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Interview with Lennart Bengtsson

by Hans von Storch

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On the occasion of the [press release by GWPE](#): "Professor Lennart Bengtsson Joins GWPF Academic Advisory Council" I wanted to hear Lennart's own position on this matter and prepared some questions. Here are his answers:

Before I try to reply to your questions I need to provide some general background

My interest in climate science and in weather prediction has always been driven by scientific curiosity and I have increasingly been disturbed by the strong tendencies to politicization that has taken place in climate research in recent years. I believe most serious scientists are

sceptics and are particularly frustrated that we are not able to properly validate climate change simulations. I have always tried to follow the philosophy of Karl Popper that I believe is particularly important when you are dealing with complex systems of which the climate system is a primary example. For this reason empirical evidence is absolutely essential. The warming of the climate system since the end of the 19th century has been very modest by some 0.4°C in spite of the simultaneous increase in greenhouse gas forcing by 2.5-3 W/m².

I am concerned that this as well as the lack of ocean surface warming in some 17 years has not been properly recognized by IPCC. Nor have the cooling and increase in sea ice around Antarctica been properly recognized. Climate science must be focussed to understand such matters much better and for this reason it is appropriate to have an open mind and not follow the IPCC as believers of a religious faith.

I certainly believe that most scientists are potentially worried because of the long residence time of many greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and that we must continue to seek for alternative ways to provide the world with energy. I share that view. There is no way this can be accomplished on a large scale within the next 50 years and probably not the next 100 years. Europe must realize that there is a world outside Europe that depends on fossil energy to improve standard of living and now emits more than 90% of all greenhouse gases. This is worrisome but our worries must be put into a context as there are endless matters to worry about, practically all of them impossible to predict. Just move yourself backward in time exactly 100 years and try to foresee the



Lennart Bengtsson in 2006

evolution in the world for the next 100 years. It is important to keep this in mind. For these reasons we must be prepared to adjust to the future and not try to believe that we can determine the future.

The GWPF - what type of organisation is this?

See on Internet.

I was somewhat surprised when I was asked to join but I know some of the people like Richard Lindzen, Richard Tol and Henrik Svensmark that I consider as fine scientists although I do not always agree with them. In fact I have had considerable disagreement with both Lindzen and Svensmark in public debates during the last 15 years. Most of the members of GWPF are economists and leading intellectuals that often have expressed critique towards the present dominant climate policy. This critique has generally in my view been justified as I strongly endorse an open society and consider it as a healthy sign that there is place for different well-thought through opinions on complex issues.

Serving in an advisory capacity does not necessarily imply that would agree with its major points. Which of the major points of GWPF would you endorse?

As a member I will of course maintain my scientific opinions that are well established but I will endorse a view where we should use science to overcome some of the problems that might occur in a warmer world. To have a future world that provides decent living conditions for some 9-10 billion people will require that we must use advance science such a nuclear power to provide energy for the world and to use genetic science to enhance food production. I do not support the present European views here. I also strongly endorse that I believe in the approach of GWPF namely to put the emphasis on adjustment and not on mitigation. Mitigation cannot be approached by returning to previous forms of societies but must be looking forward embracing science.

What do you think you will be able to contribute constructively to their mission and work?

To continue to have an open mind and be scientifically skeptical.

Having your new membership in the advisory board announced in a press release - what is the purpose of this very public announcement?

You have to ask GWPF here. I have not taken any step for publicity but I have no intention to be a sort of a secret member. It is interesting but this process started actually from a previous [article on your blog](#) for more than a year ago.

It seems that rather controversial knowledge claims are voiced through the GWPF-website - e.g. "The Observatory". Some may believe that you as an advisory board member and very prominent atmospheric scientist would share such claims. Will you try to avoid such perceptions? What about your skeptical attitude concerning knowledge claims favored by GWPF or its members?

There is no common view among the members of GWPF and I might well have a quite different view than from some of them. I will in no way hide my views. But I believe that someone like Lindzen that is a first class meteorologist sees things in a similar way. I am not joining in order to learn any meteorology but to

rather to teach. But we might have more common views what we are going to do about climate change. I am looking forward to argue with some of the other members - we will see how it will work out.

Links: Another [interview with Lennart Bengtsson](#)

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at 16:41 Labels: [GWPF](#), [Interview](#) 

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54 comments:



[Hans von Storch](#) said...

1

We have seen sometimes a tendency of placing rather stupid first comments in a new thread. Obviously, one could do this here as well. In trying to avoid this, I take the opportunity to declare my respect for Lennart and his willingness to take the climate issue seriously beyond the ubiquitous efforts to subordinate science, and its limits, to the utility of Zeitgeist. Taking an issue seriously often requires willingness to exchange with people who hold different views and adopt different values.



[Hans von Storch](#) said...

2

Georg Hoffmann publishes on scienceBlogs.de a rather harsh judgment on Lennart Bengtsson's move: "Die schärfsten Kritiker der Elche Lennart Bengtsson tritt dem GWPF Advisory Board bei." (http://scienceblogs.de/primaklima/2014/05/02/die-schaerfsten-kritiker-der-elche-lennart-bengtsson-tritt-dem-gwpf-advisory-board-bei/?fb_action_ids=10203014415454443&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_ref=.U2NjEtpdo2c.like)



[MikeR](#) said...

3

For those of us not so familiar with Lennart Bengtsson, I think it would be helpful if some kind of background were given on where he agrees with what's considered the standard consensus, not just the places where he is skeptical. And it would also be helpful to explain a little of his place in European climate science. Otherwise, some are just going to say things like, "Who cares? Another denier in an organization of deniers. 97% of climate scientists disagree with him."

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

4

I dont understand your argument, Hans. If Lennart Bengtsson thinks that he has to better understand "people with different views" he has not necessarily to join their club. I am also interested in understanding racism but I wouldnt join the Ku Klux Klan just for better empathy.

In the GWPF advisory board are a number of real and alleged climate scientists who showed at several occasions a complete disrespect for the scientific method and a strong tendency of data cooking to obtain the wished outcome.

Whatever the zeitgeist is at the moment and whoever feels that he/she should resist (actually the zeitgeist is only there so that we can resist. I never met someone who liked the poor zeitgeist) it doesnt become really better by joining a club of woodoo scientists. The logic seems to be if "they" are not stressing sufficiently the Antarctic seaice and the temperature hiatus I have the right to twiddle with some cloud cover data to make my cosmic ray idea look better. What type of zeitgeist is that actually?

[P Gosselin](#) said...

5

Hoffmann, you've chosen a very reckless and thoughtless

analogy. It's a very dim way of seeing things. So if I join a group criticizing police tactics, then I'm joining the mafia? Little wonder Bengtsson is leaving the alarmist camp.

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

6

@Gosselin

" So if I join a group criticizing police tactics, then I'm joining the mafia?"

If I want to criticize police tactics I do NOT join the mafia just because it is something in contrary to the police. If I want to criticize industrial, heartless medicine I do NOT enter into the association of homoeopathic believers just because it's against school medicine. And if I have diverging views to the IPCC I do NOT enter in a club of data twiddlers.

"Die fast unlösbare Aufgabe besteht darin, weder von der Macht der anderen, noch von der eigenen Ohnmacht sich dumm machen zu lassen."

[David Johnson](#) said...

7

Quite Frankly Hoffman, that is a disgusting analogy and I suspect you know it.

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

8

@David Johnson

Quite frankly I doubt you know what an analogy is. For example Hoffman is not an analogy of Hoffmann, but just badly spelled.

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

9

Georg – I do not think that it was in some way "necessary" to join GWPF's advisory board, but it was Lennart's judgment that doing so would be good for what he has in mind. If we value (schätzen) Lennart, as you claim to do, then we should respect him and his judgment – which would not imply that I would applaud him for doing so.

A question is how we respond to his move, and you came up very quickly with a very harsh judgment – I hope, you had read his own words before you decided to do so. The interview on Klimazwiebel came out after your blog-comment; thus it must have been another one – or was it only the press release of GWPF? When I saw that press release I decided for myself to first ask Lennart himself about what happened and what his motives were. Maybe you screened the blogosphere, if there were interviews by Lennart (there was one, at least). I would presume, however, that you fired right after the press release. As you like to do, like a good cowboy.

Your strong, partly acidic rhetoric convinces nobody but only reassures your friends that you still are friends. You seem unable for an outreach, to overcome the problems we are facing (with different views) – you seem convinced that talking with "them" makes no sense under no circumstances; such a configuration is called war – the purpose is to destroy the others; this is, indeed, a joint property of yourself with the denier camp – the "others" are stupid and/or evil. But even in a real war, you need in the end the capability for talking; otherwise the war does not end (at least in most cases). The only solution is that the others give up. Maybe Lennart is naive in trying to build bridges, but is it helpful, or in your terms: necessary, to comment on him as you do?

Just to be sure, I consider Richard Tol, whom I know and value, a very good scientist; Paul Reiter I never met, but I think he contributed significant insights, when people were constructing the linear direct link between Malaria and temperature change. In that board are others, true, who have a rather bad reputation, but I was never present, when they argued – but, admittedly – I am not that keen on meeting these people.

I welcome Lennart's bravery to enter such an arena, in particular with an audience with people like you. (I had asked you on facebook if you would do an interview with me on these matters; unfortunately, you did not respond.) I do not expect that he will be successful in building dialogs and sorting conflicts

out - but often enough I am too pessimistic. Why not trying it?

Who claimed that Lennart was joining GWPF "just for better empathy"?

The Zeitgeist issue, we should discuss elsewhere. The utility of the Zeitgeist is limited, true, but it represents a significant factor in social inertia.

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

10

Now, Georg, what did we others learn from your response
"@David Johnson

Quite frankly I doubt you know what an analogy is. For example Hoffman is not an analogy of Hoffmann, but just badly spelled."

Martin Heimann said...

11

Well - this' gotten a bit out of hand. The GWPF is not the Ku Klux Klan, but a lobby group with a clear agenda. Per se nothing wrong with that. However, it is not a forum where different views are rationally discussed. In fact, none of the Advisory Board members ever exchanged their views on the GWPF website. Since many years I receive their daily newsletter on climate and climate change news. While I have no problem with voicing different opinions on how to see the climate problem and what to do about it, it is the extremely skewed information on basic science that the GWPF conveys to the public that is worrying. This has nothing to do with "serious skeptical scientists", nor having an open mind. I am not sure if Lennart is aware of this. But if he is, I am looking forward to a serious change in the information policy of the GWPF and wish him good luck.

Bam said...

12

Personally, I find the irony delicious.

Bengtsson states he is "disturbed by the strong tendencies to politization", and then joins a political thinktank because it holds the same policy opinion as Bengtsson (to paraphrase: "adjust, not mitigate").

Anonymous said...

13

@ Gosselin

"Little wonder Bengtsson is leaving the alarmist camp."

Well, Bengtsson has never been in the "alarmist camp". He was and still is in the science camp.

If Bengtsson would like to change scientific opinions he would have to write papers. If Bengtsson wants to change politics he should join the GWPF.

Bengtsson is a climate scientist, not a skeptic or denier.

Andreas

P Gosselin said...

14

Andreas,

Glad we agree that the "alarmist camp" is not equivalent to the "science camp". Others think they are the same.

Anonymous said...

15

@ HvS

"Your strong, partly acidic rhetoric convinces nobody but only reassures your friends that you still are friends. You seem unable for an outreach, to overcome the problems we are facing (with different views) – you seem convinced that talking with "them" makes no sense under no circumstances; such a configuration is called war – the purpose is to destroy the others;

Als einer von Georgs "friends" äußere ich mich mal hierzu (Georg kann ja ggf. korrigieren):

Ich finde nicht, dass wir uns bei Primaklima treffen, um einen Teil der Öffentlichkeit von irgendetwas zu überzeugen. Nein, dort lesen keine Vertreter der Presse o.ä. mit, wir sind so eine Art "Klimastammtisch" und treffen uns regelmäßig auf ein Bier. Was ist falsch daran?

Und ja: Georg hätte natürlich auch wie Martin Heimann in #11 sich äußern können und sein Bedauern über diesen Schritt ausdrücken können. Nur: für mich wäre es dann deutlich weniger unterhaltsam.

Und zu "harsh": Georgs Kritik ist harsch. Aber weniger an Bengtsson, sondern an Carter (ob Bengtsson mit Carter über dessen NIPCC-Bericht diskutieren wird?), Courtillot und der GWPF. Ja, die GWPF ist nicht der KuKluxKlan oder die NoTrickZone, aber merkwürdig ist es schon, "politisierte Wissenschaft" zu beklagen und als Konsequenz dann bei einer politischen Lobbyorganisation mitzuarbeiten.

Ich sehe es ganz entspannt: ich verstehe Bengtssons Schritt nicht, aber es ist halt seine Entscheidung. Und es könnte auch sein, dass Bengtsson schnell feststellt, dass er dort keinen Input einbringen kann, sondern dass man ihn und seinen guten Ruf lediglich als Feigenblatt benutzen will. Ich vermute, in diesem Fall wird Bengtsson dann ebenfalls seine Konsequenzen ziehen.

PS:

Richard Tol schätze und respektiere ich ebenfalls. Allerdings hatte ich noch nie das Gefühl, dass er seine Expertise im advisory board der GWPF jemals eingebracht hätte.

Andreas

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

16

Hm, Andreas, harsche Rhetorik (u.a. Beschimpfung und Unterstellungen) gegenüber anderen als "Unterhaltung"? Oder habe ich Sie da missverstanden? Ich meinte übrigens auch nicht "Primaklima" sondern den Beitrag bei scienceBLOG.de, das ja vermutlich nicht als "Stammtisch" zu verstehen ist

Abgesehen davon haben wir hier wohl eine ziemlich ähnliche Wahrnehmung.

Anonymous said...

17

@ HvS

Ich nehme ihre Rolle hier so wahr, dass Sie hier im Blog ein Teil der öffentlichen Klimadebatte sind. Und wir wissen ja, dass auch Journalisten hier regelmäßig vorbeischauchen. Da ist es selbstverständlich, dass die Worte wohlformuliert sein müssen, da muss man auf jedes Wort achten.

Das ist anders bei Georgs Primaklima. Er schreibt als Privatmensch. Natürlich ist Georg auch Klimaforscher, aber seine Beiträge sind keine Beiträge zur Klimadebatte, sondern einfach Georg pur. Hier bin ich Teilnehmer an einer Pressekonferenz, bei Georg sitze ich auf seinem Sofa im Wohnzimmer (oder in der Küche). Beides hat seinen Sinn und Funktion, bei Georg erfahre ich, was ihm gerade so in Echtzeit durch den Kopf geht. Irgendwie erfrischend und persönlich. Und satirische Elemente, Überspitzung etc. empfinde ich als unterhaltsam, ich mag auch (gutes) Kabarett.

Und doch, ich finde, "Stammtisch" passt ganz gut. Wenn Georg mal ein paar Wochen Pause einlegt, dann unterhält sich ein kleines Grüppchen in "Dies und das"-Threads einfach selbst. Und bei weitem nicht nur selbstaffirmativ, von MJ habe ich eine ganze Menge über die ökonomischen Aspekte der Klimadiskussion gelernt.

"Klimazwiebel" und "Primaklima" sind nicht vergleichbar, sie sind unterschiedliche Genres zum selben Thema.

Andreas

Anonymous said...

18

@ Hvs

"Abgesehen davon haben wir hier wohl eine ziemlich ähnliche Wahrnehmung."

Glaube ich auch. Ich denke, das was Martin Heimann hier geschrieben hat, ist konsensfähig. Ist auch das, was Georg geschrieben hat, nur eben wohlformuliert.

Andreas

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

19

Georg – I do not think that it was in some way "necessary" to join GWPF's advisory board, but it was Lennart's judgment that doing so would be good for what he has in mind. If we value (schätzen) Lennart, as you claim to do, then we should respect him and his judgment – which would not imply that I would applaud him for doing so.

A bit too much "respect" and "value" instead of actually saying something about the reasons and logic of Lennarts judgment. You value him so much so you can't say publicly that the idea to join this dubious political pressure group was not really great? I just got to know Bengtsson when I was a Phd student, I spoke with his students who seem to be happy. His presentations were interesting. He seemed to be a nice director. I don't know him personally and he for sure does not even know my name. So I have (I think) all liberty to criticize his judgment. Actually this is what judgments are good for.

A question is how we respond to his move, and you came up very quickly with a very harsh judgment – I hope, you had read his own words before you decided to do so. The interview on Klimazwiebel came out after your blog-comment; thus it must have been another one – or was it only the press release of GWPF? When I saw that press release I decided for myself to first ask Lennart himself about what happened and what his motives were. Maybe you screened the blogosphere, if there were interviews by Lennart (there was on, at least). I would presume, however, that you fired right after the press release. As you like to do, like a good cowboy.

Absolutely right. I criticize him on the basis of his decision and gave some examples of the people who he will teaming up with. As you do as well at the end of your comment.

end part i

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

20

Your strong, partly acidic rhetoric convinces nobody but only reassures your friends that you still are friends. You seem unable for an outreach, to overcome the problems we are facing (with different views) – you seem convinced that talking with "them" makes no sense under no circumstances; such a configuration is called war – the purpose is to destroy the others; this is, indeed, a joint property of yourself with the denier camp – the "others" are stupid and/or evil. But even in a real war, you need in the end the capability for talking; otherwise the war does not end (at least in most cases). The only solution is that the others give up. Maybe Lennart is naïve in trying to build bridges, but is it helpful, or in your terms: necessary, to comment on him as you do?

Now and again all is mixed up.

1) I am happy and pleased that GWPF can publish whatever they want. Hell, even Pierre Gosselin should absolutely publish the complete nonsense he publishes. Your description of this conflict is completely weird and I don't know what you are talking about. I have no war with nobody and I use the word "climate wars" only in an ironic sense.

2) However I also don't need "a constructive dialog" with nobody. I try to express my opinion, that's it. If you have political ambitions to organize such a dialog, to construct bridges, and so forth, that's great but it is certainly not me. This is not a decision of right or wrong but about what role you want to play. You have some political ambitions in this conflict (very good!) and I don't.

3) I am pretty sure that my approach is absolutely viable and democratically ok. Public opinion picks from the many voices and opinions the most interesting/convincing/whatever and this will be part of the basis when it comes to decisions. I never heard that someone is complaining about money wars (when it comes to different opinions about monetary policy), high school wars (when it comes to the future of our schools systems) or retreat wars (when it comes to discuss how to finance health security in 2050). There are political/economical/moral issues and people express their opinion. I never heard of someone asking that everyone should like, understand and embrace every other opinion on these issues since otherwise there is war. Political decisions were taken based on conflicts (of interest, moral, political views) and different opinions should be clearly formulated. It is absolutely not needed (and probably not even healthy from a political point of view) to hug and embrace any other contrarian opinion on this planet just to avoid bad feelings. This is teletubby democracy.

4) This is what you said and what I am referring to: "Taking an issue seriously often requires willingness to exchange with people who hold different views and adopt different values." This was (am I right?) completely independent of the specific issue of climate change. So, yes, if I would be a neoliberal free market aficionado and a politician I should consider socialist point of view. To better argue with them, to find compromises (that's the job for a politician, isn't it?) in the parliaments and so on. But should this neoliberal guy therefore enter into the labor party just to understand them better (this is what I called for better empathy). If Lennart Bengtson wants to publicly discuss with Bob Carter or Vincent Courtillot and to understand their motivations and feelings there are million ways to do it. But it is certainly not needed to join the GWPF. If he shares the obvious political objectives of the GWPF, that is fine and perfectly normal. But if he actually does not share their objectives he will find out that they use just his name for publicity.

end part ii

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

21

Just to be sure, I consider Richard Tol, whom I know and value, a very good scientist; Paul Reiter I never met, but I think he contributed significant insights, when people were constructing the linear direct link between Malaria and temperature change. In that board are others, true, who have a rather bad reputation, but I was never present, when they argued – but, admittedly – I am not that keen on meeting these people.

Its not about meeting someone, its about teaming up with him/her.

And I know for example Vincent Courtillot and met and discussed him at several occasions. I'll be happy to have any type of discussion with him. But I certainly wouldn't join him in a political climate lobby organization. Read this paper and some of the discussion. It has a strong smell of scientific fraud.
<http://www.realclimate.org/images/BardDelaygue.pdf>

I welcome Lennart's bravery to enter such an arena, in particular with an audience with people like you. (I had asked you on facebook if you would do an interview with me on these matters; unfortunately, you did not respond.) I do not expect that he will be successful in building dialogs and sorting conflicts out - but often enough I am too pessimistic. Why not trying it?

I am not a vivid facebooker and didn't get your notice. We can make any interview whenever you want.

Again, Lennart has issues with the IPCC report (not enough Antarctic seaice). Great. Make it public, go to discussions, write articles, go blogging, whatever. But join the GWPF? I repeat my point from above: If you feel something is wrong with school medicine you don't become automatically a homoeopath. There is no logic in it.

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

22

Georg,

it is interesting to see that you seem always really sure about what you believe is going on. It could be different, your judgment could be premature. Could. Does not need to.

Now, I will not criticize Lennart for joining this board, even if I do not believe that he will succeed in what he describes as his goal. But he may be able to open up new channels of communications, of constructive tests to overcome conflicts like the BEST-effort for dealing with the thermometer record.

Now, you, and me, have two (or more) possibilities: declare that he will fail, that the effort is futile (or worth), or we observe what is happening - and do, for instance another interview with him, and maybe others (Richard Tol?) about what he has experienced.

My point with "war" - could you please read again, what I wrote? I guess you misunderstood the point, which was that you acted like being in a war - independently if you feel so or not.

Also, could you clarify if Andreas described your position of a Stammtisch-Betreiber interested in "Unterhaltung von/mit Freunden" properly.

I will repeat the request of an interview at a later opportunity; I wanted you too have an opportunity to express yourself before people would start to speculate about your motives. Now, for this time, the opportunity is gone

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

23

With another interview with Lennart, I meant in 6 months, or a year.

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

24

I am not behaving as being in war. Cannt put it more bluntly.

"Also, could you clarify if Andreas described your position of a Stammtisch-Betreiber interested in "Unterhaltung von/mit Freunden" properly."

This is absolutely part of the blogging. It is free, meandering and often even intelligent discussion on whatever issue possible. On primaklima is a flavor of science and a flavor of climate science in particular.

This is not about saving the world, building bridges or writing press releases.

But it is also about fighting on issues, sharpening its arguments, giving as objective information as possible to outsiders and so on.

[Victor Venema](#) said...

25

Hans von Storch, it is interesting to see that you seem always

really sure about what you believe is the best communication strategy with climate change dissenters. I can imagine people being relatively sure about natural science, when it comes to a vague social science topics such as communication, I had expected some more humility. That is up for debate.

Can you, after so many years of blogging, show any results of your bridge building towards climate change dissenters? (I guess you do not want to build bridges to climate change alarmists, right? Or did I miss something?) Is there, for example, already a quantifiable fraction of the population that used to believe that CO2 cools the atmosphere, suddenly convinced that CO2 might warm the Earth surface?

I wonder how the term "*acidic rhetoric*" is supposed to contribute to building bridges to climate scientists.

Karl Kuhn said...

26

Victor,

building bridges is perhaps not the appropriate term. It is rather about building fora where both sides of the debate can meet and exchange their arguments in public, giving readers a chance to form their own views. Hans and his colleagues have definitely succeeded in doing this. The Klimazwiebel may not always have the best articles of the climate blogosphere, but by far the highest-level comment arena. Another bridge-builder, Judi Curry, has, in my view, much better articles, but the comment area is turning me off, as too many cranks write always the same stuff.

nobody said...

27

@HvS

meine Frage ist: inwiefern hat die BEST-Initiative etwas in der Klimadebatte verbessert? Auf der einen Seite: uns war schon immer klar, dass CRU, GISS, japanische Agentur, NOAA usw. gute Datenprodukte anzeigen. GISS bspw. war sogar seit 2007 quelloffen und seit 2010 oder so unabhängig re-implementiert. BEST bestätigte diese Datenprodukte und brachte eine kleine Weiterentwicklung.

Auf der anderen Seite: Leugner leugnen nun zusätzlich BEST. Andere wie Pielke Sr. oder Judith Curry finden nun BEST auch blöd, weil es eben nicht zu ihren Weltbild passt. Dabei sind deren Arbeiten zu diesem Thema entweder schlecht (Pielke Sr) oder nicht existent (Curry).

Was genau hat BEST in der Debatte gebracht? Kamen Entschuldigungen an das GISS, NOAA, oder CRU-Teams von den sogenannten Skeptikern, die sogar diesen Leuten Betrug unterstellten? Wird nun die Temperaturentwicklung der letzten 150 Jahren als recht robust von den sogenannten Skeptikern angesehen? Außer einigen Ausnahmen sah ich keine Verbesserungen, von Entschuldigungen ganz zu schweigen. Was ist ihr Gefühl dabei?

Die zweite Frage: sie brachen die Zusammenarbeit mit Vahrenholt ab. Warum sollen dann andere mit Leuten wie Vahrenholt und Co zusammenarbeiten? Sie empfanden es als nicht möglich.

Nobody.

Anonymous said...

28

a) "I believe most serious scientists are sceptics and are particularly frustrated that we are not able to properly validate climate change simulations." (Lennart Bengtsson)

b) "I am happy and pleased that GWPF can publish whatever they want. Hell, even Pierre Gosselin should absolutely publish the complete nonsense he publishes. Your description of this conflict is completely weird and I don't know what you are talking about. I have no war with nobody and I use the word "climate wars" only in an ironic sense." "Georg Hoffmann"

a) Wow, a great man!

b) Ouhtsch! Fremdschämen!!!

[the feeling of shame on someone else's behalf]

You know dear Georg, most people think you are weird (or did you mean wired???) , as well as climate alarmism is weird for most people outside this "debate".

Shame on you!

Yeph

[JamesG](#) said...

29

Courtillot and Svensmark are reviled simply for being fond of the idea that the sun drives climate. Yet this should not be controversial since it was the previous scientific consensus stretching back as far as science has existed.

The real issue here is that the mainstream scientific community has too long allowed itself to be bullied by the doom-mongers among them who pretend moral superiority. As Prof. Von Storch almost said - if you paint your opponents as evil then you don't need to bother with their arguments. This is less science than religion!

External Skeptic organisations exist only because there are not enough internal skeptics of the current zeitgeist. Press-release science that finds alarm from innocuous data and pessimistic models is rarely criticised while any study that finds there is little cause for alarm is vilified. Real science has seemingly given way to activism!

Skeptics would be ignored but for the simple fact that time and again they have been proven correct. We have now conducted the experiment of CO2 injection up to 400ppm and nothing happened. This was a great surprise to every non-skeptic despite how many contradictory excuses they now present. Skeptics were essentially correct to say that the dominant role of CO2 was overhyped and that the models were inadequate. This is quite simply because the role of natural variation was not understood and hence marginalised. so how on earth is this construed as evil?

Mainstream climate alarmists do not hold the moral high ground. If energy supplies drop before we have managed to replace them with useful alternatives then the cure is most certainly worse than the putative disease. This is the real danger that the GWPF is trying to warn against.

Nobody said...

30

"Svensmark are reviled simply for being fond of the idea that the sun drives climate."

Svensmark was not reviled. Look at the remarks about Mike Mann or Jim Hansen. There you will see serious insults, even murder threats!!!! MURDER THREATS. Unbelievable stupid.

Svensmarks idea is that GCRs (modulated by the sun) and clouds are serious amplifiers for the suns influence. Before Svensmark, the idea was that GCR might marginally influence the climate. That idea still stands.

Svensmarks idea is not really correct. None of the independent studies could confirm Svensmarks idea. Why? In your world it must be an evil conspiracy... The ideas of Lindzen (iris theory), Svensmark,etc. are not really good or already contradicted.

A further interesting point is: almost all "skeptics" use clouds as amplifiers of their idea to influence climate. And almost none of these "skeptics" do actual work about the influence of clouds: what feedback create clouds? How do they form? Is there a trend in cloud data? How model clouds? Particle grow models? How to observe clouds?

Nobody.

Karl Kuhn said...

31

Nobody: "Svensmarks idea is not really correct. None of the independent studies could confirm Svensmarks idea."

Nobody,

you once admitted not to be a climate scientist. Given that fact, your assertions about what is fact and who is right and who's wrong are maybe a bit overconfident. It is unlikely that you as a layman have the time and expertise to properly evaluate the literature related to Svensmark's theory. Your credibility as a discussant would increase if you would be less assertive about your hobbies.

Mike Mann is notorious for insulting others via Twitter ... it is sufficient that you disagree with him to be called denier, liar, misinformer and the like. So he should not complain about equivalent feedback. Wie man in den Wald hineinruft ...

Nobody said...

32

@Kuhn

you are thinking that 99.999% of all "skeptical" arguments and their proponents are irrelevant. 99% of the rest are minor corrections to mainstream. There is not much left on the so-called skeptic side.

Interesting opinion.

Nobody.

Karl Kuhn said...

33

Nobody, switching to outright nonsense will not help your cause.

[eduardo](#) said...

34

Published in 1999

Bengtsson, L., E. Roeckner, and M. Stendel (1999), Why is the global warming proceeding much slower than expected?, [J. Geophys. Res., 104\(D4\), 3865–3876](#). doi: [10.1029/1998JD200046](#).

From the abstract:

...'However, the observed trend of no warming in the midtroposphere and clear warming at the surface is not found in the model simulations.'

Bam said...

35

Eduardo, note that the paper relies heavily on the, at that time, highly faulty UAH record.

[eduardo](#) said...

36

Bam,

Bengtsson underlines in his interview the need for a proper model validation. I wanted to illustrate that his worries in this respect were already expressed long ago. So my comment was rather about Bengtsson than about climate models

Bam said...

37

Eduardo, the paper itself does not mention model validation, and certainly not "proper" model validation, so I am sorry for not noticing that the paper was showing he was concerned about that already in 1999.

[eduardo](#) said...

38

Bam,

I am pretty sure you perfectly understood what the paper is about

hw said...

39

Bam,

of course this paper is about validation in the sense of comparing simulation results with obs. And this is where real climate science happens, mostly. From Bengtsson's recent interviews there is only one criticism worth considering:

I think the climate community shall be more critical and spend more time to understand what they are doing instead of presenting endless and often superficial results and to do this with a critical mind. I do not believe that the IPCC machinery is what is best for science in the long term. We are still in a situation where our knowledge is insufficient and climate models are not good enough. What we need is more basic research freely organized and driven by leading scientists without time pressure to deliver and only deliver when they believe the result is good and solid enough.

This sentiment is certainly not uncommon among researchers who get sick of reading (and producing!) one "sea-level rise threatens world heritage sites in (2000 years)" after another "climate change will lead to more Aspirin sales (in 100 years)" paper and the endless stream of meaningless garbage pushed out to pad publications lists that is only possible to publish (and apparently necessary if you are part of the machine) because the topic is "hot".

And the man's life-achievement gives him as much authority as possible at all, for such statements about the general direction of the field. I just fear that this being voiced in the context of his recent association with the Clowns doesn't help the cause.

Anonymous said...

40

Who are the clowns?

"The Subterranean War on Science
Science denial kills."

(Stephan Lewandowsky, Michael E. Mann, Linda Bauld, Gerard Hastings, and Elizabeth F. Loftus)

If you read any of the Lewandowsky-papers about "NASA Faked the Moon Landing—Therefore, (Climate) Science Is a Hoax" or "Recursive fury: Conspiracist ideation in the blogosphere in response to research on conspiracist ideation" you feel ashamed about "science".

Further if you read about the famous Mister "hide the decline"-you also feel ashamed.

Why is nobody surprised to see both men work together. And many climate scientists are proud to support these people or even work with them.

I wasted several days of my life to read through this moon hoax scam and I was even more disappointed then ever before since the climate wars began. This is really the worst I have ever read about hoaxes in science.

These examples will eternally live on in history books as the darkest ages of science.

Yeph

[Warren Pearce](#) said...

41

Victor, you say you are looking for results of bridge building?
How would you be measuring these results?

[Victor Venema](#) said...

42

Warren Pearce: "Victor, you say you are looking for results of bridge building? How would you be measuring these results?"

No idea, that is your field, isn't it? I am not the one confidently claiming to know how to best communicate with and build bridges towards climate "sceptics". I hold it to be a futile exercise.

The only people you can convince of the wrongness of the thesis of the "sceptics" are the general public and your friends, colleagues and family. If the "sceptics" will change their minds, it will be because their peers no longer see their opinion as acceptable.

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

43

Victor, that is in general a good policy, what you suggest - but when you notice after 20 years of trying, that you have no real success - what then?

Have your "enemies" (the stupid and evil skeptics) become weaker, less in number, less in attention? - or is it possibly the other way around?P No skeptics were visible earlier in Germany, now there are quite some. Not a majority, true, but a sizable minority, it seems.

All this is often framed in the wording of war - the US did in Vietnam what you want to do now with the "skeptics"; finally, after 20 years th US accepted that there was no winning in sight and started to speak to the Vietcong. Many asymmetric war are developing this way.

Maybe there is more to learn in history - about our own limitation, our error-making, our stupidity, our repeating historical inconsistent judgment?

Note that this analogy does to imply that the Vietcong built a better society than a western-supported government would have done.

[Victor Venema](#) said...

44

Hans, I am not aware that [trying to convince your direct peers](#) was the dominant strategy the last 20 years. I had the feeling we tried to use scientific arguments and mainly used mass media to convey them. My experience tells me that scientific arguments do not work.

In understand that my rhetoric sounds harsh in your ears. That is not a strategy, I just do not want to be dishonest about the quality of the arguments at WUWT and Co.

My question was, however, what kind of evidence you have that your appeasement strategy is working? Does calling mainstream scientists dishonest work? Are people willing to listen to you because of that? Really listen and think, not just increasing your click rates. I think, I have asked this before and also then did not get an answer.

You seem to be very convinced that yours in the only strategy that works. I wonder where the evidence for that is.

Karl Kuhn said...

45

Victor, I don't know about you, but I changed my mind on several issues since I was sweet sixteen.

But the rants of self-righteous Rumpelstilzkens never did the trick.

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

46

@Hans

"All this is often framed in the wording of war"

La langue de sciences es la langue de guerre. (Bruno Latour)

"Have your "enemies" (the stupid and evil skeptics) become weaker, less in number, less in attention? - or is it possibly the other way around?P No skeptics were visible earlier in Germany, now there are quite some. Not a majority, true, but a sizable minority, it seems."

The aim of a political discussion is not the extinction of the other side. The social democrats havent failed since after 150 years of existence conservative prties and people are still existing. The aim is to convince the majority.

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

47

@Hans

"All this is often framed in the wording of war - the US did in Vietnam what you want to do now with the "skeptics"; finally, after 20 years th US accepted that there was no winning in sight and started to speak to the Vietcong. Many asymmetric war are developing this way. "

Since my "Ku-Klux Klan comparison" (which was not a comparison at all with the GWPF) has such a success in the internet I only can warn you. You will find your sentence in a second on some websites with "leading climate scientist compares the bad treatment of sceptics by mainstream scientists with throwing Napalm on children in Vietnam by the US"

PS Just for interest. You wrote

"Note that this analogy does to imply that the Vietcong built a better society than a western-supported government would have done. "

"does" or "does not"?"

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

48

I would agree, Georg.

But what do you do if you notice that you do not get the majority, and you think that time is running out? Convince the majority - does it mean convince it that your enemies are evil and/or stupid, or that you case is significant and your solution best for the majority?

My point is, Georg, when you recognize that your goal of winning the war or gaining the majority, fails - what do you do then? What is plan B? (Pushing for such a plan B WAS the core of the sozialdemokratische Ostpolitik.)

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

49

I would agree, Georg.

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[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

50

@Hans

"But what do you do if you notice that you do not get the majority, and you think that time is running out?"

All political issues are urgent. What are political parties if they dont succeed? Continue arguing or even compromise with the "other side" as the socialist is doing now with the conservatives in Germany.

"Convince the majority - does it mean convince it that your enemies are evil and/or stupid, or that you case is significant and your solution best for the majority?"

Usually politicians are doing both.

Weaknesses (personal or in the argumentation of the other side) are obviously exploited all the time in politics.

"My point is, Georg, when you recognize that your goal of winning the war or gaining the majority, fails - what do you do then? What is plan B? (Pushing for such a plan B WAS the core of the sozialdemokratische Ostpolitik.)"

Since you are really asking me personally I just want to make clear I have no agenda (other than it would be nice to reduce

GHG emissions) concerning climate change politics. The economic and social implications are way to complicate for me. Those who are pushing for a CO2 reduction plan should probably look for compromises along generally accepted political goals such as "independence of arabian oil" or "energy efficiency", ie goals which are generally accepted even if you think climate models have no relation to reality. But I am not in a position to give recommendations to the green party.

Also I said here already several times that for the particularities of the climate problem (time scale, importance of carbon fuel, etc) I don't think that there will be any limit in the quantity of oil, carbon, gas we will burn. The business as usual scenario seems to me by far the most probable scenario.

[Hans von Storch](#) said...

51

Sorry, Georg, my English seems a little limited. I did not want to know what YOU DO, but I wanted to make clear that I am referring to your post, and how some points in your post are to be understood in view of some issues I raised. I certainly do not want to question you personally. If you got this impression, I apologize.

(Auf Deutsch hätte ich sagen wollen: "Was macht man?" - wie sage ich das gut auf Englisch?)

All political questions are urgent, true, but the climate issues is often framed as a case of needed "Weltrettung", with a clear near-term deadline of last possible reaction. I would call this "really urgent" - a component of the what makes up the soup named "postnormal".

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

52

@Hans

I don't know what people who strongly push for emission reductions should do. As I said my impression is that both our political system and might be even our anthropological equipment is not designed to solve problems on such time scales.

But independent of this not very constructive statement I also don't think that the political discussion or the media image of climate sciences or in particular the failure of any political measures to reduce GHG emissions has anything to do with the way scientists communicate their science or how they treat (nicely or beastly) sceptics.

[Freddy Schenk](#) said...

53

@Georg #52

What do you mean with timescales here? That a problem has to be solved whose consequences will be seen only much later (a typical political or share holder value problem)? I think that mainly the spatial scale is the problem in this context. To reduce emissions effectively, a global agreement between all countries is required. I don't see any body of evidence for progress in this matter. The alternative, think globally - act regionally does not work so far as countries compete economically having in the same time very different levels of wealth.

We had the "Bert Bolin Lecture" (a founder of the IPCC) yesterday at Stockholm University about "*The role of the carbon cycle in regulating climate*" by Corinne Le Quéré (East Anglia). She did not present much science. She included the Al Gore style of showing CO2 over billion of years and at the end uncovering the recent increase hitting the upper edge of the slide. Her main conclusion at the end was that we (scientists) have to communicate more about the problem although she also doesn't know what to do. I agree with her in the point that people care about weather but not climate and that the meaning of a temperature change of 2 degrees cannot be understood by lay people. Still, I don't think that communication is the issue...

[Georg Hoffmann](#) said...

54

@Freddy

yes I agree. Communication is not the problem at all. Being better informed might even be a problem sometimes:
"It's what we might call the More Information Hypothesis: the belief that many of our most bitter political battles are mere misunderstandings. The cause of these misunderstandings? Too little information — be it about climate change, or taxes, or Iraq, or the budget deficit.... But the More Information Hypothesis isn't just wrong. It's backwards. Cutting-edge research shows that the more information partisans get, the deeper their disagreements become."
<http://www.vox.com/2014/4/6/5556462/brain-dead-how-politics-makes-us-stupid>

And, yes, spatial and temporal scales. No effort "we" would do now would make a difference in our lifetime and hardly a difference in the life of our kids. Sacrifying even a minimum of wealth for people we dont know and never will know, possibly even living in other regions of the planet.... I have a hard time to imagine that someone can motivate people to such politics. Moreover with politicians having a "being in charge" lifetime of a couple of years.

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