

# Understanding The IPCC AR5 Climate Assessment

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Each IPCC report seems to be required to conclude that the case for an international agreement to curb carbon dioxide has grown stronger. That is to say the IPCC report (and especially the press release accompanying the summary) is a political document, and as George Orwell noted, political language “is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.”

With respect to climate, we have had 17 years without warming; all models show greater tropical warming than has been observed since 1978; and arctic sea ice is suddenly showing surprising growth. And yet, as the discrepancies between models and observations increase, the IPCC insists that its confidence in the model predictions is greater than ever.

Referring to the 17 year ‘pause,’ the IPCC allows for two possibilities: that the sensitivity of the climate to increasing greenhouse gases is less than models project and that the heat added by increasing CO<sub>2</sub> is ‘hiding’ in the deep ocean. Both possibilities contradict alarming claims.

With low sensitivity, economic analyses suggest that warming under 2C would likely be beneficial to the earth. Heat ‘hiding’ in the deep ocean would mean that current IPCC models fail to describe heat exchange between surface waters and the deep ocean. Such exchanges are essential features of natural climate variability, and all IPCC claims of attribution of warming to man’s activities depend on the assumption that the models accurately portray this natural variability.

In attempting to convince the public to accept the need to for the environmental movement’s agenda, continual reference is made to consensus. This is dishonest not because of the absence of a consensus, but because the consensus concerning such things as the existence of irregular (and small compared to normal regional variability) net warming since about 1850, the existence of climate change (which has occurred over the earths entire existence), the fact that added greenhouse gases should have some impact (though small unless the climate system acts so as to greatly amplify this effect) over the past 60 years with little impact before then, and the fact that greenhouse gases have increased over the past 200 years or so, and that

their greenhouse impact is already about 80% of what one expects from a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> are all perfectly consistent with there being no serious problem. Even the text of the IPCC Scientific Assessment agrees that catastrophic consequences are highly unlikely, and that connections of warming to extreme weather have not been found. The IPCC iconic statement that there is a high degree of certainty that most of the warming of the past 50 years is due to man's emissions is, whether true or not, completely consistent with there being no problem. To say that most of a small change is due to man is hardly an argument for the likelihood of large changes.

Carbon restriction policies, to have any effect on climate, would require that the most extreme projections of dangerous climate actually be correct, and would require massive reductions in the use of energy to be universally adopted. There is little question that such reductions would have negative impacts on income, development, the environment, and food availability and cost – especially for the poor. This would clearly be immoral.

By contrast, the reasonable and moral policy would be to foster economic growth, poverty reduction and wellbeing in order that societies be better able to deal with climate change regardless of its origin. Mitigation policies appear to have the opposite effect without significantly reducing the hypothetical risk of any changes in climate. While reducing vulnerability to climate change is a worthy goal, blind support for mitigation measures – regardless of the invalidity of the claims – constitutes what might be called bankrupt morality.

It is not sufficient for actions to artificially fulfill people's need for transcendent aspirations in order for the actions to be considered moral. Needless to add, support of global warming alarm hardly constitutes intelligent respect for science.