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Confidential document reveals Obama's hardline US climate talk strategy

Document outlines key messages the Obama administration wants to convey in the run-up to UN climate talks in Mexico in November

John Vidal in Bonn
guardian.co.uk, Monday 12 April 2010 10.05 BST



The document outlines key messages the Obama administration wants to convey in the run-up to UN climate talks in Mexico in November. Photograph: Anja Niedringhaus/AP

A document accidentally left on a European hotel computer and passed to the Guardian reveals the US government's increasingly controversial strategy in the global UN climate talks.

Titled *Strategic communications objectives* and dated 11 March 2010, it outlines the key messages that the Obama administration wants to convey to its critics and to the world media in the run-up to the vital UN climate talks in Cancun, Mexico in November. (You can read the document text below).

Top of the list of objectives is to: "Reinforce the perception that the US is constructively engaged in UN negotiations in an effort to produce a global regime to combat climate change." It also talks of "managing expectations" of the outcome of the Cancun meeting and bypassing traditional media outlets by using podcasts and "intimate meetings" with the chief US negotiator to disarm the US's harsher critics.

But the key phrase is in paragraph three where the author writes: "Create a clear understanding of the CA's [Copenhagen accord's] standing and the importance of

operationalising ALL elements."

This is the clearest signal that the US will refuse to negotiate on separate elements of the controversial accord, but intends to push it through the UN process as a single "take it or leave it" text. The accord is the last-minute agreement reached at the chaotic Copenhagen summit in December. Over 110 countries are now "associated" with the accord but it has not been adopted by the 192-nation UN climate convention. The US has denied aid to some countries that do not support the accord.

The "take it or leave it" approach divided countries in Bonn this weekend and alienated most developing countries including China, India and Brazil who want to take parts of the accord to include in the formal UN negotiations. They say the accord has no legal standing and should not be used as the basis of the final legally binding agreement because it is not ambitious enough. It lacks any specific cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and sets a temperature rise limit of 2C, which critics say is too high to prevent serious harm to Africa and other parts of the world.

Last night Jonathan Pershing, lead US negotiator at the Bonn talks, said he "had no knowledge" of the document. But he endorsed one of its key messages. "We are not prepared to see a process go forward in which certain elements are cherry-picked. That was not the agreement we reached in Copenhagen," he said.

Text of the leaked document:

Strategic communications objectives

- 1) Reinforce the perception that the US is constructively engaged in UN negotiations in an effort to produce a global regime to combat climate change. This includes support for a symmetrical and legally binding treaty.
- 2) Manage expectations for Cancun – Without owning the message, advance the narrative that while a symmetrical legally binding treaty in Mexico is unlikely, solid progress can be made on the six or so main elements.
- 3) Create a clear understanding of the CA's standing and the importance of operationalising ALL elements.
- 4) Build and maintain outside support for the administration's commitment to meeting the climate and clean energy challenge despite an increasingly difficult political environment to pass legislation.
- 5) Deepen support and understanding from the developing world that advanced developing countries must be part of any meaningful solution to climate change including taking responsibilities under a legally binding treaty.

Media outreach

- Continue to conduct interviews with print, TV and radio outlets driving the climate change story.
- Increase use of off-the-record conversations.
- Strengthen presence in international media markets during trips abroad. Focus efforts on radio and television markets.
- Take greater advantage of new media opportunities such as podcasts to advance US position in the field bypassing traditional media outlets.

- Consider a series of policy speeches/public forums during trips abroad to make our case directly to the developing world.

Key outreach efforts

- Comprehensive and early outreach to policy makers, key stakeholders and validators is critical to broadening support for our positions in the coming year.
- Prior to the 9-11 April meeting in Bonn it would be good for Todd to meet with leading NGOs. This should come in the form of 1:1s and small group sessions.
- Larger group sessions, similar to the one held at CAP prior to Copenhagen, will be useful down the line, but more intimate meetings in the spring are essential to building the foundation of support. Or at the very least, disarming some of the harsher critics.

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Portlander99

12 Apr 2010, 10:25AM

Just the sort of stage-managed reality for which Washington is famous.

From the corporatist Obama, expecting more is a mug's game (and Michael Tomasky will be along soon to play it).

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prayle

12 Apr 2010, 10:26AM

McShame not McSame.

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imaginination

12 Apr 2010, 10:34AM

A document accidentally left on a European hotel computer and passed to the Guardian reveals the US government's increasingly controversial strategy in the global UN climate talks

My goodness, did that really, really happen ? I thought journalism had died in its sleep 30 years ago. Apparently not. This sounds just like the Downing Street document when that MI6 guy Michael Smith at The Times found a report by MI6 saying the Yanks were to blame for the Iraq evidence. I think we can safely blame the yanks for everything again.

We the British stand tall in our resolve to save the planet for the ungrateful beggars who live in it.

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Christarris

12 Apr 2010, 10:52AM

Who cares!

Climate change is now down to each of us.

Global agreement is history

Move on.

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loblollyboy

12 Apr 2010, 10:52AM

"Create a clear understanding of the CA's [Copenhagen accord's] standing and the importance of operationalising ALL elements."

'Operationalizing'? Thunderin' Jaysus, is there anyone left in the US government who can speak plain English?

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therealworld

12 Apr 2010, 11:00AM

What exactly is "vital" about the talks scheduled for Cancun? Is it going to more or less vital that Copenhagen, Kyoto, etc. etc. ad infinitum.....

PS--nice place to visit, but if the delegates really want to experience warming and other climate events (e.g. hurricanes) why not hold the talks in August?

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Optymystic

12 Apr 2010, 11:02AM

Are we to understand that Climate Change has become an ideological tool like free trade i.e. a principle used by rich countries to beat up poor ones? If the US can persuade developing countries to reduce emissions, it believes it can cease worrying about its own absurd per capita CO2 emissions.

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Mungobel

12 Apr 2010, 11:02AM

This should surprise no one. At the close of his brief show at the the Copenhagen conference, an obviously hurried Obama sought to give the impression that an American-backed deal had been overwhelmingly accepted. In fact the delegates of most attending countries had not been given time to consider the details before they were bulldozed through.

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rockingchair

12 Apr 2010, 11:03AM

Media outreach:

- and leaving documents in hotel rooms ?

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Arbuthnott

12 Apr 2010, 11:03AM

Well-meaning lawyer

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**finee**

12 Apr 2010, 11:04AM

This is the clearest signal yet, and there have been many, that global warming is a complete bust.

Andy Revkin's Dot Earth has moved to the NYT opinion page

if I had to choose one of two bumper stickers for our car ? CLIMATE CRISIS or ENERGY QUEST ? I'd choose the latter. This doesn't mean I reject the idea that we face a climate crisis. I just don't think that phrase is a productive way to frame this challenge, particularly as defined over the last few years in the heated policy

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2010/04/dot-earth-20.html>

It's a bust because the lie was too big to carry. Almost no one believed it. Especially the scientists at their Geneva conference last year.

The new strategy is that we need to de carbonise the economy, anyway. We must have carbon trading. We must pay tribute to the banksters.

On the Energy Gap and Climate Crisis

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/04/07/on-the-energy-gap-and-climate-crisis/>

Recommend? (29)Report abuseClip |Link**Tehillim**

12 Apr 2010, 11:13AM

@ loblollyboy

It's even better with the sentence which follows -

"Create a clear understanding of the CA's [Copenhagen accord's] standing and the importance of operationalising ALL elements."

This is the clearest signal...

LOL!

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12 Apr 2010, 11:18AM

" Continue to conduct interviews with print, TV and radio outlets driving the climate change story."

Of course climate change is a "story" -- an 'Alice in Wonderland' story. A myth that has nothing to do with science. The press is becoming skeptical, so ignore them and concentrate of TV and radio where sound bites rather than balanced discussion will prevail.

This agenda has nothing to do with climate change; it's all about preparing the way for Global Government and re-booting the financial system to let US off the debt hook.

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gpwayne

12 Apr 2010, 11:27AM

finee

This is the clearest signal yet, and there have been many, that global warming is a complete bust.

Really? Haven't you heard - according to your denier mates, the science isn't settled.

Colebrook

This agenda has nothing to do with climate change; it's all about preparing the way for Global Government

You in the market for some second-hand tinfoil at all?

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Quillcards

12 Apr 2010, 11:40AM

Whose document, authored by whom, for whose attention?

Left on which computer by who?

Passed to the Guardian by who?

How does one 'verify' a document left on a computer?

If I make a document and recite the author as President X and address it to whomever and upload it to a datastick and then visit 'a European hotel' and download it there, how could someone else verify its authenticity?

Just saying...

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Valleyboi

12 Apr 2010, 11:42AM

What a load of PR bullsh!t!!

Funnily enough, I was reading "The Restaurant at the end of the Universe" yesterday.

I love the bit where the Galgramorian's send the spaceship full of useless professions from their planet on the premise that it's about to suffer sudden demise. "We'll just sort things here, then catch you up!"

It makes me think that Douglas Adams was years ahead of his time.

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**finee**

12 Apr 2010, 11:46AM

gpwayne

You may have noticed a massive shift in Guardian blogs, you may have noticed that the BBC has cut its 'we are all going to de'coverage by about 90% since Copenhagen. AGW was a plausible theory, but there was no way it could ever be proved. Those with no understanding of science were convinced until climategate, when the man behind the curtain was revealed.

The point about the Phil Jones BBC interview is that he **volunteered** to answer incriminating questions about AGW after he was hung out to dry by scientists and journalists alike. No one had done that before.

No amount of screaming or foot stamping will change that.

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12 Apr 2010, 11:49AM

Speaking as a fan of the US of A and it's progressive policies on CO2 limiting and reduction of oil consumption I think it's darned tooting for them to lecture India, China and the rest of the world on climate change and what has to be done. They should all do what they are told by Borrocks O'Blimey, the US President. Now, I just have to go to the shops so I'll climb in my US of A monster truck (16 american cylinders of raw power, yessir) and burn 500 gallons of cheap gas driving 3 miles to the Wallymart.

[Recommend?](#) (4)[Report abuse](#)[Clip](#) |[Link](#)**loftytom**

12 Apr 2010, 11:49AM

Quillcards

12 Apr 2010, 11:40AM

Whose document, authored by whom, for whose attention?

Left on which computer by who?

Passed to the Guardian by who?

How does one 'verify' a document left on a computer?

If I make a document and recite the author as President X and address it to whomever and upload it to a datastick and then visit 'a European hotel' and download it there, how could someone else verify its authenticity?

Just saying...

Know what my friend, you should be a journalist, I say that sincerely and with praise.

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loftytom

12 Apr 2010, 11:50AM

[finee](#)

12 Apr 2010, 11:46AM

[gpwayne](#)

You may have noticed a massive shift in Guardian blogs, you may have noticed that the BBC has cut its 'we are all going to de'coverage by about 90% since Copenhagen. AGW was a plausible theory, but there was no way it could ever be proved. Those with no understanding of science were convinced until climategate, when the man behind the curtain was revealed.

The point about the Phil Jones BBC interview is that he volunteered to answer incriminating questions about AGW after he was hung out to dry by scientists and journalists alike. No one had done that before.

No amount of screaming or foot stamping will change that.

You can't argue with true believers, ask Dawkins.

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arthoor

12 Apr 2010, 11:53AM

Climate change? Can't see what the fuss is about when you have the US military saying things like this:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/apr/11/peak-oil-production-supply>

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finee

12 Apr 2010, 12:03PM

arthoor

That's right, peak oil was always the backup carbon trading scam to global warming.

That's why Andy Revkin has shifted. The smart money has been on this for some time.

Read Mike Hulme and his profoundly daft post normal science nonsense.

Normally your green dude would be calling the US military all the liars under the sun.

Which of course they are.

Plumbing the depths

Inside story: A recent wave of advances is enabling oil companies to detect and recover offshore oil in ever more difficult places

http://www.economist.com/search/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15582301

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oldbrew

12 Apr 2010, 12:10PM

It lacks any specific cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and sets a temperature rise limit of 2C

Or else what?

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Justice4Rinka

12 Apr 2010, 12:14PM

Climate science must be the only branch of science in which groupthink is spun as "consensus" and considered a good thing.

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paulhs

12 Apr 2010, 12:23PM

this seems like a coherent communications strategy: nothing more, nothing less. I would expect something a bit more sophisticated considering the power of the "climate change is a lie" lobby.

What is their communication strategy?

- 1) stick to the script that "science" doesn't have all the answers.
- 2) contradict 1 when someone/anyone says they are a scientist and seem to question the existence of anthropic climate change.
- 3) contradict 1 again by saying that "science says that sunspots..."
- 4) repeat things that scientists have shown to be incorrect as the causes of any changes
- 5) contradict 4 by saying that there is less change.
- 6) Develop a few simple talking points for people with too much time on their hands, and pay a few opinion leaders to disseminate these talking points, with money from a fund from powerful lobby groups with an interest in doing nothing.
- 7) you know the rest

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carnaptious99

12 Apr 2010, 1:08PM

@valleyboi

Reading H2G2 just yesterday were you? Would it be the Golgafrinchans you were

referring to? Short memory?

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Bioluminescence

12 Apr 2010, 1:11PM

finee

You may have noticed a massive shift in Guardian blogs, you may have noticed that the BBC has cut its 'we are all going to de' coverage by about 90% since Copenhagen. AGW was a plausible theory, but there was no way it could ever be proved. Those with no understanding of science were convinced until climategate, when the man behind the curtain was revealed.

The point about the Phil Jones BBC interview is that he volunteered to answer incriminating questions about AGW after he was hung out to dry by scientists and journalists alike. No one had done that before.

No amount of screaming or foot stamping will change that.

And yet the science of ACC is as strong as ever. No one's managed to falsify it and no one's come up with an alternative theory. The reason deniers are desperately trying to smear climate science and scientists is due to the fact that they have effectively lost the scientific argument. The only thing left for them is to try and discredit it because no data analysis supports their position. But even 'climategate' didn't manage to do that in the end - I know many denialist blogs claim otherwise but the only real problem with these UEA emails is that they didn't comply with all FOI requests.

The raw data is out there for all deniers to do their own analyses. They haven't bothered and they won't, because all they need to do is claim that it's all a hoax based on fraudulent science and people believe it. Very sad state of affairs.

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Pyrus

12 Apr 2010, 1:17PM

The US scuppered the Copenhagen Accord months ago, it is just a hollow initiative now. This content of the leak is no surprise. It is a continuation of US policy on the matter. They don't have to do anything of any significance - certainly nothing that would reduce US emissions, cost money and lose votes - but they do get to say they are working towards addressing climate change knowing that the CA created more pollution in air trips to the conference for the delegates than it will save through any of its clauses. It's going to have to get a lot hotter before the US takes an honest look at the problem.

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CaptCrash

12 Apr 2010, 1:22PM

aathoor

Good shout ... however, many say that peak oil was reached in 2006, which would explain the spike in prices in 2006-7, the start of the credit crunch and the invasion of Iraq.

The oil crisis has been on-going for nearly a decade now, and is largely not reported in that vain.

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antipodean1

12 Apr 2010, 1:31PM

This document is realistic and exactly what might be expected; USA has made its position clear for some time and quite understandably wants to spin their argument in the best possible way.. No-one should imagine they will suddenly change their view and accept deep & binding emissions cuts without also getting some concessions from China & India which will limit their emissions growth..

Cancun is unlikely to achieve a game changing breakthrough unless there are high profile catastrophic symptoms of climate change emerging which shock the world into action.....

and the Americans are making good points surely advanced developing countries must be part of any meaningful solution to climate change including taking responsibilities under a legally binding treaty.

Its a no brainer, and its still the Copenhagen deadlock.

Everybody needs to limit emissions.

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gpwayne

12 Apr 2010, 2:03PM

finee

You may have noticed a massive shift in Guardian blogs, you may have noticed that the BBC has cut its 'we are all going to de' coverage by about 90% since Copenhagen.

No, what I noticed was that very little scientific findings were released in that period, hence the lack of news. Perhaps we should ask the Guardian and BBC to take a leaf out of the denier's manual, and just make some stuff up?

AGW was a plausible theory, but there was no way it could ever be proved.

Like evolution, the big bang and gravity, right? Climate science is inferential, and if you don't understand why mathematical or laboratory proofs cannot be offered, you can join the creationists club of disaffection, since your argument is exactly the same as their demand for a missing link.

Those with no understanding of science were convinced until climategate, when the man behind the curtain was revealed.

And was revealed to be only one of 2000 scientists working on the theory. Only 1999 to go, then. Anyway, Jones was also revealed not to have done anything that affected the science *in any way whatever*, although it is necessary to understand the science in order to appreciate the point.

The point about the Phil Jones BBC interview is that he volunteered to answer incriminating questions about AGW after he was hung out to dry by scientists and journalists alike.

No, he answered questions, and was then ruthlessly misquoted, misinterpreted and generally stitched up - mendacious behaviour by deniers and their media lackeys to which you are now a party.

No amount of screaming or foot stamping will change that.

No amount of spin, deceit, misinformation or propaganda will change the science, or stop the ice melting.

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oldbrew

12 Apr 2010, 2:18PM

@ Bioluminescence

If it's all so credible why are the main players losing, hiding or refusing access to their data and methods? Why so many 'adjustments' to past temperature data? This only convinces those who wanted to be convinced anyway.

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GrahamLand

12 Apr 2010, 2:25PM

The text of this leaked document does less to highlight the US's hardline strategy than the actual fact that they explicitly denied climate aid to developing countries who didn't sign onto Copenhagen.

This is the part that directly relates to that strategy:

5) Deepen support and understanding from the developing world that advanced developing countries must be part of any meaningful solution to climate change including taking responsibilities under a legally binding treaty.

The leaked document reads more like a mission statement without enough detail to be considered hardline.

greenfudge.org

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**Bioluminescence**

12 Apr 2010, 2:26PM

oldbrew

For a number of reasons. It doesn't mean there's fraud going on on a grand scale. Even if you choose to exclude Jones's work, you're still left with NASA, NCDC and satellite datasets which all tell a similar story. As I said, the raw data is available for anyone to show that current analyses are fundamentally flawed - it's up to someone to do their own work by developing their own methods and getting their results published. Do you never ask yourself why this hasn't been done yet, since the raw data's been available for some time now?

What 'adjustments' are you talking about?

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**Valleyboi**

12 Apr 2010, 2:35PM

carnaptious99

Thought I might have got the name wrong, suspected if I had then a H2G2 geek would help me out ;-)

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**Valleyboi**

12 Apr 2010, 2:59PM

Oldbrew

Have you not heard? The British House of Commons have found that Climegate was a storm in a teacup.

As for the 'adjustments' you refer to, I hope the following paragraph will help:

On the much cited phrases in the leaked e-mails??trick? and ?hiding the decline??the Committee considers that they were colloquial terms used in private e-mails and the balance of evidence is that they were not part of a systematic attempt to mislead.

Insofar as the Committee was able to consider accusations of dishonesty against CRU, the Committee considers that there is no case to answer.?

Full article [here](#), looking forward to your thoughts on this.

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**ScepticMike**

12 Apr 2010, 4:52PM

With all this nonsense about so-called "Climategate " a huge piece of work from the EPA in USA which takes on a lot of the other stories from the "sceptics" in one place seems to have been ignored. It came out in Dec 2009.

It is in answer to 300,000 ! comments on its previous findings that there is indeed a problem.

It is too much to hope that the sceptics will read it but it does cover almost all their concerns.

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ScepticMike

12 Apr 2010, 5:08PM

I missed the ref for the easy way to look at the EPA info .Look up "Skeptical Science."

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AdrianOc

12 Apr 2010, 6:40PM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



Teratornis

12 Apr 2010, 7:09PM

finee:

Normally your green dude would be calling the US military all the liars under the sun.

Which of course they are.

So when the US military claims to have military bases in Iraq, that really means ... what exactly?

The US military, like any large organization, consists of many different individuals, some who probably lie a lot, and some who are probably more honest. If the US military was the only source of this claim that oil extraction in existing fields is dropping faster than newly-developed fields appear likely to make up, we might be more suspicious. But we are hearing this claim from many different sources now.

When the US can no longer import enough oil to satisfy its massive population of gaswasters, part of the adaptation process will be to divert more crops into fuel. From the EIA: "Fuel ethanol blending into gasoline increased from an average of 645,000 bbl/d during the summer of 2008 to 717,000 bbl/d during the summer of 2009 and is projected to average 816,000 bbl/d this summer, about 8.9 percent of the total gasoline consumed."

Just a friendly heads-up to any countries who rely on food bailouts from the US to maintain your exponentially growing populations after outstripping the carrying capacity of your own land: don't expect any more surplus food from the US after 2015 if the world oil production shortfall really is 10 million bbl/day (and getting worse thereafter) as the US military predicts. Given that the US burns a quarter of the world's

oil, our share of the shortfall will be 2.5 million bbl/day, which means we'll probably increase our ethanol production to make up at least part of it. Given the slow pace of progress in second and third generation biofuels, that will probably mean diverting a lot more corn.

When Americans are given the choice between (a) giving up their cars, vs. (b) letting the world's poorest billion people starve, what do you think they will choose? American drivers already don't care that we fight wars to keep the world safe for gaswasting. I don't know anyone who quit driving in protest of the invasion of Iraq.

Plumbing the depths

Inside story: A recent wave of advances is enabling oil companies to detect and recover offshore oil in ever more difficult places

The oil industry has impressive technology for scraping the last dregs from the barrel - albeit at ever-higher cost of energy input to the process, and hence ever-higher carbon footprint for the energy ultimately delivered. That means the net well-to-wheels (and well-to-wings) carbon footprint of driving (and flying) gets higher every year.

For those who believe the glaciers aren't really melting and this is all some hoax cooked up by Santa Claus and his elves, "higher carbon footprint" also implies "costs more money". Not enough to cramp the style of a Bill Gates any time soon, but maybe enough to inconvenience the little guy.

Let us know when the oil companies discover a way to create more oil in the ground. Until they do that, all their technological marvels are just ways to withdraw money from the bank account faster. Like when the banks and the retail industry give us some impressive new technology like PayWave that allows us to spend our own money with even less effort. Hey banks, let me know when you come up with a way to add more money to my account, not just clever ways to help me drain it faster.

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bleedin

12 Apr 2010, 7:15PM

Listen the the climate fraud deniers squeal !!

The big people's document is saying that the Americans intend to sabotage future climate talks unless they get their own way. This document will ensure that doesn't happen. Exactly the same thing occurred at Copenhagen.

Game over.

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Bioluminescence

12 Apr 2010, 7:15PM

AdrianOc

I am a mathematical physicist.

Funny how many deniers make an appeal to authority by claiming to be scientists, yet completely ignore the vast body of evidence, as published in the peer-reviewed

literature, when making their own little 'analyses'.

You claim that warming and ice melt cannot be attributed to CO2 because these started before the significant increase in CO2. It's a bizarre claim to say the least, and certainly not a scientific one. No one's claimed that only CO2 affects the climate - according to the IPCC, the most likely cause of warming at the beginning of the 20th century. To show that CO2 isn't causing any warming, you'd need to explain why adding gases which we know absorb and re-emit infrared radiation does not lead to more infrared radiation being absorbed; i.e. you have to show why the properties of greenhouse gases have suddenly changed.

Then you seem very keen to base your analysis on data from the past decade. Yet you are aware of Phil Jones's BBC interview in which he specifically says that 15 years is generally not long enough to get a statistically significant 'trend'. This is because the climate is highly variable.

You also seem to base your analysis of sea levels mainly on US data. Not good enough. And again you state that a decade is enough for you to make such a sweeping statement. As for your statement that CO2 has not had any measurable effect on the climate, where to start? Scientists have concluded that human activities are the most likely cause behind recent trends because observations are consistent with what was predicted if the warming was caused by greenhouse gases. These include stratospheric cooling, the cooling and contraction of the upper atmosphere, an energy imbalance between incoming and outgoing radiation with the additional energy being stored mainly in the oceans and patterns of warming (greater changes in night-time temperatures than in day-time temperatures). On top of that, scientists, looking at data, have concluded that recent trends are unlikely to be the result of changes in solar output, natural internal variability and volcanic activity.

So basically your analysis, based on geographically limited, short-term data, goes against the body of evidence collected and analysed by experts in their fields. By all means, get your analysis published but I think we have a perfect example of the Dunning-Kruger effect here.

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ScepticMike

12 Apr 2010, 7:28PM

Bioluminescence

I think you are banging your head against the proverbial!

These people are just not interested in facts .

They know the " Truth".

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fadergost

12 Apr 2010, 7:31PM

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Teratornis

12 Apr 2010, 7:31PM

antipodean1:

Its a no brainer, and its still the Copenhagen deadlock.

Everybody needs to limit emissions.

Yeppers. The current level of international coordination could probably just manage say a 10% emissions cut. The 80% to 95% cut that we probably need is way beyond what any government can seriously contemplate doing voluntarily now. There's nowhere for anyone to shift the burden to someone else with a 95% cut.

However, the glaciers don't care about what is difficult or easy for humans. They will continue their remorseless retreat on their own schedule, until humans become universally convinced of the need to stop burning fossil fuels and forests.

In the meantime, as individuals the best we can do is to keep finding new ways to cut our personal emissions further every year. Eventually the rest of the world's governments and people will wake up from their hallucination and ask us to teach them what we have learned. When that day comes we must be ready.

I cannot guess when that will be. Maybe in as little as 10 years, depending on the news in the meantime. If there really is a 10 million bbl/day global oil extraction shortfall by 2015, that will at least obliterate the implicit working assumption of climate change deniers that we have the option to keep burning exponentially more fossil fuels every year, if only Al Gore and the global carbon trading banker conspiracy can be kept at bay.

I suspect climate change deniers sieze upon climate change (whether consciously or subconsciously, I cannot guess) as a ploy to distract from the simple fact that fossil fuel madness cannot long continue. It is possible to deny complex, abstract science, but much harder to deny queues at the filling station.

I wouldn't want to have the job of telling a thousand angry well-armed Texans that there will be no gasoline today.

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fadergost

12 Apr 2010, 7:36PM

Bioluminescence

Before we went tabloid, more or less all the qualified people on cif were sceptics. The ones who could put forward coherent, intelligent arguments and said fing like

I is a scientist

I is a computer modler

That's why we went tabloid, to drive them away.

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fadergost

12 Apr 2010, 7:38PM

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Bioluminescence

12 Apr 2010, 7:53PM

ScepticMike

Aye, but you never know - a true sceptic might actually be lurking around.

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AdrianOc

12 Apr 2010, 8:54PM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



Hoax

12 Apr 2010, 9:33PM

Falling apart. Falling apart.

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