

THE PARIS CLIMATE TREATY - WILL IT HELP REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE?

Looking back in geologic time, there were times when:

- The Atlantic Ocean was 100' deep over the land along the Atlantic Seaboard.
- The Atlantic Ocean edge was well offshore in the Baltimore Canyon.

Although few people want to see man's presence on earth negatively impact the environment, we should understand whether Global Warming is or is not a problem we can solve.

Key issues include:

1. Consider the Paris agreement's preamble, which states that signatories will work to keep the rise in average global temperature "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and even suggests that the increase could be kept to 1.5 degrees. This is empty political rhetoric. Based on current carbon dioxide emissions, achieving the target of 1.5 degrees would require the entire planet to abandon fossil fuels in four years.

2. The treaty has deeper problems. The United Nations organization in charge of the accord counted up the national carbon-cut pledges for 2016 to 2030 and estimated that, if every country met them, carbon dioxide emissions would be cut by 56 gigatons. It is widely accepted that restricting temperature rises to 2 degrees Celsius would require a cut of some 6,000 gigatons, that is, about a hundredfold more.

3. Advocates of global carbon cuts fail to acknowledge the wider costs of subsidizing certain energy sources. A global pact in which governments promise to use more expensive energy ensures that the world economy will develop at a slower pace. This adds up to an immense expense: \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion by 2030 and each year for the rest of the century, mostly in lost GDP growth. This represents \$150 to \$300 for every person in the world, every year.

4. Taxpayers in wealthy nations may well ask whether this money could be better spent on schools, hospitals or care for the elderly. In developing countries with more immediate problems, there are definitely more productive ways to use the money. A global poll of almost 10 million people conducted by the UN finds that climate change is the lowest priority behind health, education, food and 11 other priorities.

5. Acknowledging the Paris treaty's flaws does not mean endorsing the Trump administration's apparent intention to ignore climate change. Real progress in reducing carbon emissions and global

temperatures will require far-reaching advances in green energy, and that will mean massive investment in research and development - an annual global commitment of some \$100 billion, according to analysis by the Copenhagen Consensus. When green energy is economically competitive, the whole world will rush to use it.

By Bjorn Lomborg, Wall Street Journal - 6-17-17

Mr. Lomborg is the President of the Copenhagen Consensus Centre and the author of "The Skeptical Environmentalist" and "Cool It".

We at RT have been working on green energy projects - including five solar farms. We agree - let's invest our dollars wisely to make energy as efficiently as possible, and as cleanly as possible.

- Gary R. Brown, P.E.



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