

**US National Climate Assessment** Comments by Ken Haapala of Science & Environmental Policy Project, 10 May 2014.

**NCA:** On May 6, the Administration released the anticipated third National Climate Assessment (NCA), *Climate Change Impacts in the United States*. The cover letter to Congress is signed by John P. Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and by Kathryn D. Sullivan, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, NOAA Administrator. The report is the product of the US Global Change Research Program with 13 government agencies participating: Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, Health and Human Services, Interior, State, Transportation as well as the Agency for International Development (USAID), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Science Foundation (NSF), and Smithsonian Institution. The report is a slick marketing piece and the web site is very effective as such. The NCA claims that the nation is being damaged by global warming/climate change and it divides the nation into regions to discuss the harms occurring.

Apparently, the Administration has declared war on global warming/climate change/climate disruption, etc. As such, it appears the Administration has taken Churchill's admonition to heart. [Quote of the Week]. A student of war-time propaganda may identify this report as such. The report relies heavily on projections from defective, biased climate models and selective ignorance of climate history of the United States. On his web site, Roy Spencer presents a brief rebuttal to each of the 12 major points. In his December 11, 2013 testimony to the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, John Christy presented evidence contradicting many of the claims in this report. The testimony discussed the defects in the climate models, and the strong warming bias they have. Defective global models are an inappropriate basis for estimating regional impact.

The section of the report on global sea level rise illustrates the lack of scientific rigor in the report (pp 44 & 45). It states that since 1880, when reliable record keeping began, sea levels have risen by about 8 inches. Then goes on to state that: The future scenarios range from 0.66 feet (8 inches, 20 cm) to 6.6 feet (79 inches, 201 cm) by 2100. "These scenarios are not based on climate model simulations, but rather reflect the range of possible scenarios based on other scientific studies." [These studies are not discussed in that section.] "In particular, the high end of these scenarios may be useful for decision-makers with a low tolerance for risk." The report states the more likely range of sea level rise is 1 to 4 feet by 2100 (30 to 122 cm). The report attributes the broad range of values to the uncertainty of the science. Others may attribute the broad range of values to an effort to alarm the general population and give justification to bureaucrats to impose punitive taxes and regulations.

This report may be the most misleading document published by the executive branch of government in a time of peace. For a broad range of comments see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Defending the Orthodoxy - The NCA, and Questioning The NCA.

**For Only \$7.5 Billion:** According to the cover letter, the National Climate Assessment (NCA) is the result of a three-year analytical effort by a team of over 300 experts, overseen by a broadly constituted Federal Advisory Committee of 60 members. Other reports stated that the NCA was 4 or 5 years in the making. Three years is sufficient to establish an estimate of how much the NCA costs. The NCA is the justification for the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and it is the program's principal product. According to reports from the White House, the USGCRP spent about \$7.469 Billion in fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013 (fiscal years end on September 30). Yet, the USGCRP cannot estimate sea level rise 86 years hence within one foot! See links under Questioning The NCA

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default...>

and

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/def...>

**Realistic Sea Level Rise:** Willem P. de Lange and Robert Carter have produced a report of sea level rise that is more realistic and, no doubt, less expensive than the NCA. They suggest a policy for addressing sea level rise that is far less expensive than government policies that may come from the fears promoted in NCA.

A group of scientists using the name Randolph Glacier Inventory have compiled an inventory of all the earth's glaciers. Several studies calculate that if all the glaciers melt, sea levels will rise by about 35 to 47 cm (13.8 to 18.5 inches). This is far less than the 30 to 122 cm (12 to 48 inches) estimate in the NCA. (Note, the rise does not include possible expansion of the oceans due to warming or possible melting of the extremely cold Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets. See links under Questioning the Orthodoxy and Changing Cryosphere - Land / Sea Ice

**Prolepsis:** How we know they know we know they are trying to deceive us? Prolepsis is an argumentative (debate) technique whereby the advocate of a particular position begins by admitting certain weaknesses in order to deflect more severe criticism and/or gain sympathy from the audience. It can work very well, but it alerts others that the advocate is aware of some of the weaknesses in the position. Although not a quote from one of the authors of the NCA, an article discussing NCA in the *Wall Street Journal* gave an excellent example.

*To predict local impacts of climate change, the researchers combined and averaged several different kinds of physical and statistical computer models for the report. Every computer climate simulation has its shortcomings, experts say, **but taken together they can provide a plausible range of possibilities.** [Boldface added.]*

As John Christy illustrated in his testimony, the climate models have a warming bias, ranging from moderate to severe. Any statistic derived from a collection of biased models is also biased. In Christy's graph, the mean of the models clearly shows this bias. Further, any range of values from the biased models is also biased. The use of these procedures create major defects in the NCA. In WUWT, Robert Brown discusses the problem of using biased models in some length. See Article # 1, Challenging the Orthodoxy, and Model Issues.

**Northwest US:** On his web site, Cliff Mass discusses some of the shortcomings in the NCA in its regional analysis of the Northwest US. Mass is not a global warming skeptic, but he endeavors to be objective. See link under Seeking a Common Ground.

**Motivation:** Some may ask what motivates the Administration to issue a biased report. It is impossible to determine. However, a quote provided by Howard (Cork) Hayden, may provide some insight.

Paul Ehrlich and John Holdren wrote: "Individual rights must be balanced against the power of the government to control human reproduction. Some people have viewed the right to have children as a fundamental and inalienable right. Yet neither the Declaration of Independence nor the Constitution mentions a right to reproduce." *Ecoscience* (1977). 2 *Population, Resources, Environment* (1970).

The statement totally misrepresents the Constitution as advocated by the Founding Fathers, for example, James Madison. To them, the powers of the central government are few, defined, and limited. The rights of the individuals are broad and not delimited.