatology. Now on the web at <http://science-sepp.blogspot.com/2007/12/press-release-dec-10-2007.html>

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" The fundamental question is whether the observed warming is natural or anthropogenic (human-caused). Lead author David Douglass said:
"The observed pattern of warming, comparing surface and atmospheric temperature trends, does not show the characteristic fingerprint associated with greenhouse warming. The inescapable conclusion is that the human contribution is not significant and that observed increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases make only a negligible contribution to climate warming."

Co-author John Christy said:

"Satellite data and independent balloon data agree that atmospheric warming trends do not exceed those of the surface. Greenhouse models, on the other hand, demand that atmospheric trend values be 2-3 times greater. We have good reason, therefore, to believe that current climate models greatly overestimate the effects of greenhouse gases. Satellite observations suggest that GH models ignore negative feedbacks, produced by clouds and by water vapor, that diminish the warming effects of carbon dioxide."

Co-author S. Fred Singer said:

"The current warming trend is simply part of a natural cycle of climate warming and cooling that has been seen in ice cores, deep-sea sediments, stalagmites, etc., and published in hundreds of papers in peer-reviewed journals. The mechanism for producing such cyclical climate changes is still under discussion; but they are most likely caused by variations in the solar wind and associated magnetic fields that affect the flux of cosmic rays incident on the earth's atmosphere. In turn, such cosmic rays are believed to influence cloudiness and thereby control the amount of sunlight reaching the earth's surface-and thus the climate." Our research demonstrates that the ongoing rise of atmospheric CO2 has only a minor influence on climate change. We must conclude, therefore, that attempts to control CO2 emissions are ineffective and pointless - but very costly. "
