

"Species are driven to extinction by global warming".

No single species has been driven to extinction by recent warming. All species alive today have lived through the Roman and Medieval warm periods, when temperatures were warmer than today's. We are indeed facing a high level of extinction, but this is driven largely by human population pressure, habitat destruction, and the clearance of natural forest for agriculture. The bitter irony is that the pressure for agricultural land is partly driven by biofuels. It's not climate, but our climate change policies, that drive species to extinction. Meantime polar bears are doing just fine.

"We can take action to halt climate change".

Isn't it odd that the people who are telling us what the temperature will be in 100 years can't be sure if it'll rain on Tuesday? It's even more hubristic to imagine that we can alter the climate. Given industrial development in China and India, there is no realistic chance of reducing CO₂ emissions for decades. It will be centuries after that before atmospheric CO₂ levels start to drift down. If there's a "tipping point" in ten years, or five years, then we've missed the boat.

"The costs of mitigation are far lower than the costs of doing nothing".

The deeply flawed Stern Review tries to make this case. It swallows the alarmist position whole, makes all the worst-case assumptions, then fails to discount future costs at a realistic rate. Many other studies by serious economists, for example Yale's William Nordhaus, conclude that costs of mitigation could well exceed any benefits, even if the alarmists are right. If they're wrong, we're simply throwing away trillions of dollars and impoverishing future generations in a doomed and futile attempt to deal with an entirely speculative problem.

Further Reading:

"An Appeal to Reason"

Lord (Nigel) Lawson

"The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change"

Chris Horner

"Unstoppable Global Warming (Every 1500 Years)"

Prof Fred Singer, University of Virginia

"Blue Planet in Green Shackles"

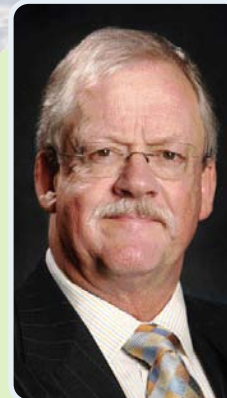
by President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic

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Straight Talking

on Climate Change

Everyone agrees that the Earth's climate is changing. Always has, always will.

But after that, agreement breaks down. This is a guide to some of the myths in the debate.

By Roger Helmer

Debunking The Myths of Climate Change

"Global warming is happening now!"

Not so. In fact the hottest year in living memory was 1998. Since then global temperatures have fallen slightly, and some scientists are predicting a "lull" in warming until 2015.

"We're facing unprecedented warming"

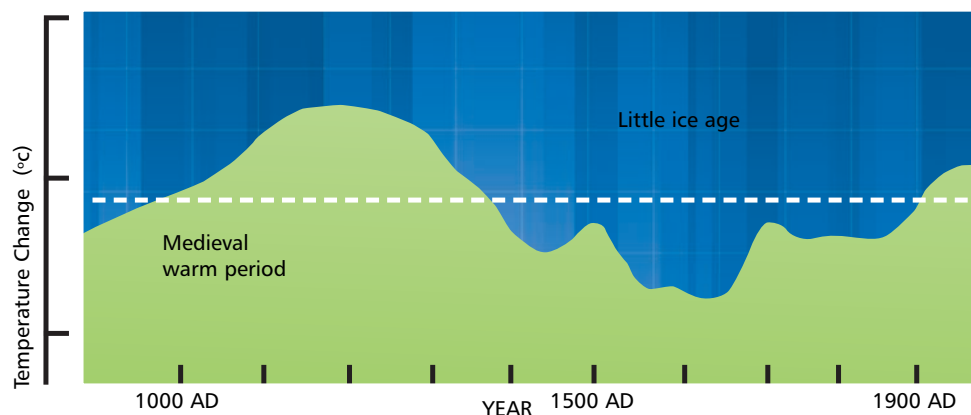
Not at all. The world's climate is cyclical. Both the Medieval Warm Period (c. 900 -- 1400 AD) and the Roman Optimum (c. 100BC -- 300AD) were warmer than today, as were the earlier Holocene maxima, 5000 to 9000 years ago. The slight rise in temperature since 1850 is consistent with the idea that we are moving into a new, natural, cyclical climate optimum.

"CO₂ is a dangerous pollutant"

Not true. In fact CO₂ is essential for life on earth. Without it, plants would die, and we should die too. Higher atmospheric CO₂ leads directly to faster plant growth and higher crop yields, as the biosphere absorbs more CO₂. Man-made CO₂ emissions are a tiny fraction of the natural carbon cycle, and while CO₂ is indeed a greenhouse gas, it is much less significant than water vapour -- which we cannot start to control.

"Al Gore has proved that CO₂ drives temperature"

Al Gore's disaster movie shows a dramatic graph of atmospheric CO₂ and global temperatures over the last million years, based on ice-core data. It seems to show a stunning link between temperature and CO₂. Case proved? But look closer. As you look at the graphs in higher resolution, you see that the CO₂ graph lags the temperature curve by around 800 years. So CO₂ doesn't drive temperature -- temperature drives CO₂! And what drives temperature? The Sun, of course.



"A warming climate will bring disaster"

Funny, isn't it, that when wealthy Americans retire, they sell up and move from New England to Florida? They opt for an average temperature increase of around 10°C, because they prefer it. The two recent warm periods (Roman and Medieval) were very successful times for humanity, when plentiful food allowed for better than subsistence agriculture. Think of the Roman Empire, or the medieval cathedrals. Wine grapes grew in northern England. These were great ages of travel and exploration.

"Sea level rise is an urgent problem"

This myth has sunk deep into the minds of the public and the media, so you may be surprised to learn that the current rate of sea level rise, of around six to eight inches a century, has been consistent for as long as we have records, and very likely since the end of the last Ice Age. It is driven by thermal expansion, not ice melt. The rate of rise actually reduced slightly over the 20th century.

"The world's ice caps are melting"

The world has warmed slightly since 1850, and there is some limited melting at the margin both in Greenland and in the Antarctic, but nothing unusual. Remember that when the Vikings got to Greenland (c. 900AD), *it was green!* But warmer temperatures mean more precipitation -- more snow, so deeper ice over the main Antarctic land mass. Total global ice mass remains broadly constant.