

## Climate change or climate con?

Global warming, climate change, call it what you like; it seems to be here with us in one way or another. For the past three years, debate has raged sporadically, especially in the Letters section of *The Press* and other dailies. In our past two issues, *Avenues* has attempted to provide a far wider and more comprehensive forum for this debate.

To this end, two acknowledged and published experts, with views at opposite ends of the climate change spectrum, have been invited to present these views in a written debate in this magazine. In February, Dr Gerrit van der Lingen, a professed climate change ‘agnostic’ made his case. In our March issue, Professor Bryan Storey, firmly on the other side of the climate change fence, was given equal space to present his views. This month, Dr van der Lingen has the opportunity to rebut these views, then the following month Professor Storey will have a further chance to critique and rebut Dr van der Lingen’s prior assertions. Finally, the cases put by both scientists will be weighed, evaluated and judged by a single, independent and highly experienced adjudicator.

This whole project is a major one, and something *Avenues* has not entered into lightly. We are though, if one side is to be believed, facing the single greatest threat to life in the history of humankind. If the other side is correct, we are in the midst of the single greatest, stage-managed deception in recorded history. The debate continues. **Editor**

## APOCALYPSE CANCELLED

By Gerrit van der Lingen

**Abbreviations:** In this article I will use the following: MMGW – Man-made Global Warming; IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; NIPCC – Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change; ppmv – parts per million by volume.

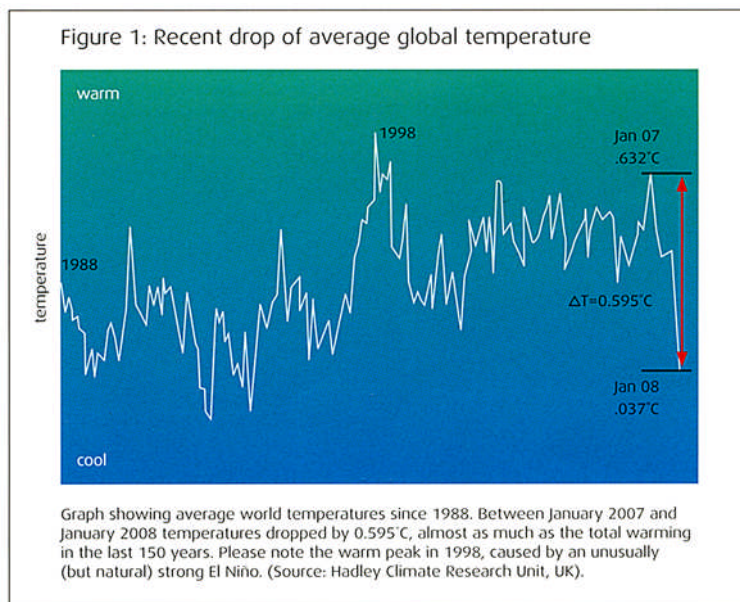
### Update:

Before commenting on Professor Bryan Storey’s article in the March issue of *Avenues* (‘Evidence for climate change’), I want to start with an update on two items I discussed in my article in the February issue, items essential to this debate.

1. I mentioned some of the worldwide extreme cold events in recent time. Since then many more have made the headlines:

- China experienced its worst snowstorms in 50 years, affecting millions of people. More than 100,000 houses collapsed under the weight of snow
- Avalanches in the Indian Kashmir, caused by the worst snowfall in decades, killed 22 people
- A record-breaking cold spell in Vietnam killed about 60,000 cattle
- On 30 January, 20cm of snow fell in Jerusalem
- North America was hit by severe winter storms
- The exceptional cold spell also affected the Arctic. Sea-ice between Canada and Greenland reached its largest extent in 15 years. In many places the ice was 10 to 20cm thicker than last year
- The northern hemisphere recorded its largest snow cover since 1966 (reversing the trend of Professor Storey’s Figure 4c)
- On November 17, 2007, Buenos Aires recorded its lowest temperature in 90 years

The list goes on and on. However, the amazing aspect of these cold events was the fact that environmental organisations and most of the media maintained a deafening silence about the majority of these extreme cold spells. They certainly never wondered if this was typical for global warming. It would have been a different story had there been a heat wave, like the 2003 one in Europe.



There are three science agencies that provide data on average global temperatures. One of these is the British Hadley Centre. Their latest graph (Figure 1), from 1988 to January 2008 shows a remarkable drop in temperature of 0.595°C between January 2007 and January 2008. This is almost the same as the entire global warming over the last 150 years.

One MMGW promoters' blog (*RealClimate*) includes the comment that eight years of climate trends is meaningless and people who pay any attention to recent climate trends are misguided. This aptly reveals the mindset

of these people. Their comments would have been the opposite had the trend been one of warming. The chairman of the IPCC, Dr Rajendra Pachauri, said he would look into this recent trend and suggested that there may be natural factors causing it. To which we MMGW agnostics would say: "Yeah, right!"

Someone lent me a copy of a recently published book by Gareth Renowden, titled *Hot Topic*. Renowden, who is not a scientist, but grows grapes, olives and truffles in Waipara, makes a spirited defence of his belief in catastrophic MMGW, as promoted by the IPCC. He starts his Introduction as follows:

"Our climate is changing. New Zealand is getting warmer. The whole world is warming, and it will continue to heat up for decades to come."

Yes, the climate is changing and has been doing so for billions of years and will continue to do so and there is nothing humans can do about it. No, New Zealand is not getting warmer. No, there is no evidence that we will continue to heat up. To the contrary, there is better evidence that we may be entering a cooling phase (see comments above and my February article). This illustrates very well the chasm between the computer-based, virtual reality world, in which the global warming alarmists are living, and the real world.

2. In my February article I expressed concern that some of the draconian measures proposed by MMGW advocates, "to save the planet from catastrophic global warming," are a direct threat to democratic freedoms and freedom of speech. Most of them would also be catastrophic for poor people in the world, as exemplified by the rush into biofuel production, resulting in a dramatic increase in food prices and the cutting down of natural rainforests. 'Saving the planet from catastrophic MMGW' and 'Making poverty history' are mutually exclusive objectives.

To say that the MMGW hysteria poses a threat to democratic freedoms may seem a bit far-fetched, until one reads some of the anti-democratic utterances from catastrophic-MMGW advocates. For instance, Mayer Hillman, called a 'leading green thinker,' said in a published interview: "When the chips are down I think democracy is a less important goal than is the protection of the planet from the death of life. Rationing has got to be imposed on people whether they like it or not." Al Gore openly expressed hostility towards the democratic process. He called certain elected governments "obstacles to the environmental agenda."

Freedom of speech is threatened by the regular calls for the silencing of anyone who dares to doubt or criticise the catastrophic-MMGW dogma. For instance, the Academy Councillor of the Royal Society

of New Zealand, Professor Keith Hunter, wrote in the Royal Society Alert newsletter of October 4, 2007:

“It is discouraging to see that the media in New Zealand, which is generally not known for the quality of its scientific journalism, continues to pay so much attention to the ravings of the various climate change deniers in our midst. Naysaying of this nature can be very dangerous and counter-productive.” It’s a bit rich when scientists who believe in an unproven hypothesis start calling those who don’t share their belief ‘deniers.’ One would have expected howls of protest from members of the Royal Society. Not a peep. The only group lodging a protest was we, the New Zealand Climate Science Coalition. But we can be ignored, as we are those “climate change deniers in our midst.” It is very sad that this once august, scientific body, whose *raison d’être* should be to uphold the free and frank exchange of scientific ideas and opinions, unencumbered by ideologies, has now stooped so low.

**Breaking News:** News has reached us that Al Gore will receive an honorary doctorate on April 15, from Lausanne University, Switzerland. The Swiss newspaper *Weltwoche* wrote an angry protest, reminding its readers that the same university had awarded an honorary doctorate to Benito Mussolini in 1937. It writes that the success of both comes from the same type of political agitation and that Gore, with his fanatical worldwide campaign, has pushed half of mankind into climate hysteria. *Weltwoche* also comments, in passing, that both Mussolini and Gore do not practise what they preach. The other half of mankind, if they cherish their democratic freedoms, should be worried. Be very worried.

### **Apocalypse cancelled**

I am pleased that Professor Storey is not perpetuating the apocalyptic view of MMGW. This is unusual, as many MMGW advocates are trying to outdo each other in predicting imminent climate catastrophes. For instance, Sir David King, the science advisor to the British Government, has said that, unless we drastically reduce our carbon dioxide emissions, the only habitable place on Earth by the end of this century will be the Antarctic continent. Not to be outdone, James Lovelock, the author of *The Revenge of Gaia*, predicted that the only habitable place by the end of this century would be the Arctic. Our own professor Peter Barrett, of Victoria University, wrote that we only have about ten years to avoid the destruction of our civilisation by the end of this century (*Pacific Ecologist*, Issue 11, 2005/6). In 1999, he warned a group of politicians visiting McMurdo Station in the Antarctic that the Western Antarctic Ice Sheet was on the point of melting, which would cause a 6-metre rise in sea level (*The Press*, January 28, 1999). All these apocalyptic predictions have no base in science and are highly irresponsible. But the human species seems to have a predilection for predicting the end of time. I call it a ‘longing for Apocalypse.’

### **The science is not settled**

One often hears that the science of global warming has been settled and that the debate is over. I am pleased therefore, that Professor Storey does not share that opinion. He writes that the climate is “a complex interactive system” and is “affected by many natural processes and increasingly influenced by human activities. Consequently, there’s valuable debate (and argument!) and scientific research in progress.” As I wrote in my February article, thousands of scientists disagree with the catastrophic-MMGW hypothesis, and hundreds are actively involved in debating the science.

### **Points of difference**

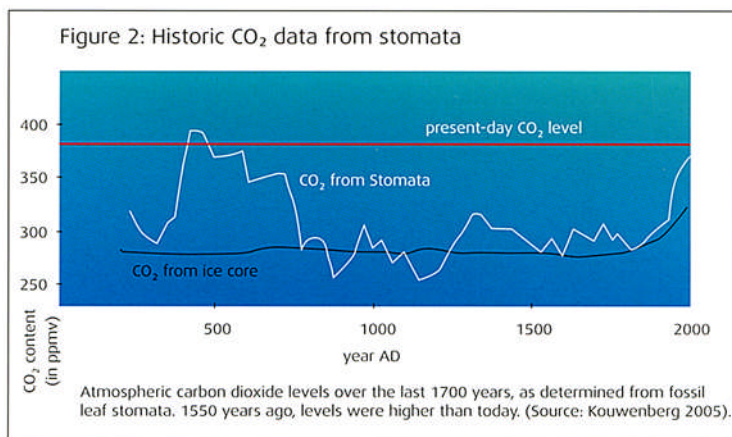
However, there are many scientific points on which Professor Storey and I differ. In this short space I can only mention a few. By necessity some of these arguments are rather technical.

### **Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)**

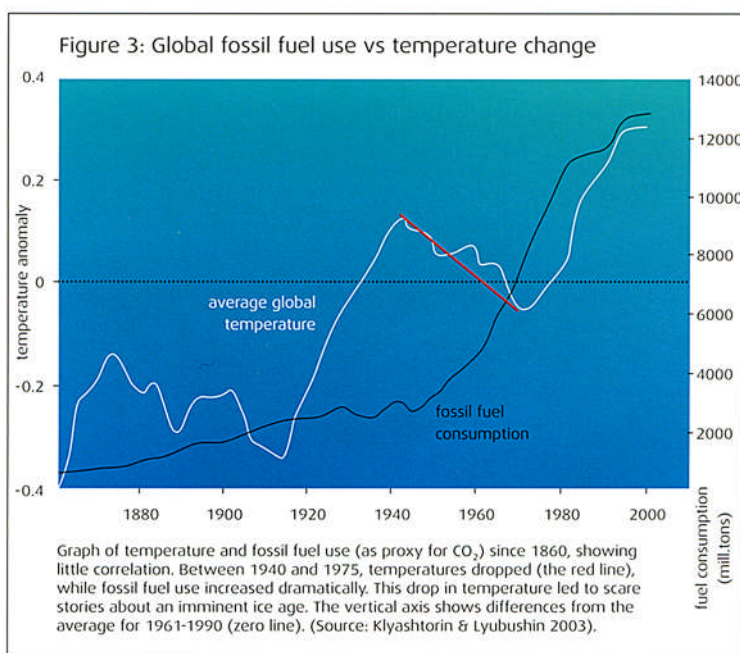
There is major disagreement on the magnitude of the warming effect of CO<sub>2</sub>. According to many scientists, its effect is very small and almost impossible to measure. Professor Storey mentions its ‘blanketing effect.’ Yet, this blanket has large holes in it. CO<sub>2</sub> can only absorb infrared radiation from the Earth in specific small windows of the electromagnetic spectrum. Outside these areas, the infrared

radiation escapes into space. Furthermore, theoretical considerations suggest that those spectral windows can become saturated. This means that at a certain point, any additional carbon dioxide will have no further warming effect. Theoretical considerations also suggest that the warming effect of a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is not more than 0.5 to one degree. That the IPCC predicts higher future temperatures is entirely based on computer modelling, by factoring in all sorts of positive feedbacks. The warming predictions of models vary wildly, from 1.4 to 11°C. They are just computer games.

Professor Storey writes that the present level of CO<sub>2</sub> (380 ppmv) “has reached a record high relative to more than the past half million years,” based on ice core data. The problem is that CO<sub>2</sub> data in ice cores are only an average over hundreds to thousands of years – the time it typically takes for snow falling on ice caps to turn into solid ice and trap air in bubbles. However, there are other modern scientific methods to determine past CO<sub>2</sub> levels. One is based on stomata (pores) in fossil plant leaves. More CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere results in fewer stomata in leaves.



Extensive research by scientists at Utrecht University has found that CO<sub>2</sub> levels about 1550 years ago were higher than at present (Figure 2). Moreover, when one tries to join CO<sub>2</sub> data from ice cores with present-day actual measurements, there is a big gap, suggesting that the ice core data do not reflect actual atmospheric levels. Finally, a German scientist, Ernst-Georg Beck, investigated over 90,000 chemical analyses of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, carried out between 1812 and 1957, some by Nobel Prize laureates (Energy & Environment 2007). Many of these analyses had an accuracy better than 3%. There were high CO<sub>2</sub> levels around 1825, 1857 and 1942, some higher than 400 ppmv. It is not surprising that his research has been anathema to MMGW believers.



Even if the present-day CO<sub>2</sub> is an all-time high, we have no clear proof that human emissions from burning fossil fuels is a significant cause of increasing temperatures. Figure 3 shows that there is *no* correlation between fossil fuel consumption and temperature.

One of the biggest deceptions is that CO<sub>2</sub> is a pollutant. It is not. It is one of the

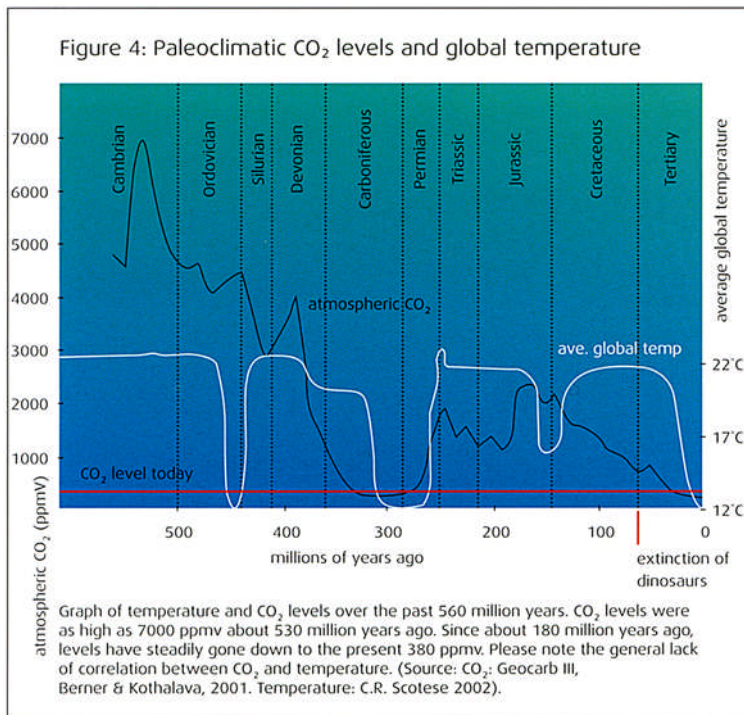
essential constituents of life. Without it there would be no plants and no life on Earth. Hundreds of experiments have shown that plants grown in air with double CO<sub>2</sub> levels, *increase* their productivity between 20% and 50%. Trees also need less water in an atmosphere with more CO<sub>2</sub>.

### Past Ice Ages and CO<sub>2</sub>

Professor Storey writes that millions of years ago the Earth was a very different place and that we cannot use data from the distant past to make comparisons with the present day. I do not see why not.



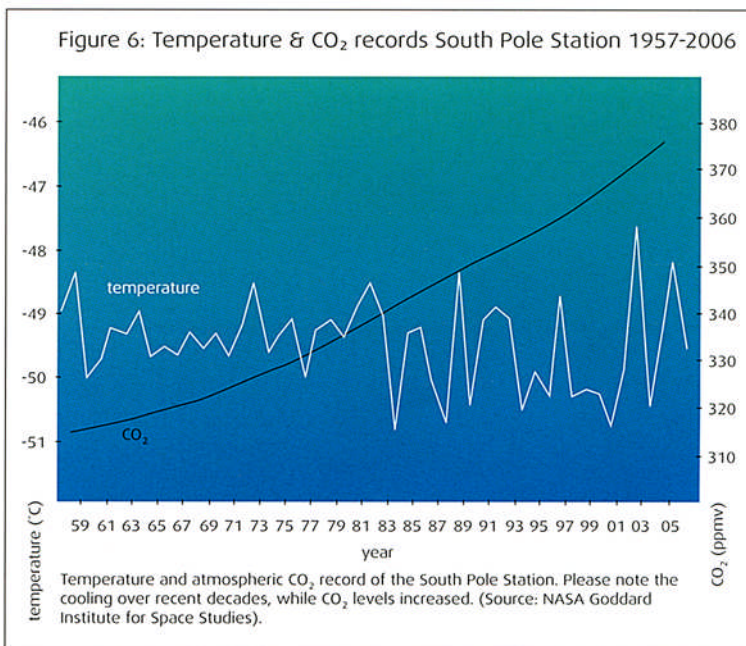
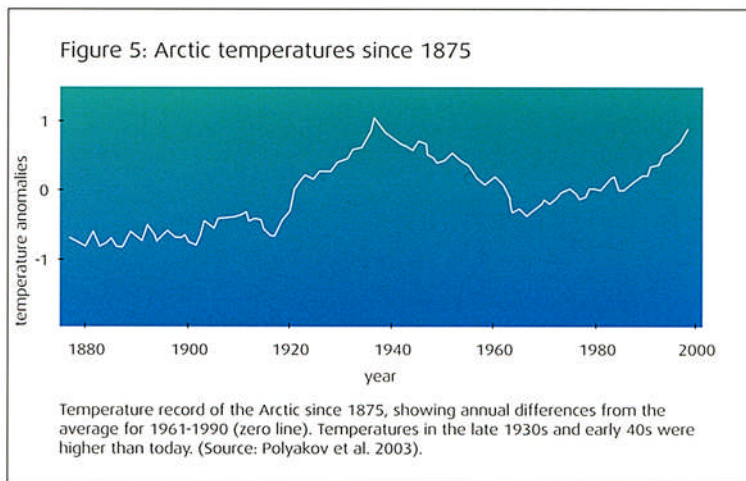
The physics in the past were not different from those of today. He also writes that “there was no ice in the polar regions, and sea levels and global temperatures were very much higher than today.” The first part is simply not true, as shown by the graphs in my February article. There was certainly ice in the polar regions during the five ice-age periods, especially the one about 950 to 520 million years ago. Some scientists think that in that period most of the planet, including oceans, was covered in ice. They call it ‘Snowball Earth.’



It is quite revealing to look at CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the distant past. These have been determined by a variety of indirect proxy data. The best known is called Geocarb III (Figure 4). It shows that CO<sub>2</sub> levels were far higher in the distant past, up to 7000 ppmv. During the Jurassic, about 180 million years ago, levels were about 2700 ppmv. Since then levels have steadily gone down to only 380 today. As the graph shows, there was no correlation between CO<sub>2</sub> and temperature over that 590 million year period.

## Falsification

Famous philosophers have thought deeply about the nature and rules of science. One of the best known is Sir Karl Popper (1902-1996). In 1934, he published his book *The logic of scientific discovery*, in which he put forth his well-known ‘theory of falsifiability.’ He developed this theory to distinguish science from pseudo-science. In short, this theory states that ‘A proposition or theory cannot be considered scientific if it does not admit the possibility of being shown false.’ He used the proposition that all swans are white. This can be falsified (i.e. proven wrong) by finding just one black swan. To put this in another way, ‘A scientific statement must be able to be tested and proven wrong.’ One of the corollaries is also that scientific observations and experiments must be reproducible and that all scientific endeavours must be open and transparent. Data on which scientific publications are based must be properly archived and accessible for verification. But scientists are human and become very attached to their work and theories, and don’t like their work to be falsified. They say rather, that ‘the science has been settled’ or ‘the debate is over.’



There are several aspects of the MMGW dogma that can be falsified. I will mention two:

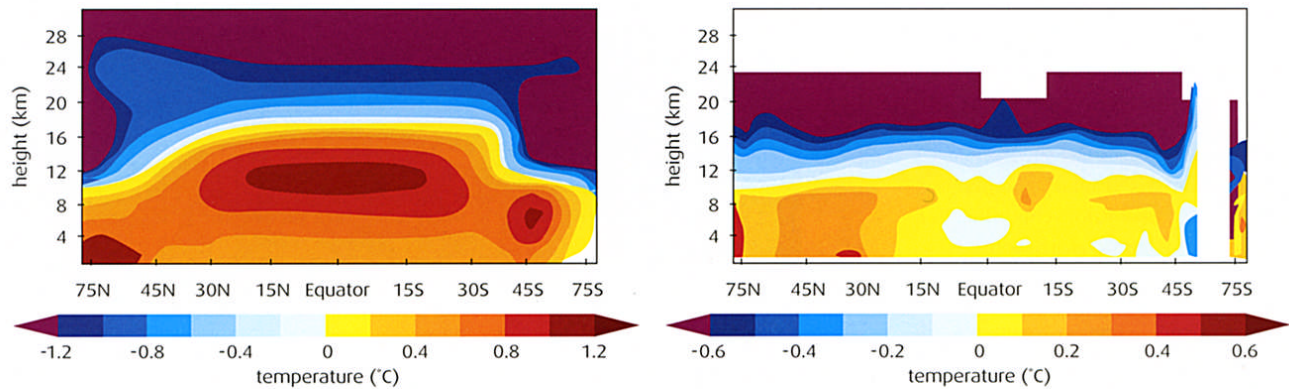
1. All climate computer models state that MMGW will first become evident in the polar regions. MMGW advocates will say that this is obvious in the Arctic, which has been warming in recent times. But what they omit to say is that it was warmer in the 1930s and 40s (Figure 5). The falsification is clinched by the fact that the Antarctic continent has been cooling (only the Antarctic Peninsula has been warming, but that is a local phenomenon). This is clearly shown in the temperature record of the South Pole station (Figure 6). This cooling is an obvious embarrassment to the MMGW advocates. They have been frantically looking for an explanation. Professor Storey writes that the ozone hole is the culprit. This was first suggested by two scientists in 2002 (Thompson and Solomon, *Science*, vol. 296). However, in 2004 another group of scientists suggested that El Niño might be the culprit (*Geophysical Research Letters*, vol. 31). It is obvious they simply do not know.

2. A recently published, peer-reviewed, scientific publication provided the most devastating falsification of the IPCC hypothesis (Douglas et al., *International Journal of Climatology*, 2007). According to all climate computer models used by the IPCC, the increase in CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere should cause a decadal rate of warming (especially in the tropics) of the mid-troposphere (the troposphere is that part of the atmosphere directly above the surface of the Earth, about 20km thick at the tropics and 7km at the poles), which then radiates that heat back to Earth, causing the greenhouse warming (Figure 7a).

However, they found that real world, direct measurements by weather balloon radiosondes since the 1960s and satellites since 1979 did not show any such rate of warming (Figure 7b). For a detailed technical analysis see Monckton 2007

([http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton\\_papers/greenhouse\\_warming\\_what\\_greenhouse\\_warming\\_.html](http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton_papers/greenhouse_warming_what_greenhouse_warming_.html)).

Figure 7: Comparison between computer model predictions of atmospheric warming vs real-world actual data



A – Virtual-reality computer modelling, predicting a decadal rate of warming of the mid-troposphere (red and orange areas) due to increased human CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. B – Real world radiosonde measurements, not showing any such predicted rate of warming. (Source: Monckton 2007).

As this is a fundamental aspect of the MMGW hypothesis, this falsification should be the final nail in its coffin. But don't hold your breath. The catastrophic-MMGW hypothesis has nothing to do with science anymore, as so clearly demonstrated by Professor Hunter's comments. The hypothesis has become a quasi-religion.

## NIPCC

In February 2007, the *Summary for Policy Makers* of the Fourth Scientific Assessment Report of the IPCC was presented in Paris. Most media took this as being the launch of the complete report, but that was not published until May 2007. It was a cynical, political manipulation of the media. The summary was prepared and agreed on, line by line, by government representatives. The reason given for the delay was that the final report required a final edit, to make it conform to the summary. A case of the cart before the horse.

A group of scientists who do not support the IPCC hypothesis organised themselves in the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) to analyse the same data as used by the IPCC, plus many peer-reviewed, scientific articles the IPCC ignored. On March 3, the results were presented at a climate change conference in New York. The title of their report is *Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate*. It can be found on the website [www.sepp.org](http://www.sepp.org) (click on Publications, then click on NIPCC Report).

## A freezing Apocalypse?

I titled this article 'Apocalypse cancelled,' a variation of the title of the excellent Canadian critical climate documentary *Climate Catastrophe Cancelled*. The findings of the NIPCC clearly show that there will not be a warming apocalypse. Unfortunately that does not mean that we will never face disastrous climate change. If the planet should cool dramatically, as it has done so often in the past, its effects would be infinitely more catastrophic for mankind than warming. These days, many more people die from the cold than from the heat. Historic warm periods, like the Medieval Warm Period, between one and two degrees warmer than today, were times of benign climate with abundant harvests and less extreme storms. The most destructive storms occurred during the Little Ice Age (about 1300 to 1850 AD). For instance, historic records estimate that about 400,000 people perished in the European All Saints' Day storm of 1570. Tens of thousands of people drowned in The Netherlands during the so-called St Elisabeth floods in 1421.

We can only hope the predictions by astrophysicists, that the planet is about to enter a cooling phase, based on sunspot cycle analyses, will not come true. Prudent governments though, would be wise to consider the possibility of cooling and make contingency plans to deal with it. But don't hold up your

hopes. The New Zealand Government has bought into the catastrophic MMGW hysteria and is preparing draconian legislation (the Climate Change (Emissions Trading and Renewable Preference) Bill) to deal with the perceived threat of warming, that, if adopted, would cost the country dearly. I have made a submission to this bill, but have no illusions that it will change the government's mindset.