

Comments to the CRC Advisory Panel: 12/15/2014

This is one of those glass half-empty or half-full situations. It is clear to me that this report will be much better than the 2010 report. I appreciate that you're showing actual tide gauge graphs. I appreciate that there's no erroneous claim that SLR has accelerated in response to global warming. I appreciate that the word "Rahmstorf" has not been uttered. However, I still have concerns.

One is that this draft report does not acknowledge any errors in the previous report, not even the mistaken claim that SLR has accelerated due to global warming. This Panel has an ethical responsibility to do its best to undo the confusion which was caused by that erroneous statement, and a willingness to acknowledge and correct errors would enhance the body's credibility. Another concern is the Report's reliance on sources from one end of the scientific opinion spectrum. The UN's IPCC Report, the Obama Administration's NCA Report, and the climate activism site "Climate Central" are all from the "left" end of the spectrum.

I've already told you that I was an IPCC Expert Reviewer on the AR5 Report, and I've already told you that their so-called expert review process was a sham. Their accelerated SLR scenarios are not credible. Even their low emission scenario projects more than 3x the current rate of sea-level rise, 6.9" vs 2.2" at the current rate. That's ridiculous. The next 30 years will probably see only about 70 additional ppmv CO₂, which, because of the logarithmically decreasing effect of CO₂, will have much less effect than the last 100 ppmv, and that 100 ppmv hasn't caused any acceleration in SLR at all. It is absurd to project that global SLR will more than triple, in response to a small forcing, when it didn't increase at all in response to a much larger forcing.

You should drop the fawning praise of the IPCC and the 50,000 comments that they so often ignored, and drop the Climate Central reference. To balance the IPCC & NCA, I recommend that the Panel cite the relevant sections of the reports from the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) and the U.S. Senate's EPW Committee minority (Republican).

You should also clearly acknowledge right up front, the consensus in the literature that GHGs haven't caused accelerated SLR. In fact, until 2006, nobody had claimed to have detected any acceleration. In 2006, C&W claimed to have detected an acceleration in 20th century SLR, but they neglected to mention that all that acceleration was prior to 1930. I corresponded with Dr. Church and he acknowledged that their data showed slight deceleration after 1930. Their 2009 data set, based on different tide gauges, also showed deceleration. Their 2011 data set showed a very tiny, statistically insignificant acceleration.

Dave Burton
IPCC AR5 Expert Reviewer