

Science Doesn't Support Climate Activists' Extreme Weather Claims

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By: Marisa Herman

As summer temperatures begin to climb and activists start clamoring that human-caused emissions are responsible for expected natural disasters, climate scientists contend the data simply doesn't support the so-called "climate crisis."

During a recent media webinar, climate experts discussed the forthcoming summer weather patterns ahead of a pending transition from El Nino to La Nina and its relation to natural disasters.

"Summer is now approaching, and summer is the favorite time for climate alarmists to advance their linkage between so-called man-made climate change and severe weather-related issues that we find like fires, hurricanes, tornadoes," said CO2 Coalition Executive Director Gregory Wrightstone.

While media reports warn of extreme heat, deadly storms, and massive wildfires, experts say the data to back these claims often is cherry-picked and fails to represent the reality that severe weather events are actually declining.

"Looking at the science, the facts, and the data, it doesn't support this idea of increasing severe weather events," Wrightstone said. "In terms of actual numbers, the science leads us to, in many cases, a decline."

A PBS "NewsHour" report titled "Extreme weather wreaks havoc around the world" cited "human-caused climate change" when highlighting recent "wild weather swings," including flooding in Brazil, blazing temperatures in India, a heat wave in Asia, flash flooding in the United Arab Emirates, and tornadoes in the United States.

While few dispute that Earth is in a "warming trend," Wrightstone said the warming began "more than 300 years ago," which is "long before we started adding CO2 to the atmosphere."

James Taylor, president of The Heartland Institute, points out that Earth is still recovering from the Little Ice Age — the coldest period of the past 10,000 years — that officially ended in 1850.

Considering the planet is in the second-longest and third-strongest El Nino cycle, he said "global temperatures should be higher."

Last year, NASA declared the summer of 2023 as Earth's hottest since global records began in 1880.

"Temperatures should continue to set 'records' so long as climate activists define the record as the past 150 years," Taylor said.

Overall, he noted temperatures have been "significantly warmer" throughout earlier periods of history than they are today.

While the Earth is "warming from a cold period," he said it is still "unusually cool and not unusually warm."

Steve Milloy, a senior legal policy fellow at Energy & Environment Legal Institute, said if every emission supposedly warms the planet, then how come April 2024 was 1.35 degrees cooler than April 1981 "despite 43 years of global emissions."

"I can't think of a single apocalyptic climate prediction going back to the 1960s that has ever come true," he said.

As climate alarmists paint the picture that emissions are responsible for the rising temperatures and natural disasters that wreak havoc, Wrightstone said the data indicates that the number of natural disasters taking place is trending downward.

"Go to the science, the facts, and the data to learn more about this," he said. "There is no climate crisis by almost every metric."

According to the International Disaster Database, Wrightstone said there has been a drop in the number of reported natural disasters by about 10% since the year 2000.

He also said the notion that deaths related to severe weather events are increasing is a myth.

"We are being told that deaths from severe related weather events are increasing, but science, the facts, and the data say just the opposite," he said.

Dating back 100 years ago — to the beginning of the last century — he said there has been a "significant" decline in global deaths from natural disasters totaling more than a 90% decrease.

Last year, climate activists argued that sweltering summer temperatures were responsible for an uptick in heat-related deaths.

While heat can cause life-threatening illnesses and even death, Wrightstone said cold weather is responsible for 15 to 20 times more fatalities than the heat.

As climate change experts try to associate man-made warming to the number of hurricanes that may hit land, Wrightstone said the frequency of landfalling hurricanes in the high-risk state of Florida has not increased dating back to 1850.

When the later summer months approach and the focus is on wildfires, Wrightstone noted that the percentage of acres burned recently is 20% of what it was 80-90 years ago.

Last year, officials repeatedly tried to tie devastating Maui wildfires to climate change.

In reality, experts say, Hawaiian officials seemingly ignored warnings that invasive species that were thriving on the island were highly susceptible to catching ablaze.

Wrightstone said data also debunks claims that droughts are increasing because of human activities.

"A global analysis of droughts shows them in significant decline," he said.

Taylor noted that, with the exception of October 1983, March 2024 saw the "smallest percentage of the country experiencing dry conditions ever recorded" dating back more than 100 years.

"We know that as temperatures are moderately warming, drought is becoming less and less frequent and less and less severe," he said. "We have to look at overall trends."

He pointed out that the same concept applies to hurricanes and "just about every category of extreme weather events."

"As the planet continues its gradual recovery from the Little Ice Age, virtually all extreme weather events are showing no trend or are becoming less frequent and severe," he said.

However, he said that doesn't mean extreme weather won't occur.

Rather, he said it is important to remember that "outlier extreme weather events do not make a trend."

If a part of the country is experiencing a drought, he said that doesn't mean that droughts are increasing.

"The fact that extreme weather events still occur doesn't mean climate change or a gradually warming planet is causing them," he said. "The trends all show that things are not getting worse as far as extreme weather events go."

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