

FATAL FLAW 2: - IN THE GLOBAL WARMING ARGUMENT

“Our arrogance in believing how well we understand the climate, is only exceeded by the arrogance of Man in believing he can have a significant impact on climate”

“Carbon and Carbon Dioxide should be declared pollutants, and be controlled by the EPA”

Pre Requisite Reading: Handout 3-3 - A Brief Look at Carbon Dioxide

As any secondary teacher in biology will tell you carbon is the basic building block of all life on this planet – get rid of carbon and you get rid of all life. Similarly, as explained in Handout 3-3, carbon dioxide is, in effect, ‘plant food’. If you get rid of carbon dioxide, all plant life would die. Then all those animals that ate plants would also die, and other animals who ate the former animals would then find life a little difficult.

So it very quickly becomes obvious that we should not vilify carbon or CO₂ too quickly, as both have such important roles in life on this planet. The Greens know this, so why do they wish to declare war on carbon and carbon dioxide? They, and their theory, believe that carbon dioxide causes global warming, and Man causes 100% of this global warming. By controlling Man’s carbon dioxide, they hope to control global temperatures. To date, they have shown no indication of wishing to control naturally produced CO₂.

Although their global warming theory has many serious faults (See Handout 3-4), in this handout we will incorrectly assume the theory is valid. Then we will attempt to find out how bad is Man’s contribution to global warming, and what effect we will have if we reduce Man’s impact by twenty percent. At this stage, the reader should read Handout 3-3 - “A Brief Look at Carbon Dioxide”. We will be using much of what was discussed in that Handout in our attempt to try and roughly identify Man’s impact on global warming.

Man’s Impact on Global Warming

In Handout 3-3, we found that:

- Both natural and man-made CO₂, in total, make up only 0.038% of the atmosphere,
- Carbon dioxide is approximately 1% of the greenhouse gasses,
- Man produces just under 3% of all CO₂ produced each year¹, and
- The heating effect of CO₂ diminishes rapidly after passing a concentration of 100ppm in the atmosphere.

The Greens believe that global temperatures are driven solely by the greenhouse gases and because carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, it should be controlled as a pollutant. However, carbon dioxide is only a small part of the greenhouse gases.

Water vapour dominates the greenhouse effect and although CO₂ is the second most voluminous greenhouse gas, it contributes only a very small part to global warming. Without considering the effectiveness of additional CO₂ added to the atmosphere, the following table shows you the indicative impact that CO₂ might have on global warming

Table 1: - Indicative Impact of Man Made CO₂ on Global Warming

Greenhouse Gases	Existing	Existing	Additional Man Made CO ₂		
	H ₂ O Vapour	CO ₂	33%	66%	100%
% of Atmosphere	4%	0.038%	0.0127%	0.0253%	0.038%
% Impact on Greenhouse Warming Effect	99.06%	0.94%	0.31%	0.62%	0.94%

You should note that this table assumes that all additional CO₂ is caused by man – a very fragile assumption. So now, we see that of the total global warming, the greenhouse gas - water vapour - produces 99%, and both natural and man-made CO₂ only produces approximately 1% of the warming. If we ignore the power of each greenhouse gas to heat, and accept that Man only produces 3% of the total amount of carbon dioxide, then Man's contribution to global warming is 3% of 1% of the total warming (i.e. 0.03% of total warming).

However, the effect that carbon dioxide has on global warming is further complicated as its warming effect rapidly diminishes as more carbon dioxide is added to the atmosphere. This diminishing effect is explained anecdotally by Dr. Timothy Ball:

“...one of the reasons climate models are failing is because they overestimate the warming effect of CO₂ in the atmosphere.”

“The relationship between temperature and CO₂ is like painting a window black to block sunlight. The first coat blocks most of the light. Second and third coats reduce very little more. Current CO₂ levels are like the first coats of black paint,” Ball explained in a June 6, 2007 article in Canada Free Press.

Canadian climatologist Dr. Timothy Ball, formerly of the University of Winnipeg, who earned his PhD from the University of London,

Once CO₂ concentration exceeds 100 parts per million its warming effect diminishes rapidly, leading some to believe that the effect of CO₂ on warming is nearly exhausted:

“The amounts of CO₂ already added to the atmosphere must have already used up much – and perhaps most- of CO₂'s forcing capability”

Unstoppable Global Warming, by S. Fred Singer and Dennis T. Avery, Rowan and Littlefield Publishing, 2007, page 10.

Others are more willing to quantify the effect of CO₂.

"...noted that CO₂ only represents about ¼ of one percent of the total greenhouse gas effect, hardly a device to drive the massive energy system of earth's climate."

Dr. Lee C. Gerhard, senior scientist emeritus of the University of Kansas, and a **UN IPCC reviewer**.

Looking at all the greenhouse gases, we are told that methane has the most powerful warming effect of all greenhouse gases on temperatures but, fortunately, there is only a 'trace' of methane in the atmosphere leading to a very small overall contribution to the heating of the planet. In contrast to methane's steady and powerful impact, we are told that CO₂'s impact diminishes with each additional unit added to the atmosphere, leading some scientists to believe that most of the impact of CO₂ has already been seen. Further, water vapour is considered as powerful as CO₂, but there is nearly one hundred times more water vapour than CO₂.

So Man's future contribution to global warming is going to be significantly less than 0.03%. Most of carbon dioxide's power (i.e. 85% to 95%) to heat the planet is exhausted in the first 100ppm. Each additional unit of CO₂ added to the atmosphere has significantly less effect than the first units added to the atmosphere. The following table indicates the significant drop in heating power of CO₂.

Table 2: - CO₂ Absorption of 100 Units of Heat

Decaying Power Factor %	0 – 100 PPM	100 – 200 PPM	200 – 300 PPM	300 – 400 PPM	400 – 500 PPM
95%	95 units	4.75 units	0.24 units	0.01 units	0.006 units
85%	85 units	12.75 units	1.9 units	0.3 units	0.04 units
75%	75 units	18.75 units	4.7 units	1.2 units	0.3 units

As we already have a CO₂ concentration of 380ppm (blue highlighted column), any additional CO₂ added to the atmosphere will only have 1% or less impact on warming

Before we discuss the sensitivity of each of our assumptions we are using, the following is a rough calculation on the likely impact that Man will have when adding any more CO₂ to the atmosphere.

Man's Effect on Global Warming = total greenhouse gas effect *
 1% (CO₂ contribution) * 3% (Man's contribution to CO₂'s effect) * 0.006%
 (diminished impact of CO₂ as it rises between 400ppm to 500ppm) =
0.0002%.

Once passed a CO₂ concentration of 400ppm, Man will only have significantly less than 1% (i.e. 0.0002%) effect on global warming. To reduce 20% of this insignificant impact, it is being suggested that we spend tens of trillions of dollars² that will significantly reduce the wealth of all future generations.

There are two questions asked by most people when they see this figure for the first time. Why haven't we been told how little impact Man has on the total problem? Why would you spend so much to avoid so little effect? Others cannot believe the calculation and consider that it must be using extreme figures to derive such a small figure, so let us discuss each figure and calculate a "more reasonable" figure for these critics!

Trying to Construct a "More Reasonable" Answer

The amount of water vapour in the greenhouse gases can vary from the 4% we are using. If for some reason, it was only 2% then CO₂ contribution to the total greenhouse effect would rise from 1% to just under 2%. For our second calculation, we will use 2% although this is unlikely to be true. As global temperatures rise there will be greater evaporation, which will mean more water vapour in the atmosphere, rather than less.

For our second calculation, let us double Man's impact and assume that each year Man's production of CO₂ is 6% of the total annual production of CO₂. Man is predicted to reach this level by the end of the century so we could use this worst case scenario figure now.

On the diminished effect of CO₂, the first calculation used a decaying power factor of 95% as most commentators talk of a figure between 85% and 95%. For our second calculation, let us use a very conservative figure of 75%. Finally, let us also assume that, somehow, we have reduced CO₂ concentrations to below 300ppm.

This second "more reasonable" calculation then becomes:

Man's Effect on Global Warming = total greenhouse gas effect *
 2% (CO₂ contribution) * 6% (Man's contribution to CO₂'s effect) * 4.7%
 (diminished impact of CO₂ between 200ppm to 300ppm) = **0.006%.**

So Man's contribution to global warming as CO₂ concentrations fall between 200 ppm and 300 ppm is still significantly less than 1% (i.e.0.006%). It still seems very foolish to spend trillions of dollars² to reduce any fraction of this figure.

I do not mind what figures you use, (unless, because of green ideological reasons, you choose completely unrealistic figures) because you will find it extremely difficult to have any calculation produce anything more than a fraction of 1%. Consequently, you are still left with the two very reasonable questions that never seem to be answered: Why haven't we been told how little impact Man has on the total problem? Why would you spend so much² to avoid so little effect?

Why are we spending trillions of dollars? To stop runaway global warming which will destroy the planet, life as we know it, and have our grandchildren "see forests self combust, and lakes boil"³. This assumes the greenhouse gas theory is correct – it isn't. There is little correlation between warming and high CO₂ concentrations. In previous **ice ages**, there have been much higher CO₂ concentrations than today⁴ (e.g. The Ordovician-Silurian ice age [4,000 ppm CO₂, ten times higher than today], and the Jurassic-Cretaceous ice age [2,000 ppm CO₂, five times higher than today]). Obviously, there is another factor, or combination of factors, that can overcome the greenhouse warming effect. Once we accept there are many other factors, both known and unknown, that affect global temperatures, then Man's impact is further diminished.

Finally, we have assumed that Man is the sole source of additional CO₂. This is incorrect; as we know that, in any one year, a normal annual variation of naturally produced CO₂ can dwarf Man's annual contribution.

Conclusion

Even if we accept that the greenhouse gases are the sole contributors to global warming and, that any increase in CO₂ concentration is caused by Man, the impact that Man has on global warming is trivial. Consequently, it is fallacious to ignore the benefits of carbon and CO₂; ignore the effect of water vapour; then claim that Man's CO₂ is a pollutant and the sole cause of global warming; and use this as an excuse to spend trillions of dollars to reduce Man's trivial contribution, while ignoring Nature's significant contribution to global warming.

Notes:

1. Hayden, Howard C., *A Primer on CO₂ and Climate*, Second Edition, Vales Lake Publishing, Colorado, 2008, page 23.
2. Lomborg Bjorn, *Cool It*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2007, pp.32-34. Full Kyoto Protocol with the US participating (but not China, India, or Russia) is \$5 trillion dollars. If all countries participate \$15 trillion dollars. If temperatures are stabilised at 2.7⁰F (an ambitious EU target), the cost rises to \$84 trillion.
3. Lomborg Bjorn, *Cool It*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2007, page 129.
4. Ian Plimer, *Heaven and Earth – Global Warming the Missing Science*, Connor Court Publishing, Ballan Victoria, 2009, page 165.