

Re: Collapse of Wilkins ice shelf and its consequences for the 3rd coal loader in Newcastle

Threshold for dangerous climate change is now 350 ppm CO₂, at most.

You have now the last opportunity to revoke your approval of the 3rd coal loader in Newcastle and issue a stop work order claiming an Act of God. Or do you want to wait until the rest of the Wilkins ice shelf is gone (maybe just at the time the 3rd coal loader is completed, or the next election) at which point the ice sheet itself starts an accelerated slide into the ocean, causing immediate sea level rise, endangering the very coastal developments you have also approved?

NASA climatologist James Hansen in an interview with Kerry O'Brien **almost to the day 1 year before the Wilkins ice shelf collapse:**

".....and even of more concern is West Antarctica because it's now losing mass at about the same rate as Greenland, and West Antarctica, the ice sheet is sitting on rock that is below sea level. So it is potentially much more in danger of collapsing and so we have both the evidence on the ice sheets and from the history of the Earth and it tells us that we're pretty close to a tipping point, so we've got to be very concerned about the ice sheets."

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2007/s1870955.htm>

I predict that Federal and/or international pressure will force the closure of the 3rd coal loader in the not too distant future, latest by 2013 when the Arctic summer sea ice is gone which will change the whole climate on the Northern hemisphere. This process has already started. There was almost no winter in Europe this time.

Causes of Changes in Arctic Sea Ice; by Wieslaw Maslowski (Naval Postgraduate School)

http://www.ametsoc.org/atmospolicy/documents/May032006_Dr.WieslawMaslowski.pdf

You think you can bypass the laws of nature! An utterly futile attempt. What a waste of money, manpower, fuel and energy resources!

Hansen after Iowa coal case hearing: "**....but it does require that we have a moratorium on any new coal fired power plants.** And over the next 25-30 years we are going to have to phase out those that exist. **And this is going to become very clear within the next several years.** So it is just plain silly to build a new one now because you are not going to be able to grandfather these in and say: oh we have got it so we can keep it. It's not going to work that way. Once the government really understands how serious the problem is these plants are going to have to go. So it just makes no sense to make another one now." <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMDS5KEA2ZM>

The same thing of course applies to all new coal loading facilities.

One of your argument goes like this: "Oh, if we don't export the coal others will". Really? Then why are there so many coal ships waiting offshore? Why don't they go elsewhere and pick up coal there? And even if, YOU approved the loader (no one forced you - it was your own, free decision), therefore YOU are responsible for the consequences. No court will listen to your excuses.

Have you read Hansen's latest paper?

“Paleoclimate data show that climate sensitivity is ~3 °C for doubled CO₂, including only fast feedback processes. Equilibrium sensitivity, including slower surface albedo feedbacks, is ~6 °C for doubled CO₂ for the range of climate states between glacial conditions and icefree Antarctica. Decreasing CO₂ was the main cause of a cooling trend that began 50 million years ago, large scale glaciation occurring when CO₂ fell to 425±75 ppm, a level that will be exceeded within decades, barring prompt policy changes. If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed, paleoclimate evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that CO₂ will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm. The largest uncertainty in the target arises from possible changes of non-CO₂ forcings. An initial 350 ppm CO₂ target may be achievable by phasing out coal use except where CO₂ is captured and adopting agricultural and forestry practices that sequester carbon. If the present overshoot of this target CO₂ is not brief, there is a possibility of seeding irreversible catastrophic effects.”
http://www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/2008/TargetCO2_20080317.pdf

This means we are now in emissions overshoot mode for already 20 years! Your job is not only to reduce emissions but to take CO₂ out of the atmosphere again. Will you do this for all the CO₂ from coal mines you have already approved? How will you do this? Will you pay for this?

So take your pen and stop the 3rd coal loader! Before nature forces you to close it down anyway.

Thanking you for your attention
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