

Terry Hudgins

CARB is obviously teaming, once again, with radical environmental group to thwart the fossil fuels industry without scientific data or common sense. The collection of data is to come to a place with the California government is all of its left-wing glory to charge a price for the emission of CO₂ from whatever source they can find. You have already sent major refineries packing, resulting in the severe questions about the supply chain of petroleum products, but reduced the capacity of the industry to meet existing and future needs. How does it now make sense to bring California oil supplies in by ship, which causes the immediate increase of green house gas emissions from the very vessels coming to deliver our shortfall?? We know that with the collection of this data that you will now subject it to the hocus-pocus of energy modeling and environmental impacts that have no basis in reality in order to apply taxes and fees to every ton of emissions from every sector using fossil fuels. This is being done to increase the revenues to the state so that they can pay off all of the other bogus programs that now find us up to the eyeballs in debt. We have also seen of late that the County of Los Angeles intends to tax the number of square feet of solar panels on a residence because the solar programs are not paying for themselves and have become a drain on government funds. This is nothing by a giant Ponzi-scheme to rip off the citizens of this state once again. CARB needs to stop this fictional approach to collect data and break their association with the left-wing environmentalists that continue to want to destroy our economy and life in California as we know it. STOP!!!!

Climate Change Alarmism Is a Lie that Must Stop

by **Drieu Godefridi**

April 14, 2023 at 5:00 am

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/19580/climate-change-alarmism>

- With China opening an average of two new coal-fired power plants a week and India apparently more determined than ever to continue its development curve, as is the entire non-Western world, global CO₂ emissions will continue to rise for the foreseeable future. There is not yet any available, inexpensive alternative to fossil fuels.
- This increase in global CO₂ emissions would be inevitable even if the West persists in its efforts to reduce emissions: *Western reductions are -- and will continue to be -- more than offset by the increase in emissions in the rest of the world.*
- "Setting an example" to regimes and countries around the world that often hate the West simply enables those countries to grow stronger, while the countries setting the example weaken themselves by committing themselves to severe economic disadvantage -- while having virtually *no* net effect on the climate.... Meanwhile, as they grow, they would doubtless be extremely happy to see the West hobbling itself.
- The climate knows neither Europe nor Asia. Nothing that Europe and the West accomplish in this field has the slightest meaning if reduction of emissions is not *global*.
- In its fifth and latest (full) report, the IPCC estimates that a 3° warming -- twice the Paris Agreement target -- would reduce global economic growth by 3%. Three per cent a year? No, 3% by the year 2100. This amount represents a reduction in global economic growth of 0.04% a year, a number that is barely measurable statistically. That is in the IPCC's

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OK

- [A]ccording to the data of the IPCC itself, the economic growth and well-being in Europe and the United States are more threatened by extremist and delusional environmental policies than by global warming.
 - "The EU and its Member States have focused on climate policy, mobilizing enormous financial and human resources, thereby reducing the resources necessary for the development of its industry and weakening the security of energy supply." — Jean-Pierre Schaeken Willemakers, Thomas More Institute, president of the Energy, Climate and Environment Cluster, science-climat-energie.be, February 22, 2023.
 - Future generations will judge us harshly for allowing extremist environmental activism to enfeeble us in the West, while a hostile East – China, Russia, North Korea and Iran -- continue to advance their industrial and military capabilities. Instead of trying to fight CO₂ emissions, we would do better to invest in researching ways to make reliable supplies of energy both cleaner and less expensive so that everyone -- by choice -- will rush to use them.
 - Global emissions and the accumulated stock of CO₂ in the atmosphere will, unfortunately, not be decreasing any time soon, but that is no reason to let the global standing of the West decrease instead.
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Since 1992, global CO₂ emissions have continued to rise, with China opening an average of two new coal-fired power plants a week. Do we really believe that China, Russia and India will let the West dictate their economic conditions and CO₂ emissions? Meanwhile, as they grow, they are doubtless happy to see the West hobbling itself by persisting in efforts to reduce its own emissions. Pictured: A steel mill with a coal-fired generator in Hebei, China. (Photo by Kevin Frayer/Getty Images)

Since 1992 and the **Earth Summit in Rio**, the West has been living under the spell of a "climate emergency" that is repeatedly renewed but never happened. Since then, the West – and only the West -- has set itself the main goal of reducing CO₂ emissions (and other greenhouse gases, implied in the rest of this article).

It is now 2023, time for a review:

1. CO₂ emissions have not stopped growing and will continue to grow.

Since 1992, global CO₂ emissions have continued to **rise**. With China opening an average of **two new coal-fired power plants** a week and India apparently more determined than ever to continue its development curve, as is the entire non-Western world, global CO₂ emissions will continue to rise for the foreseeable future. There is

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not yet any available, inexpensive alternative to fossil fuels.
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This increase in global CO₂ emissions would be inevitable even if the West persists in its efforts to reduce emissions: *Western reductions are -- and will continue to be -- more than offset by the increase in emissions in the rest of the world.*

2. Will the warming target of the **Paris Agreement** -- "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels" -- be met?

Achieving the Paris Agreement target requires drastic reductions in CO₂ emissions. This has not happened. We are not on track. This global reduction will not happen. Therefore, the Paris Agreement target **will not be achieved**. This is now a certainty or, in the words of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (**IPCC**), a projection with a very high degree of reliability.

3. Will the EU's target of "**decarbonisation by 2050**" be met?

Even more extreme than the Paris Agreement is the EU's goal of decarbonisation. As stated earlier, even if the EU ceased to exist, global CO₂ emissions would continue to rise. From this perspective, reducing European emissions only makes sense if it is part of an effective global framework, not a national or regional one. "Setting an example" to regimes and countries around the world that often hate the West simply enables those countries to grow stronger, while the countries setting the example weaken themselves by committing themselves to severe economic disadvantage -- while having virtually *no* net effect on the climate. Do we really believe that China, Russia and India will let the West dictate their economic conditions and CO₂ emissions? Meanwhile, as they grow, they would doubtless be extremely happy to see the West hobbling itself.

Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, probably the most zealous extremist to come to power in Europe since 1945 -- whose chief of cabinet is the former leader of Greenpeace's anti-nuclear campaign -- multiplies measures, **initiatives** and **declarations** aimed at drastically reducing European CO₂ emissions -- even at the cost of Europe's economic devastation, at the cost of freedom, and at the cost of causing a cruel increase in Europe's **dependence** on China's rare earth minerals.

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The climate knows neither Europe nor Asia. Nothing that Europe and the West accomplish in this field has the slightest meaning if reduction of emissions is not

global.

4. Would the economic consequences of even the most pessimistic IPCC global warming scenario matter?

Let us now look at the issue of the economic impact of CO₂ emissions.

The climate expert and physicist Steven Koonin, former Under Secretary for Science during the Obama Administration, **notes** in his latest book, *Unsettled* that even if the IPCC's most pessimistic warming scenario were to come true, the global economic impact would be negligible (*Unsettled*: Dallas, BenBella Books, 2021, chapter 9, 'Apocalypses that ain't', page 179s.)

In its fifth and latest (full) report, the IPCC estimates that a 3° warming -- twice the Paris Agreement target -- would reduce global economic growth by 3%. Three per cent a year? No, 3% by the year 2100. This amount represents a reduction in global economic growth of 0.04% a year, a number that is barely measurable statistically. That is in the IPCC's *pessimistic* scenario. In the more optimistic scenarios, the economic impact of warming will be virtually non-existent. The IPCC, AR5, Working Group II, chapter 10 states:

"For most economic sectors, the impact of climate change will be small relative to the impacts of other drivers.... Changes in population, age, income, technology, relative prices... and many other aspects of socioeconomic development will have an impact on the supply and demand of economic goods and services that is largely relative to the impact of climate change."

In other words, according to the data of the IPCC itself, the economic growth and well-being in Europe and the United States are more threatened by extremist and delusional environmental policies than by global warming. As Jean-Pierre Schaeken Willemakers of the Thomas More Institute, president of the Energy, Climate and Environment Cluster, **noted** on February 22:

"The EU and its Member States have focused on climate policy, mobilizing enormous financial and human resources, thereby reducing the resources necessary for the development of its industry and weakening the security of energy supply."

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The lesson of all this is simple: Future generations will judge us harshly for allowing extremist environmental activism to enfeeble us in the West, while a hostile East – China, Russia, North Korea and Iran -- continue to advance their industrial and military capabilities. Instead of trying to fight CO₂ emissions, we would do better to invest in researching ways to make reliable supplies of energy both cleaner and less expensive so that everyone -- by choice -- will rush to use them.

Global emissions and the accumulated stock of CO₂ in the atmosphere will, unfortunately, not be decreasing any time soon, but that is no reason to let the global standing of the West decrease instead.

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Climate Worries Are Non-Credible, Luxury Beliefs That Harm Civilization Itself

By Joakim Book

[Mises.org](https://mises.org)

April 20, 2024

I live in a small village at the edge of lands surrounded by very harsh nature. Those who occupied these valleys in ages past lived ruthlessly dangerous lives, where starvation was a constant worry, the sea just as often nurtured as it took away, and the winters were long and perilous. Nowadays, while I'm walking the desolate mountains or admiring the fierce storms from inside my nice, sheltered existence, echoing in my head is Thomas Hobbes's descriptions of man's precivilizational life: "Solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

In the 2020s, we live fairly comfortable lives here, my fellow villagers and I. Our hearths are warm, our command over economic goods excellent. We live long, safe lives, where nobody starves and where almost nobody perishes in outbursts of nature's wrath. We use machines—constructed far, far away using materials we don't have, that run on fossil fuels that these lands don't contain—to move away the snow that frequently and predictably lands on our doorsteps and otherwise would have made our roads impassable and our houses prisons. We use different machines—constructed far, far away using materials we don't have, that run on fossil fuels that these lands don't contain—to get ourselves out of our valley and transport goods and services back, including exotic fruits and vegetables that never grow here (certainly not in winter!).

It truly is fascinating to behold the astonishing things that [globalized trade and capitalism](#) can accomplish. Stepping back and thinking about the miracles of modern trade, innovation, and division of labor is so humbling.

Yet we well-off moderns [worry about our collective existence](#) to the point that kids have nightmares, and survey respondents overwhelmingly say climate change [will end the human race](#). Something like [one-third](#) of young people say they don't want kids for fear of worsening the climate condition or how they'd fare in that brave, new world. "Climate anxiety is widespread among youth," [reports](#) *National Geographic*. "How can we help kids cope with 'eco-anxiety'?" [asks](#) the British Broadcasting Corporation. The vast majority of respondents in a global ten thousand-person [study](#) published in the *Lancet* in 2021 admitted to be very or extremely worried. [Vox writers](#) worry about the ethics of raising children. A new study, reported on by [Phys.org](#), pointed to how many young people won't have kids because of climate change: it'd be unfair to "bring a child into the world," who'd have to live with the constant "feeling of impending doom, every day, for their whole life," says one interviewed would-be parent.

Many of my fellow villagers entertain all these global ideas—melting glaciers and parts per million-numbers, floods and ethical dilemmas about us vulgar humans making earth inhospitable or uninhabitable.

inhospitable or uninhabitable.

It's a strange thing to worry about obsessively, while the vicious storm raging outside the double-glazed windows affect nothing about our food supply, electricity use, heating, or ability to participate in the global division of labor—whether in our offices or remotely via high-speed internet. It somehow seems contradictory to passionately rally against capitalism from the comforts of very capitalistically built and maintained houses, hotels, and pubs; to inveigh against the burning of fossil fuels that literally keeps one alive.

It has me thinking about the [action axiom](#), the starting point of Ludwig von Mises's [praxeology](#) and the pillar-stone upon which Austrian economics rests. The colloquial version of this foundational Austrian maxim is "put your money where your mouth is" or "actions speak louder than words." We *demonstrate* by our actions where our preferences and values lie; we *reveal* them to the world (act them into existence, really) when we do one thing instead of another, when we purchase one good instead of another, when we work instead of relax. All of this is wrapped in uncertainty and hopes and subjective human desires trading off against other such desires; in hindsight we can regret the choices we made. Still, [says](#) Murray Rothbard, a man's "preferences are deducible from what he has chosen in action."

Perhaps all this climate complaining is simply virtue signaling, in a world where [feelings matter more than facts](#). The detachment from the physical processes of basic living—energy, materials, transportation, and in complicated monetary economies, [money](#)—has made many people ignorant, taking for granted the lifestyles we live and the standards of living we have. It has allowed us to start thinking foundational and civilization-carrying systems like money, fossil fuels, or commercial institutions are optional—a mere matter of ideological choice between good and evil people. They're not.

I'm reminded too of [luxury beliefs](#), a somewhat hyped concept coined by Rob Henderson, a psychologist at the University of Cambridge and author of the recent book *Troubled*. Henderson transfers Thorstein Veblen's "conspicuous consumption"—the purchasing of expensive, often seemingly useless goods with the purpose of flaunting one's wealth—to the moral and political domain. A [luxury belief](#), like a conspicuous good, is acquired in order to impress others, and is designed to "confer status on the upper class at very little cost, while inflicting costs upon the lower classes."

Luxury beliefs don't make much sense and don't have staying power in the [real world](#) of atoms and temperature, of nature and starvation. But we're so far detached from the world that physically supports us—so rich, so deluded, so well off—that we're willing to believe (and by extension willing to experiment with) the very systems that uphold our existence.

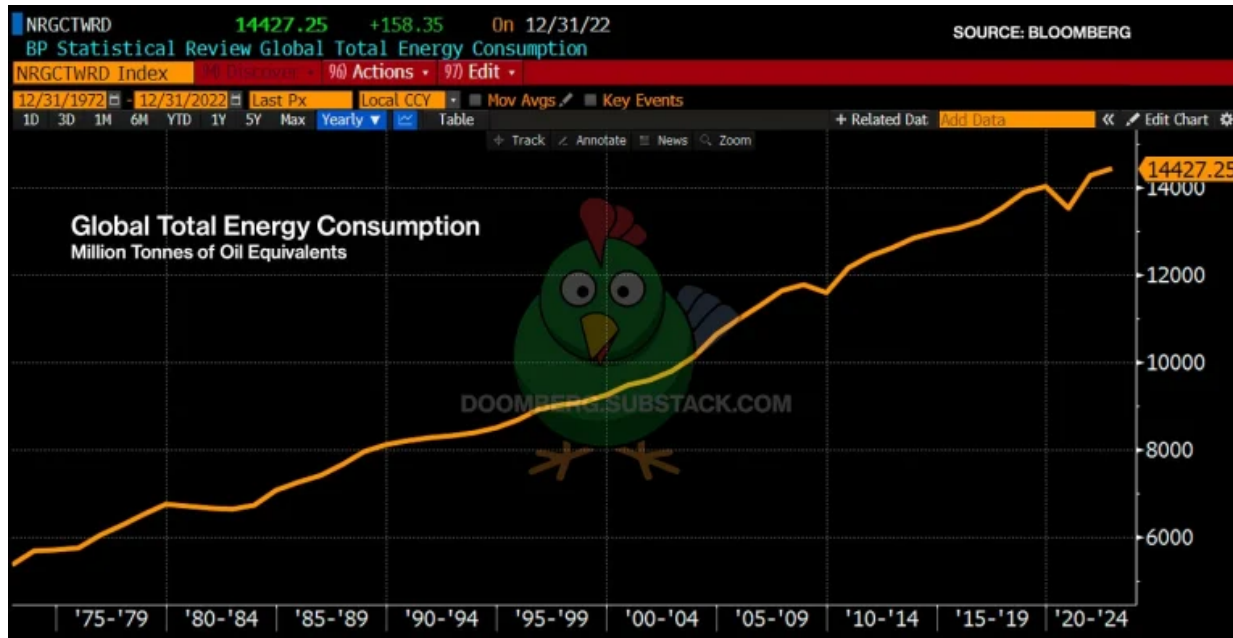
Cue environmental concerns and anticapitalism. Taken literally, enacting policies based on such follies into place, we're on a path to horror and poverty, with brutish and short lives to follow.

The good news is that those systems are remarkably resilient and these voices might still

be all “tawk,” as Nassim Taleb would say.

The popular energy-finance Substack [Doomberg](#) made a similar observation in February, listing two paragraphs’ worth of major events that happened from 1971: oil crisis, Iran-Iraq, Kuwait wars, Middle Eastern conflicts, the Asian and peso and ruble financial collapses, the terrorist attacks, Libya-Syria-Ukraine, the global financial crisis, and covid. Through all of them, as tumultuous as they seemed at the time and as relevant as they remain in the political consciousness, the world’s total energy consumption is a straight line through all of it. Here’s [their graph](#):

BP Statistical Review global total energy consumption



Source: [Doomberg\[DB1\]](#)

Socioeconomic events as radical as women’s rights or racial equality; left-wing or right-wing leaders; crises and recessions, inflations and boom years; generations of scholars and scientists and political movements . . . and there’s no impact on the basic thing that powers our civilization.

Eighty-five percent of the [globe’s primary energy consumption](#) comes directly from fossil fuels—the same it was over thirty years ago when I was born. You can *speak* beliefs about climate change, about noncredible, net-zero policy goals (always with years [suspiciously ending](#) in zero or five), about reducing reliance on fossil fuels, or about how “clean” renewable energy is. You can throw government money at it, pass laws, or pontificate in the high courts, legislative auditoriums, or the public square, but you’re just not changing that. You *can’t* change that.

[Cypherpunks](#) write code. Clever people [ignore politics](#). *You* should get out of the house, [stop worrying](#) too much about the lunatics [running the asylum](#), and instead admire nature. That’s what I’m doing.

GREATNESS AGENDA

The Corruption of Climate Science



off the table, along with their life-affirming affordable fuel.

By Edward Ring



May 23, 2023

“We need to criticize the people who got us here,” says [Alex Epstein](#), founder of the Center for Industrial Progress and author of [Fossil Future](#). “We can’t keep treating these designated experts as real experts. They are not real experts, they are destroyers. They are anti-energy, non-experts. And that needs to be made clear.”

Epstein is right, and his advice has never been more urgent—or as difficult to make people understand. It is no exaggeration that every major institution in America has now committed itself to the elimination of affordable and abundant energy. If it isn’t stopped, this commitment, motivated by misguided concern for the planet but also by a lust for power and money and by moral cowardice and intellectual negligence, will destroy Western civilization.

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For over 50 years, with increasing frequency, corrupted, careerist scientists have produced biased studies that, amplified by agenda-driven corporate and political special interests, constitute a “consensus” that is supposedly “beyond debate.” We are in a “climate crisis.” To cope with this climate emergency, all measures are justifiable.

This is overblown, one-sided, distorted, and manipulative propaganda. It is the language of authoritarians and corporatists bent on achieving even more centralized political power and economic wealth. It is a scam, perhaps the most audacious, all-encompassing fraud in human history. It is a scam that explicitly targets and crushes the middle class in developed nations and the entire aspiring populations in developing nations, at the same time as its messaging is designed to secure their fervent acquiescence.

What is actually beyond debate is not that we are in a climate crisis but that if we don’t stop destroying our conventional energy economy, we are going to be in a *civilizational* crisis.

Energy is the foundation of *everything*—prosperity, freedom, upward mobility, national wealth, individual economic independence, functional water and transportation infrastructure, commercial-scale agriculture, mining, and industry. Without energy, it all goes dark. And “renewables” are not even remotely capable of replacing oil, gas, coal, nuclear, and hydroelectric power. It’s impossible.

The only people who think renewables are capable of replacing conventional energy are either uninformed, innumerate, or corrupt. Period.

But to cope with the apocalyptic messaging of climate catastrophists, it isn’t enough to debunk the potential of renewables. It is also necessary to challenge the underlying climate “science.” The biased, corrupt, unceasing avalanche of expert “studies” serving up paid-for ideas to special interests that use them as bludgeons to beat into the desired shape every relevant public policy and popular narrative. So here goes.

A new study, released May 16, deserves far more criticism than it’s going to get. Authored by seven ridiculously credentialed experts and primarily affiliated with the leftist Union of Concerned Scientists, this study has the rather innocuous title: “Quantifying the contribution of major carbon producers to increases in vapor pressure deficit and burned area in western US and southwestern Canadian forests.” Bursting with charts and equations, and too many links to corroborating sources to count, the study has all the accouterments of intimidating credibility. But serious questions may be raised as to its logic as well as its objectivity.

Biased, Flawed Studies



For starters, this study doesn't restrict itself to "Quantifying the contribution of major carbon producers to increases in vapor pressure deficit." The authors can't resist attacking these "major carbon producers." In this revealing paragraph, the study's true intent becomes apparent: it is fodder for litigation.

"With the impacts of climate change growing increasingly severe, questions of who is responsible for climate change, how much responsibility each entity bears, and the obligations of those entities to mitigate future climate change and assist financially with climate adaptation are more present than ever in policy negotiations and in courtrooms around the world. These questions are deepened by the fact that the fossil fuel industry was aware of the climate-related risks of their products as early as the mid-1960s (Franta 2018) and, instead of shifting business practices, invested in campaigns and tactics to mislead the public and generate doubt about climate science."

That paragraph has nothing to do with the stated goal of the study. It just shows the political and legal context in which this study is designed to play a useful part. But what about the logic?

Here is where this study falls apart. It's always fascinating to wade through intellectual efforts that are the product of extraordinary diligence and rarified expertise, only to discover the absence of fundamental variables and realize that by leaving them out, the entire argument disintegrates.

To explain what the authors got wrong, it is first necessary to summarize what they did. In plain English, the authors claim that hotter summers in recent years have caused more severe forest fires in the western United States, and fossil fuel emissions are causing the hotter summers.

That's it.

To make their case, the authors have relied on a scientific term that imparts gravitas to the discussion, "vapor pressure deficit." This is a big phrase that simply means "dry air." The point they're making is that it isn't merely heat itself, but the fact that moisture is absent from the air, which causes trees to dry out faster and therefore become easier to ignite and burn. So far, so good. But there are at least two gaping holes in this reasoning. Both should be obvious.

First, the heat waves afflicting western forests in recent years are not unique. Even in modern history, the hottest temperature ever recorded in California was in 2013, when it hit 134 degrees in Death Valley. As for whipsawing extremes, during the 1930s, a decade when hot temperatures rivaled if not exceeded those we experience today, the coldest temperature ever measured in California, negative 45 degrees, was recorded in Nevada County. But the last few centuries are a mere heartbeat in the meteorological history of California.

Last year the *San Jose Mercury* breathlessly reported that the drought—over now, by the way—was the "worst in 1,200 years." This raises the obvious question, what about that even bigger drought

that occurred 1,200 years ago? This same newspaper in 2014 reported that “past dry periods lasted more than 200 years.” And so what about these multi-century droughts? Do we have temperature data for them? Was it hot? What was the vapor pressure deficit during these prehistoric, 200-year droughts? Such questions are not asked, much less answered.

One can go on. Prehistoric Sequoias, the predecessors of redwood trees, first appeared in the fossil record 200 million years ago, when dinosaurs still walked the earth. In their current form, redwoods have thrived in California for over 20 million years. For most of that period, the average global temperatures were considerably higher than they are today.

But what if it isn't just heat, but dry heat, that is unprecedented today? What if the “vapor pressure deficit” is worse today than it has been at any time in 20 million years? That is a huge assumption, probably impossible to verify. Even if it's true, it doesn't make up for the study's other flaw, which is the density of forests in California today, which is truly unprecedented. The study's authors acknowledge they don't take this variable into account, writing:

“Our results highlight the roles of major carbon producers in driving forest fire extent by enhancing fuel aridity, but do not explicitly account for effects from non-climatic factors such as the prohibition of Indigenous burning, legacies of fire suppression, or changing human ignitions.”

The authors go on to contend this omission has “not modified the climate-BA [burned area] relationship at the scale of this study.”

They're wrong.

In California, wildlife biologists and forest ecologists who spend their lives studying and managing these timberlands unanimously agree that tree density has increased, thanks to “non-climatic factors such as the prohibition of Indigenous burning, and legacies of fire suppression.” The increase is *not* subtle. Without small, naturally occurring fires that clear underbrush and smaller trees, forests become overgrown. Controlled burns and responsible logging are absolutely necessary to maintain forest health. According to a study conducted in 2020 by UC Davis and USDA, California's mid-elevation Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests used to average 60 trees per acre, and now they average 170 trees per acre according to conservative estimates.

This is not an isolated finding. Observations of excessive tree density are corroborated by numerous studies, testimony, and journalistic investigations. Unlike the subjectively defined algorithms plugged into a climate model, excessive tree density is an objective fact, verified repeatedly by people on the ground. To imply by omission that more than tripling the density of trees across millions of acres of forest would not leave them stressed and starved for soil nutrients, sunlight, and water from rain and atmospheric moisture is scientific malpractice.

Without taking these additional factors into account, it is deceptive to indict fossil fuel emissions for causing wildfires. Perhaps some indirect connection can be established of debatable relevance, but for this study to assign specific percentages and acreages suggests a premeditated purpose: creating material for expert testimony for litigation against oil companies.

The Real Reason for Catastrophic Wildfires

California's forests are tinderboxes because environmentalists made it nearly impossible to get permits to do controlled burns and because environmentalists decimated the timber industry. In the face of relentless regulatory and litigious harassment, California's timber industry has shrunk from harvesting 6 billion board feet per year as recently as the 1990s to less than 2 billion board feet in recent years. Meanwhile, California's fire suppression industrial complex has grown to gargantuan proportions, pouring billions of dollars into putting fires out before they can spread.

The result is predictable and doesn't require a climate scientist to explain it. We have mismanaged our forests for decades, mostly thanks to the misguided influence of environmentalist pressure groups on the state legislature. California's forests are now overcrowded with trees that are stressed, dried out, and ready to burst into flames, with or without a "vapor pressure deficit."

The solution, according to climate catastrophists, is to empty the dangerous, flammable "urban/wildland interface" of human habitation, mandate electric vehicles, and sue oil companies. This will accomplish *nothing* for the forests, even if every apocalyptic climate scenario were to come true. A rational solution would be to bring back the timber industry, deregulate controlled burns and mechanical thinning, revive responsible grazing of cattle, goats, and sheep to remove excessive foliage, and watch the forests again thrive.

If mismanagement is what's really causing forest superfires, media misinformation is what's preventing policy reform. A *Sacramento Bee* headline, for example, says, "Fossil fuel companies to blame for share of California wildfires . . ." From *The Hill*: "Scientists blame fossil fuel production for more than a third of Western wildfires." From "Pulitzer Prize-winning" *Inside Climate News*: "Fossil Fuel Companies and Cement Manufacturers Could Be to Blame for a More Than a Third of West's Wildfires." *None* of these media reports mention tree density.

The monolithic alignment of the scientific and journalistic community in support of an authoritarian, utterly impractical "climate" agenda reveals a misunderstanding if not outright betrayal of scientific and journalistic core values. Both disciplines are founded on the bedrock of skepticism and debate. Without nurturing those values, the integrity of these disciplines is undermined. When it comes to issues of climate and energy policy in America, science and journalism are compromised.



Fossil Fuel Industry Failures

Let's suppose that back in the mid-1960s, oil companies were presented with a theory that fossil fuel emissions would cause the climate to warm. Wouldn't their first rational response be to question this theory? Why would questioning a *theory* constitute "misleading the public"? Even if some of the executives in these companies believed these theories, it would be absurd to suggest all of them did. In any boardroom discussion, and this is amusingly ironic, the economic interests of an oil corporation would compel their directors to be intellectually honest and not simply accept the theory that their product was going to warm the planet. Good luck proving that oil companies intentionally misled the public.

But so what? Were America's oil and gas companies simply supposed to believe all these nascent theories and shut down? What exactly should they have done, back in the mid-1960s, to cope with this allegedly looming climate emergency? Were solar panels and wind turbines ready for rapid deployment back then? Of course not, especially since solar panels from China, and wind turbines from Germany, are still not capable of providing more than a small fraction of the energy we need.

The real crime, if you want to call it that, isn't that oil and gas companies questioned climate change theories back in the 1960s or '70s. It's that they're accepting them *now*.

Oil and gas companies today are not willing to challenge the climate crisis orthodoxy, or the myth of cost-effective renewables at scale. They aren't willing to devote their substantial financial resources to debunking this agenda-driven madness that is on the verge of taking down our entire civilization. The fact that America's oil and gas companies have adopted a strategy of appeasement is a crime against humanity. The fact that these companies are failing to make long-term investments to develop new oil and gas fields, and instead are reaping windfall profits as they sell existing production at politically inflated prices, that, too, is a crime against civilization.

Ultimately, the Union of Concerned Scientists and the major oil companies are complicit in the destruction of America's energy economy. Because rather than declaring total war on these paid-for, flawed scientific studies and the special interests that fund them, oil companies will engage in theatrical litigation, knowing that the cost of settlements won't even come close to the short-term profits to be had by slowly asset stripping their companies while selling diminishing quantities of fuel at punitive rates.

Epstein is right that we must criticize the "experts" that want to destroy human civilization with climate alarmism. But we must also recognize and criticize the institutions targeted for destruction. Instead of fighting this lunacy, they are taking their money off the table, along with their life-affirming affordable fuel, and heading for the hills.

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About Edward Ring

Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. He is also is a contributing editor and senior fellow with the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. Ring is the author of *Fixing California: Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism* (2021) and *The Abundance Choice: Our Fight for More Water in California* (2022).

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