



## **Gore on the Rocks. Consensus Is Reached: Gore's Global-Warming Alarmism Is Overblown**

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As international celebrity and film star Al Gore prepared to testify about global warming on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, it was already apparent that the hot air may be leaking out of the global-warming balloon.

After a year of concentrated effort that includes a multimillion-dollar p.r. campaign on top of *An Inconvenient Truth* and slavish media coverage parroting the climate-alarmist line, recent polls show that public opinion has barely budged. Only about a third of Americans, according to a recent Gallup survey, are agitated about climate change, and even people who say the environment is their most important issue rank climate change behind air and water quality in importance.

Meanwhile a backlash in the scientific community has begun. Last week, *New York Times* veteran science reporter William Broad filed a devastating [article](#) about scientists who are "alarmed" at Gore's alarmism; Gore's account of global warming goes far beyond the evidence. The dissents from Gore's extremism, Broad explained, "come not only from conservative groups and prominent skeptics of catastrophic warming, but also from rank-and-file scientists" who have "no political ax to grind." It appears Gore refused to be interviewed directly for the article; he responded to e-mail questions only.

This backlash has been quietly building for a while. In November, Mike Hulme, director of Britain's Tyndall Center for Climate Change Re-

search, expressed his unease about climate alarmism to the BBC:

I have found myself increasingly chastised by climate change campaigners when my public statements and lectures on climate change have not satisfied their thirst for environmental drama and exaggerated rhetoric. It seems that it is we, the professional climate scientists, who are now the [catastrophe] skeptics. How the wheel turns. Why is it not just campaigners, but politicians and scientists too, who are openly confusing the language of fear, terror and disaster with the observable physical reality of climate change, actively ignoring the careful hedging which surrounds science's predictions? To state that climate change will be 'catastrophic' hides a cascade of value-laden assumptions which do not emerge from empirical or theoretical science.

Then in December, Kevin Vranes of the University of Colorado, by no means a climate skeptic, commented on a widely read science blog about his sense of the mood of the most recent meeting of the American Geophysical Union, where Gore had made his standard climate presentation. "To sum the state of the climate science world in one word, as I see it right now, it is this: *tension*," Vranes wrote. "What I am starting to hear is *internal backlash* . . . None of this is to say that the *risk* of climate change is being questioned or downplayed by our community; it's not. It is to say that I think some people feel that we've created a monster by limiting the ability of people in our commu-

nity to question results that say '*climate change is right here!*'"

Gore and other climate extremists have been hammering away at "consensus" science for years now--especially the assessments produced by the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). So it is a highly inconvenient truth that the latest IPCC scientific assessment undermines many of Gore's most spectacular claims. The IPCC says the worst-case sea-level rise this century would be 23 inches; Gore portrays 20 feet or more in his horror film. Ditto for Gore's claims about hurricanes and melting ice caps; the new IPCC fails to bolster Gore's alarmism. Already climate alarmists are starting to mutter under their breath that the IPCC is now "too conservative," but having built up the IPCC as the gold standard of "consensus" science, the alarmists are in the awkward position of being hoist by their own petard. It could be an inconvenient moment for Gore on Wednesday if someone asks him why he is so far outside the scientific consensus on so many aspects of the issue.

A new anti-alarmist documentary from Britain's iconoclastic Channel Four, [\*The Great Global Warming Swindle\*](#), is attracting Internet viewers by the millions. And the most significant blow to climate alarmism came last week in New York, where in a formal debate MIT's Richard Lindzen and author Michael Crichton decisively defeated the alarmists in an audience vote. You know there is something fundamentally weak about the case for climate catastro-

phe when you see an alarmist attributing the skeptics' victory to Crichton's height rather than the substance of the arguments.

The biggest blow to the climate catastrophists is not any scientific problem, but the hypocrisy of Gore and his Hollywood cheering section, whose profligate energy use cannot be mitigated in the popular mind through "carbon offsets," even if such offsets worked as advertised. Liberals in the 1960s and 1970s never comprehended how damaging "limousine liberalism" was to their cause. They seem even more oblivious to the self-inflicted wounds of "Gulfstream liberalism." Whatever the intricacies of climate science, middle-class citizens understand that Gore wants them to use less energy and pay more for it, while he and his Hollywood pals use as much as they want and buy their way out of guilt, like a medieval indulgence. In the companion book to *An Inconvenient Truth*, Gore writes that "a good way to reduce the

amount of energy you use is simply to buy less. Before making a purchase, ask yourself if you really need it." Gore decided that he does need it--for all four of his homes and his pool house.

The ultimate sign that climate change is more about politics than science is the repeated "go-slow" statements of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democratic leaders. If climate change is really the greatest threat in mankind's history, with the catastrophic tipping point less than 10 years away, why go slow in crafting legislation to save the planet? Perhaps Pelosi and other congressional Democrats have paid attention to the overwhelming consensus of economists--one climate consensus that Gore resolutely ignores--that serious greenhouse-gas emission cuts fail every conceivable cost-benefit test. Faced with the climate-policy equivalent of HillaryCare, Pelosi would prefer to save her majority rather than save the planet.

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