



High price for load of hot air

Climate change hysteria is costing us billions, writes **Bob Carter**

WITH understandable reluctance, Prime Minister John Howard recently donned the political hair-shirt of a carbon trading system.

On the same day, NASA chief Michael Griffin commented in a US radio interview that "I am not sure that it is fair to say that (global warming) is a problem that we must wrestle with".

NASA is an agency that knows a thing or two about climate change. As Griffin added: "We study global climate change, that is in our authorisation, we think we do it rather well."

"I'm proud of that, but NASA is not an agency chartered to, quote, battle climate change."

Such a clear statement that science accomplishment should carry primacy over policy advice is both welcome and overdue.

Nonetheless, there is something worrying about one of Griffin's other statements, which said that "I have no doubt ... that a trend of global warming exists".

Griffin seems to be referring to human-caused global warming, but irrespective of that his opinion is unsupported by the evidence.

The salient facts are these. First, the accepted global average temperature statistics used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change show that no ground-based warming has occurred since 1998. Oddly, this eight-year-long temperature stasis has occurred despite an increase over the same period of 15 parts per million (or 4 per cent) in atmospheric CO₂.

Second, lower atmosphere satellite-based temperature measurements, if corrected for non-greenhouse influences such as El Nino events and large volcanic eruptions, show little if any global warming since 1979, a period

over which atmospheric CO₂ has increased by 55 ppm (17 per cent).

Third, there are strong indications from solar studies that Earth's current temperature stasis will be followed by climatic cooling over the next few decades.

How then is it possible for Griffin to assert so boldly that human-caused global warming is happening?

Well, he is in good company for similar statements have been made recently by several Western heads of state at the G8 summit meeting. For instance, German Chancellor Angela Merkel asserts climate change (i.e. global warming) "is also essentially caused by humankind".

In fact, there is every doubt whether any global warming at all is occurring at the moment, let alone human-caused warming.

For leading politicians to be asserting to the contrary indicates something is very wrong with their chain of scientific advice, for they are clearly being deceived. That this should be the case is an international political scandal of high order which, in turn, raises the question of where their advice is coming from.

In Australia, the advice trail leads from government agencies such as the CSIRO and the Australian Greenhouse Office through to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United Nations.

Australia does not ask the World Bank to set the budget

As leading economist David Henderson has pointed out, it is extremely dangerous for an unelected and unaccountable body like the IPCC

to have a monopoly on climate policy advice to governments. And even more so because, at heart, the IPCC is a political and not a scientific agency.

Australia does not ask the World Bank to set its annual budget and neither should it allow the notoriously alarmist IPCC to set its climate policy.

It is past time for those who have deceived governments and misled the public regarding dangerous human-caused global warming to be called to account. Aided by hysterical posturing by green NGOs, their actions have led to the cornering of government on the issue and the likely implementation of futile emission policies that will impose direct extra costs on every household and enterprise in Australia to no identifiable benefit.

Not only do humans not dominate Earth's current temperature trend but the likelihood is that further large sums of public money are shortly going to be committed to, theoretically, combat warming when cooling is the more likely short-term climatic eventuality.

In one of the more expensive ironies of history, the expenditure of more than \$US50 billion (\$60 billion) on research into global warming since 1990 has failed to demonstrate any human-caused climate trend, let alone a dangerous one.

Yet that expenditure will pale into insignificance compared with the squandering of money that is going to accompany the introduction of a carbon trading or taxation system.

The costs of thus expiating comfortable middle class angst are, of course, going to be imposed preferentially upon the poor and underprivileged.

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