

THE BEST SCIENTISTS [1]

The Sales Pitch

The people who write IPCC reports are the “*crème de la crème*”. Everyone says so. Rajendra Pachauri, the person who was the IPCC's chairman from 2002 -2015, tells us this repeatedly. In 2007, he explained to a newspaper how his organization selects individuals to help write the ‘Climate Bible’:

“These are people who have been chosen on the basis of their track record, on their record of publications, on the research that they have done...They are people who are at the top of their profession...”

Two years later, when testifying before a committee of the US Senate, Pachauri argued that "***all rational persons***" should be persuaded by the IPCC's conclusions since his organization mobilizes "***the best talent available across the world.***"

Whether he speaks in Austria or Australia, whether he gives an interview or writes articles himself, Pachauri says he "***can't think of a better set of qualified people***" to write IPCC reports. At various times, he has said the IPCC consists of:

- thousands of the best scientists,
- the best scientific expertise from around the world,
- almost four thousand of the world's best specialists [2]

Nor is he the only one to make such claims. Robert Watson, who chaired the IPCC for the five years before Pachauri took over, also says the "***IPCC engages thousands of the world's best experts.***" Media outlets have repeated these assertions time and again.

But such claims are bogus.

The Reality

In 2005, an atmospheric science professor from Colorado State University named William Gray told a US Senate Committee:

“Despite my 50 years of meteorology experience and my many years of involvement in seasonal hurricane and climate prediction, I have never been asked for input on any of the [IPCC] reports.”

The reason he wasn't invited to the party, he says, is because he doesn't think global warming causes more (or stronger) hurricanes. "***They know my views and do not wish to have to deal with them.***"

Six months prior to Gray's testimony, an expert on the other side of the Atlantic was raising his own concerns before a committee of the British House of Lords. Paul Reiter knows little about atmospheric science. What he does know is the field in which he has specialized for more than 40 years – diseases that are spread by mosquitoes. According to him, the people who have been writing about those diseases in the Climate Bible are not experts.

While a large portion of the health chapter in the 1995 edition dealt with malaria, Reiter points out that "**not one of the lead authors had ever written a research paper on the subject!**" Only those with limited knowledge of this field, he says, could have produced such "amateurish" work.

For example, the Climate Bible said malaria-transmitting mosquitoes usually don't survive in areas where winter temperatures drop below 16°C (60°F). Reiter says that's nonsense. We now associate malaria with tropical locales, but poverty and an absence of health care are important factors. Hawaii, Aruba, and Barbados are all tropical, but malaria isn't a problem there. On the other hand, in the 1800s thousands died of malaria in North America and Europe - even in Siberia. [2].

It's the same story with sea levels. The former president of a Commission on Sea Level Change, Nils-Axel Mörner, also addressed the House of Lords committee. Mörner, who has 40 years experience in his field, called attention to the disparity between what genuine sea level specialists think and what those who write IPCC reports believe. Those in the second group, he says, lack hands-on expertise. Instead, they attempt to predict the future sea level rises via mathematical formulas that have been fed into computers.

Mörner told the House of Lords that, between 1999 and 2003, genuine sea level experts held five international meetings to discuss the available real-world evidence. They concluded that sea levels are unlikely to increase by more than 10 cm (4 inches) by the year 2100. Mörner says the claim that sea levels are rising quickly - or that entire island nations are in imminent danger of drowning - are simply not true.

Dr. Gray, the hurricane specialist, resides in America. Dr. Reiter, the malaria expert, works at the Pasteur Institute in Paris. Dr. Mörner is the former head of a geodynamics unit at the University of Stockholm, in Sweden.

Each of them possesses highly specialized knowledge. Each of them is a seasoned professional with long experience in his field. They are, in other words, exactly the kind of people you would expect to find at the heart of an organization comprised of world-class scientists examining one of the planet's most important questions.

But they are all IPCC outsiders, because they don't believe in "**The Cause**". This suggests the IPCC defines **top scientists** and **best experts** differently than do most of us.

Twenty-Something Graduate Students

So, if malaria experts aren't writing the section on malaria in the Climate Bible and world-renowned sea level experts aren't writing the section on sea levels, who is writing IPCC reports?

One group consists of graduate students. Typically, these are individuals in their twenties. Their experience of the world is neither broad nor deep. If they were merely performing administrative tasks that would be one thing. But the IPCC has long relied on their expert judgment.

Richard Klein, now a Dutch geography professor, is a classic example. In 1992, Klein turned 23, completed a Masters degree, and worked as a Greenpeace campaigner. Two years later, at the tender age of 25, he found himself serving as an IPCC lead author.

The IPCC has three classes of writers. *Coordinating lead authors* are in charge of an entire chapter and are therefore the most senior in rank. Each chapter usually has two. *Lead authors* are expected to write a significant amount of text. Their numbers vary from a handful to several dozen. *Contributing authors* provide supplemental knowledge. They typically don't participate in the meetings attended by the other two kinds of authors, but are asked to write briefly about a narrow, specific topic. A chapter may have no contributing authors or as many as 20 of them.

Klein's online biography tells us that, since 1994, he has been a lead author for six IPCC reports. On three of those occasions, beginning in 1997, he served as a coordinating lead author. This means that Klein was promoted to the IPCC's most senior author role at age 28 - six years *prior* to the 2003 completion of his PhD. Neither his youth nor his thin academic credentials prevented the IPCC from regarding him as one of the world's top experts ^[3].

Nor is he an isolated case. Laurens Bouwer is currently employed by an environmental studies institute at the VU University Amsterdam. In 1999-2000, he served as an IPCC lead author before earning his *Masters* in 2001.

How can a young man without even a Masters degree become an IPCC lead author? Good question. Nor is it the only one. Bouwer's expertise is in climate change and water resources. Yet the chapter for which he first served as a lead author was titled "*Insurance and Other Financial Services*".

It turns out that, during part of 2000, Bouwer was a trainee at Munich Reinsurance Company. This means the IPCC chose as a lead author someone who **a)** was a trainee, **b)** lacked a Masters degree, and **c)** was still a full decade away from receiving his 2010 PhD.

Who else falls into this category? Step forward Lisa Alexander. As recently as 2008, this woman was a research assistant at Australia's Monash University. After earning her PhD in 2009, she was hired by another Aussie university - which noted in its announcement that she had already "played a key role" in both the 2001 and 2007 editions of the Climate Bible. (She was a contributing author the first time, and a lead author the second.)

The IPCC selected its 2001 authors during 1999. This means its leadership decided that Alexander was a world-class expert 10 years before she, too, had earned her doctorate.

Sari Kovats, currently a lecturer at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is an even more egregious example. She didn't earn her PhD until 2010. Yet back in 1994 - 16 years prior to that event and three years before her first academic paper was published - Kovats was one of only 21 people in the entire world selected to work on the first IPCC chapter that examined how climate change

might affect human health. In total, Kovats has been an IPCC lead author twice and a contributing author once - all long before she'd completed her PhD.

One of Kovats' health chapter colleagues was an American named Jonathan Patz. He earned a Masters degree in Public Health in 1992 and had his first academic paper published in late 1995. Yet in 1994 the IPCC judged his credentials so impressive he was appointed one of its lead authors.

Given the involvement of both Kovats and Patz, Paul Reiter's description of the IPCC's 1995 health chapter as *amateurish* starts to make sense. Rather than recruiting real experts like Reiter, the IPCC enlisted young, inexperienced, non-experts instead.

It has been doing so since the mid-1990s. Yet in 2011 newspapers still report that the IPCC is a collection of "the world's leading scientists".

The Right Gender or the Right Country

In early 2010, the Inter Academy Council, an organization comprised of science bodies from around the world, took an historic step. It established a committee whose purpose was to investigate IPCC policies and procedures [4].

The committee posted a questionnaire on its website and invited interested parties to respond. Answers to those questionnaires were eventually made public after the names of the respondents had been removed. Those provided by IPCC insiders can be separated from the ones submitted by concerned citizens because the questionnaire begins by asking what role the respondent has played in the IPCC[5].

People with direct experience of this organization were remarkably frank in their feedback. According to them, scientific excellence isn't the only reason individuals are invited to participate in the IPCC.

Remember, this is a UN body. It therefore cares about the same things other UN bodies care about. Things like diversity, Gender balance, and Regional representation. The degree to which developing countries are represented compared to developed countries.

The collected answers to the questionnaire totalled 678 pages. As early as page 16, someone complains that: "*some of the lead authors...are clearly not qualified to be lead authors.*" Here are other direct quotes:

- There are far too many politically correct appointments, so that developing country scientists are appointed who have insufficient scientific competence to do anything useful.
- This is reasonable if it is regarded as a learning experience, but in my chapter...we had half of the [lead authors].
- who were not competent. (p. 138)
- The whole process...[is] flawed by an excessive concern for geographical balance.
- All decisions are political before being scientific. (p. 554).

- half of the authors are there for simply representing different parts of the world. (p. 296).

Lest anyone think that people from less affluent countries were being unjustly stereotyped, the person whose comments appear on page 330 agrees: *“The team members from the developing countries (including myself) were made to feel welcome and accepted as part of the team. In reality, we were out of our intellectual depth as meaningful contributors to the process”*.

The questionnaire did not contain the word *gender*. Nevertheless, it is uttered dozens of times in the answers people provided. While some feel the IPCC should not aim for gender balance, others applaud the use of this selection criteria.

Among those with firsthand IPCC experience, therefore, it is an open secret that some people are appointed for reasons that have little to do with world-class scientific expertise. Depending on whose opinion you believe, this is true in either a small minority of cases or with regard to as many as half of the authors. In the view of at least one person, every IPCC personnel decision is influenced by concerns unrelated to science.

If the United Nations regards the IPCC as a training ground for scientists from the developing world that's perfectly OK. If it thinks one of the main goals of the IPCC is to raise the profile of female scientists that's OK, too. It is entitled to do whatever it wants with its own organization. But it is dishonest to tell the world you have assembled a group of competitive cyclists when many on your team are actually riding tricycles.

Journalists say we should trust the IPCC's conclusions because its reports have been written by the world's finest scientific minds. But in order for that to be the case the IPCC would need to apply very different criteria when selecting its authors.

It would need an explicit policy that says something along the lines of: *“Even though we are a UN body, we are not influenced by UN diversity concerns. We select the world's best experts and only the best experts - regardless of where they come from or what gender they happen to be”*.

That is the kind of IPCC I could believe in. But that is not the IPCC we have.

Activists

Many environmental organizations employ people whose sole purpose is to raise awareness about global warming. The more effective these people are at convincing the public there is an urgent problem, the more money we're likely to contribute to their cause.

Since activists bring their own agenda to the table, and since agendas and science don't mix, environmentalists need to keep their distance from scientific endeavours. Data cannot be considered scientifically reputable if it has been collected and analyzed by activists. Scientific conclusions - especially those involving judgment calls - cannot be trusted if activists have played a role.

But activists have not kept their distance from the IPCC. Nor has that organization taken steps to safeguard its reputation by maintaining a strict boundary between itself and green groups. This is one of those red flags, an indicator that the IPCC is a spoiled child that feels no need to conduct its affairs in a grown-up, professional manner.

The improper relationship between activists and the IPCC is illustrated by a 2007 Greenpeace publication. The foreword to that document was written by none other than Rajendra Pachauri. At the end of his remarks, beside his photograph, he is identified not as a private individual expressing private opinions but as the chairman of the IPCC.

The following year Pachauri wrote another foreword for another Greenpeace publication. Think about this for a moment. The IPCC's role is similar to that of a trial judge. It examines the scientific evidence and decides whether or not human-produced carbon dioxide is guilty of triggering climate change.

How much faith would you have in the impartiality of a murder trial if the judge was hearing evidence during the day and partying with the prosecution team during the evening?

As has been mentioned above, the fact that Richard Klein worked as a Greenpeace campaigner at age 23 was no impediment to the IPCC appointing him a lead author at age 25. But that's just the beginning.

Bill Hare has been a Greenpeace spokesperson since 1992 and served as its 'chief climate negotiator' in 2007. A Greenpeace blog post describes him as a *legend* in that organization. Yet none of this has prevented him from filling senior IPCC roles.

When the 2007 edition of the Climate Bible was released, we learned that Hare had served as a lead author, that he'd been an expert reviewer for two out of three sections of the report, and that he was one of only 40 people on the "core writing team" for the overall, big-picture summary known as the Synthesis Report.

It's worth noting that the IPCC is less-than-candid about Hare's Greenpeace ties. The 2007 Climate Bible lists his affiliation as the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany. Since Hare is a 'visiting scientist' there the IPCC hasn't lied. Nevertheless, it has committed a sin of omission. His Greenpeace affiliation means he's not just any researcher.

Imagine you're an accident victim on the side of the road. You're told not to worry, that the person who's going to remain with you until the ambulance arrives is trained in first aid. What you aren't told is that he is also a vampire and that the blood seeping from your wound will be difficult for him to resist. You have not been warned about the presence of another agenda - one that changes the picture dramatically.

In 2009, an activist think tank observed that both Hare and a person named Malte have "long been key members of the Greenpeace International climate team."

Malte's surname is Meinshausen. In 2001 he and Hare co-authored an analysis of the Kyoto Protocol. During 2002 and 2003 he was a Greenpeace spokesperson [6].

But these facts didn't prevent him from being recruited as a contributing author to not one, not two, but three chapters of the 2007 Climate Bible. Like the graduate students discussed above, Meinshausen's participation demonstrates that many IPCC authors are hardly elder scholars. He only received his doctorate in 2005.

A number of passages in the 2007 Climate Bible blandly cite research papers authored by Hare and Meinshausen as though it's immaterial that they are Greenpeace personnel. Indeed, the IPCC goes so far as to reprint a graph that appears in a paper for which these two men are the sole authors.

But the Greenpeace connection extends still further. Australian marine biologist Ove Hoegh-Guldberg is often described as a "world renowned reef expert." Nine chapters of the 2007 Climate Bible base their conclusions partly on his work [7]. He was a contributing author to that report and has been appointed a coordinating lead author for the upcoming edition.

The problem is that Hoegh-Guldberg has had close ties to activist organizations for the past 17 years. Between 1994 and 2000 he wrote four reports about coral reefs and climate change that were funded, vetted, and published by Greenpeace. Since then he has written two more for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Someone who has spent 17 years working closely with activist groups is thoroughly tainted. By no stretch of the imagination can he be considered a disinterested party who will carefully weigh the pros and cons and then write a scrupulously objective account of the situation.

Speaking of the WWF, its website includes a formal photograph of 20 of the IPCC's most senior personnel. In the second row there's a gentleman named Richard Moss, who has been involved with the IPCC for nearly 20 years. During part of that time he was employed by the WWF as one of its vice presidents [8].

Similarly, Jennifer Morgan spent several years as the WWF's chief spokesperson on climate change. She led its global climate change program and headed its delegation to the Kyoto Protocol negotiations. Prior to that, she worked for the Climate Action Network. Currently she is director of a climate program for the World Resources Institute.

In other words, Morgan is not one of the World's finest scientific minds. She is a professional activist. Yet in June 2010, the IPCC appointed her to work on a report it describes as objective, rigorous, and balanced.

Michael Oppenheimer is also worth a mention. When the public hears the term 'scientist' we think of someone who is above the fray - who's disinterested and dispassionate and who goes wherever the scientific results happen to lead. This implied neutrality is what gives scientists their authority. But in the 1970s a new kind

of scientist began to emerge - the activist scientist. Nowadays these people occupy impressive positions at universities. They are often employed by respectable government bodies. All of that disguises the fact that they hold activist worldviews and that those views can influence their scientific judgment [9].

Research findings are rarely clear-cut. Data is collected, selected, discarded, adjusted, and interpreted by human beings. At every juncture there is the risk of going astray, of dismissing information that is actually important. The bits and pieces that get left on the cutting-room floor might add up to a different story. Because activist scientists begin with a particular narrative in mind, they may be unconsciously blind to these other possibilities.

At first glance, Oppenheimer could hardly seem more eminent. He is director of a program in science, technology and environmental policy at Princeton University, as well as a professor in the atmospheric sciences department.

Prior to these appointments, however, Oppenheimer spent more than two decades as the chief scientist for the activist Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). That organization is so wealthy its list of staff experts includes more than 100 names. Among them are seven attorneys, eight economists, and a vice president of corporate sponsorships.

Although we are familiar with the idea that big business exerts an influence on public debates, most of us have overlooked the fact that there's also such a thing as big green. Groups like the EDF lobby ferociously to advance their particular perspective. They also hire people who provide their activist agenda with a veneer of scientific respectability. Even now, Oppenheimer continues to advise the EDF. This means that his professional life has been spent in an activist milieu.

The IPCC doesn't think that matters. His online biography says Oppenheimer has been "a long-time participant." He was a lead author for the 2007 edition of the Climate Bible, is serving as an even more senior author for the upcoming edition, and also helped the IPCC write a special report on "*climate extremes and disasters*"[10].

Perhaps one of the reasons the IPCC doesn't view Oppenheimer as irredeemably contaminated is because the scientific profession itself appears to have lost its bearings on such matters. Oppenheimer's Princeton bio further tells us that he:

"has been a member of several panels of the National Academy of Sciences and is now a member of the National Academies' Board on Energy and Environmental Studies. He is also....a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science."

The activist scientists who emerged in the 1970s have been working their way into high-status, leadership positions. Rather than keeping its distance from those whose careers have been associated with activism, the scientific establishment now honours, celebrates, and promotes such people.

But this has consequences. The public is supposed to accept the Climate Bible's findings because it is a scientific document written by the world's top scientific experts. What happens when the public discovers that those involved are actually brazen activists? What happens when it discovers that the world's most illustrious science bodies have themselves stopped drawing a line in the sand between activists and those who strive to pursue science in a genuinely neutral and unbiased fashion?

If scientists want us to trust their expert opinions, they need to behave in a trustworthy manner. If they want us to be impressed by their high standards, they need to enforce these standards.

From this perspective, the shenanigans at the IPCC shed light on a broader malaise within the scientific community as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Two points to remember. The IPCC has a monopoly on the information being provided to all the countries in the World. They pretend that the science is “Gold Standard” – yet all their predictions based on this science is woeful.

They tell us that all the scientists are the “best of the best” and have;

“been chosen on the basis of their track record, on their record of publications, on the research that they have done... They are people who are at the top of their profession... And the Chairman cannot think of a better set of qualified people”

Yet, if we look past all the labels, sales pitch, and personalities, we find;

- Contrary to the IPCC’s Mandate, if the “best of the best” don’t believe in “The Cause” they are ostracised, and their work is ignored.
- There are far too many scientists who are young with little to no experience who could not be considered the “best of the best”.
- There are people who have been chosen, not because of their expertise but because of their gender and country of origin. Some of whom are honest enough to admit that they are out of their depth.
- Some are not scientists at all, and
- Far too many are Green activists who have a conflict of interest as they have an agenda to be achieved. Such people do not fit into the Mandate’s requirements of being “**objective, open and transparent**”, nor displaying a “**a wide range of views**”

Because of our irrationality, we are blind to all these IPCC faults and unthinkingly believe everything that this organisation publishes.

It is time we woke up.

Notes:

1. Most of the words in this Reading have been taken verbatim from **Laframboise, Donna, “The Delinquent Teenager – Who Was Mistaken for the World’s Top Climate Expert”, Ivy Avenue Press, Toronto, Canada, 2011**

2. Laframboise, Donna, *"The Delinquent Teenager – Who Was Mistaken for the World's Top Climate Expert"*, Ivy Avenue Press, Toronto, Canada, 2011, Page 193, Footnote 3-1
3. *Ibid*, page194, Footnote 4.1.
4. *Ibid*, page194, Footnote 5.1.
5. *Ibid*, page195, Footnote 5.2.
6. *Ibid*, page195, Footnote 6.1.
7. *Ibid*, page195, Footnote 6.2.
8. *Ibid*, page195, Footnote 6.3.
9. *Ibid*, page196, Footnote 6.4.
10. *Ibid*, page197, Footnote 6.5.