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1 Australia 'open' to atomic energy

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8308167.stm>

BBC News Page last updated at 06:20 GMT, Thursday, 15 October 2009 07:20 UK

There has been a significant shift in support for nuclear power in Australia, according to a poll.

It has found that almost one in two people believe the technology should be considered as an alternative source of energy to coal or other fossil fuels.

Proponents of nuclear energy said it showed Australians were more open to the technology as a means to help combat the effects of climate change.

In 2006 one-third of people surveyed supported the atomic energy option.

Now, almost 50% believe it would be a sensible alternative source of energy in a country that is heavily dependent on fossil fuels.

'Safer'

Australia is one of the world's worst per capita emitters of greenhouse gases and scientists have warned it is particularly vulnerable to the effects of a shifting climate.

Supporters of nuclear power have insisted it is the only practical low-emissions substitute for coal.

"There is a shift. People are more open to it again because they can see the damage that carbon dioxide is doing," the former premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, told ABC News.

"It is coal that's the poison and there's been impressive progress in the handling of nuclear waste and reactor safety."

Barry Green, one of Australia's leading nuclear physicists, said the technology is improving all the time.

"The fission community - R&D community - is working very hard to produce advanced reactors that will reduce the radioactive waste problem, which will be safer... And it strikes me that certainly you cannot shut nuclear fission out of the debate at all," he said.

Despite such reassurance, critics remain concerned about the risk of accidents and the awkward issue of safely storing radioactive waste.

Opponents have also stressed that it would take too long for Australia to develop a nuclear power industry.

The federal government has no plans to go down the nuclear path, preferring instead to investigate clean coal technology and a raft of renewable energy sources.

Australia has just one atomic facility at Lucas Heights on the outskirts of Sydney, which is used mainly to produce radiopharmaceuticals.

2. Boffins may be illegal

Garth Paltridge From: [The Australian](#) January 02, 2010 12:00AM

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/boffins-may-be-illegal/story-e6frg6zo-1225815349833>

THE Climategate scandal continues to unfold. The thousands of emails leaked to the internet from the Climate Research Unit of the University of East Anglia reveal a tight-knit, influential group of scientists whose attitude to their profession is, to say the least, distorted.

It seems that a religious belief in disastrous climate change has destroyed their common sense and their appreciation of what is the appropriate way to carry out research.

Climategate may at least demonstrate that the concept of a scientific consensus with regard to global warming is nonsense. There may indeed be thousands of scientists contributing to the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, but on any particular aspect of the overall story all have to rely on the word of the few scientists who are directly involved. And when the particular aspect concerns experimental data on which the whole story rests, the data purporting to show the world is getting warmer, then the consensus argument is indeed on shaky ground.

On the evidence so far, there is not much doubt that the group of scientists linked to the CRU has behaved fairly badly. Any individual email from the Climategate pile may be explained and excused as a stupid mistake of the time, but when all are taken together it seems obvious enough that there have been lots of violations of what might be called the scientific code. The most glaring examples concern efforts to keep basic sets of data out of the hands of people who may not be sympathetic to the official story about the disastrous nature of global warming. This, when the CRU is specifically paid to collate the data gathered by national meteorological services across the world, and to make the data available to outside scientists to check and to use.

In any event, the CRU information is covered by environmental information regulations that specifically require public bodies in Britain to make their data progressively available to the public by electronic means that are easily accessible.

So the ducking and weaving in the face of reasonable requests for CRU data by outside scientists and indeed in the face of Freedom of Information requests by those same outside scientists may not be just bad scientific form. It may be illegal. Which makes the lukewarm reaction to Climategate by the great and powerful of the scientific establishment even more difficult to swallow. The journal Nature, for instance, has this to say: "If there are benefits to the email theft, one [of those benefits] is to highlight yet again the harassment that denialists inflict on some climate-change researchers, often in the form of endless, time-consuming demands for information under the US and UK Freedom of Information Acts."

Let us ignore the fact that even a prestigious journal such as Nature is happy to label scientific scepticism as the work of "denialists", which is good evidence that the CRU disease has spread far and wide into the general science community. Prior to Climategate, there were probably fewer than a dozen FOI demands to CRU. There would have been no need even for those if the information had been made available when it was first requested.

I said recently in my book *The Climate Caper* that most scientists simply cannot believe that their colleagues would deliberately oversell a scientific conclusion for the benefit of a political cause. Dishonesty of that nature would fly in the face of everything that the rather idealistic typical scientist has been taught about his profession.

Perhaps Climategate will provide a medium for introducing typical scientists to the real world and perhaps as well it will re-introduce them to the idea that scepticism is the basis of the profession.

Garth Paltridge is an atmospheric physicist and former chief research scientist with the CSIRO Division of Atmospheric Research. His book *The Climate Caper* is published by Connor Court.

3. Another bad year for predictions of global warming

From: *The Australian* January 04, 2010 12:00AM

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/another-bad-year-for-predictions-of-global-warming/story-e6frg6zo-1225815745712>

WHAT do they care if icicles form? They've got climate change theories to keep them warm.

UK Met Office long-term forecast, September 25, 2009:

The Met Office forecast for the coming winter suggests it is, once again, likely to be milder than average. It is also likely that the coming winter will be drier than last year.

Britain's The Daily Telegraph on Saturday:

BRITAIN is bracing itself for one of the coldest winters for a century with temperatures hitting minus 16C, forecasters have warned. They predicted no let-up in the freezing snap until at least mid-January, with snow, ice and severe frosts dominating. And the likelihood is that the second half of the month will be even colder. Weather patterns were more like those in the late 1970s, experts said, while Met Office figures released on Monday are expected to show that the country is experiencing the coldest winter for up to 25 years.

Rod Liddle in The Sunday Times:

CALL me a cynic, but wasn't it a bit premature of the climate change monkeys to have called 2009 the "fifth warmest year on record" back in November? We have now had the coldest December since Surrey was home to mastodons and pterodactyls and mammoths stalked the Lincolnshire Wolds -- a fact which you might hope they will factor into their figures somewhere, but I wouldn't bet on it. I assume the climate change people believe that the year ends in December, as the rest of us do, rather than November. It's possible that for perfectly good reasons those boffins at the University of East Anglia have decided to remove December entirely from recent yearly climate figures, on the grounds that it is always a bit parky and does not entirely support the thesis that the Earth is getting hotter and all the polar bears are going to die.

Christopher Booker in The Sunday Telegraph yesterday:

What is not generally realised is that the UK Met Office has been, since 1990, at the very centre of the campaign to convince the world that it faces catastrophe through global warming. Its then director, Dr John Houghton, was the single most influential figure in setting up the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as the chief driver of climate alarmism. Its Hadley Centre for Climate Change, along with the East Anglia Climatic Research Unit, was put in charge of the most prestigious of the four official global temperature records. In line with IPCC theory, its computers were programmed to predict that, as CO2 levels rose, temperatures would inevitably follow. But in the past three years, with the Met Office chaired by Robert Napier, a former global warming activist and previously head of WWF UK, its pretensions have been exposed as never before. The "Climategate" documents from the CRU, along with further revelations from Russian scientists, have shown the CRU-Met Office alliance systematically manipulating temperature data to show the world growing warmer than the evidence justified. And those same computers used to predict temperatures 100 years ahead for the IPCC have also been used to produce those weather forecasts that prove so consistently wrong. The whole set-up -- the Met Office, Hadley Centre, the CRU, the IPCC -- looks hopelessly compromised. It is a state of affairs so bizarre that it cries out for political intervention. Yet our politicians, from Gordon Brown and David Cameron down, are so in thrall to this new religion that they cannot see evidence staring them in the face. How many more winters and summers will it take before sanity finally breaks in to put an end to this scandal?

Conrad Black in this week's The Spectator:

What possessed [Malcolm Turnbull] and [Kevin] Rudd to sign on to this climate change rubbish? Global warming is not occurring; carbon emissions have nothing to do with it when it does occur; man doesn't produce climate change fluctuations, trivial as they have been in the last 50 years. And Australia is a cameo player and brings little to this party, which it should not have attended and [which] has effectively ended in shambles. Copenhagen proved to be an unmitigated fiasco of pompous charlatans purporting to reach an agreement all will thankfully ignore, while the Chinese and Indians graciously pointed out the absurdity and hypocrisy of the whole exercise.

4. More evidence CO2 not culprit

Michael Asten From: [The Australian](#) December 29, 2009 12:00AM 113 comments

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/more-evidence-co2-not-culprit/story-e6frg6zo-1225814230258>

THE Copenhagen climate change summit closed two weeks ago in confusion, disagreement and, for some, disillusionment. When the political process shows such a lack of unanimity, it is pertinent to ask whether the science behind the politics is as settled as some participants maintain.

Earlier this month (The Australian, December 9) I commented on recently published results showing huge swings in atmospheric carbon dioxide, both up and down, at a time of global cooling 33.6 million

years ago.

Paul Pearson and co-authors in a letter (The Weekend Australian, December 11) took exception to my use of their data and claimed I misrepresented their research, a claim I reject since I quoted their data (the veracity of which they do not contest) but offered an alternative hypothesis, namely that the present global warming theory (which was not the subject of their study) is inconsistent with the CO₂-temperature variations of a past age.

Some senior scientists, who are adherents of orthodox global warming theory, do not like authors publishing data that can be used to argue against orthodoxy, a point made by unrelated authors with startling clarity in the Climategate leaked emails from the University of East Anglia.

Start of sidebar. [Skip to end of sidebar.](#)

In the scientific method, however, re-examination of data and formulation of alternative hypotheses is the essence of scientific debate. In any case, the debate on the link between atmospheric CO₂ and global temperature will continue since it is not dependent on a single result.

Another example is a study by Richard Zeebe and colleagues, published in Nature Geoscience, of a release of CO₂ and an increase in temperature 55 million years ago. At this time there was an increase in global temperature of between 5C and 9C, from a temperature regime slightly warmer than today's (that I will call moderate Earth) to greenhouse temperatures. It can be argued this example may have a message for humanity because the rate of release of CO₂ into the atmosphere at the time of this warming was of a similar order to the rate of anthropogenic release today. However, the analogy turns out to be incomplete when the data is compared with present estimates of climate sensitivity to atmospheric CO₂, and Zeebe and his colleagues conclude that the large temperature increase cannot be explained by our existing understanding of CO₂ temperature linkage. Indeed, they write, "our results imply a fundamental gap in our understanding of the amplitude of global warming associated with large and abrupt climate perturbations. This gap needs to be filled to confidently predict future climate change."

I argue there are at least two possible hypotheses to explain the data in this study: either the link between atmospheric CO₂ content and global temperature increase is significantly greater (that is, more dangerous) than the existing models show or some mechanism other than atmospheric CO₂ is a significant or the main factor influencing global temperature.

The first hypothesis is consistent with climate change orthodoxy. Recent writings on climate sensitivity by James Hansen are consistent with it, as was the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its pre-Copenhagen update, The Copenhagen Diagnosis.

Indeed, the 26 authors of the IPCC update went a step further, and encouraged the 46,000 Copenhagen participants with the warning: "A rapid carbon release, not unlike what humans are causing today, has also occurred at least once in climate history, as sediment data from 55 million years ago show. This 'Palaeocene-Eocene thermal maximum' brought a major global warming of 5C, a detrimental ocean acidification and a mass extinction event. It serves as a stark warning to us today."

We have to treat such a warning cautiously because, as Pearson and his colleagues pointed out in their letter two weeks ago, "We caution against any attempt to derive a simple narrative linking CO₂ and climate on these large time scales. This is because many other factors come into play, including other greenhouse gases, moving continents, shifting ocean currents, dramatic changes in ocean chemistry, vegetation, ice cover, sea level and variations in the Earth's orbit around the sun."

Sound science also requires us to consider the second of the above two hypotheses. Otherwise, if we attempt to reconcile Zeebe's observation by inferring climate sensitivity to CO₂ is greater than that used for current models, how do we explain Pearson's observation of huge swings in atmospheric CO₂, both up and down, which appear poorly correlated with temperatures cooling from greenhouse Earth to moderate Earth?

The two geological results discussed both show some discrepancies between observation and model predictions. Such discrepancies do not in any sense reduce the merit of the respective authors' work; rather they illustrate a healthy and continuing process of scientific discovery.

In addition, unrelated satellite data analyses published in the past two years by physicist David Douglass and distinguished atmospheric scientist John Christy in two journals, International Journal of Climatology and Earth and Environment, provide observational evidence that climate sensitivity associated with CO₂ is less than that used in present climate modelling, by a factor of about three.

Thus we have two geological examples and two satellite data studies pointing towards a lesser role of CO₂ in global warming. This argument does not discount the reality of global warming during the past century or the potential consequences should it continue at the same rate, but it does suggest we need a broader framework in considering our response. The Copenhagen summit exposed intense political differences in proposals to manage global warming. Scientists are also not unanimous in claiming to understand the complex processes driving climate change and, more important, scientific studies do not unambiguously point to a single solution. Copenhagen will indeed prove to be a historic meeting if it ushers in more open-minded debate.

Michael Asten is a professorial fellow in the school of geosciences at Monash University, Melbourne.

5. Message on climate emotive, but a fraud

By Piers Akerman From: [The Sunday Telegraph](#) December 20, 2009 12:00AM

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/message-on-climate-emotive-but-a-fraud/story-e6frezz0-1225812018528>

THE Copenhagen conference was rightly killed by greed, science fiction and a surfeit of hot air emitted by the 45,000 delegates, rent-seekers and assorted hangers-on, all of whom attempted to defy common sense and cripple the global economy.

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who sought to attain some semblance of world statesmanship as a "friend of the chair" appointed by host, Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, again demonstrated his lack of diplomatic negotiating skills as conferees failed to agree to a meaningful conclusion.

Fortunately, Rudd's attempts to scare Australians into supporting an untested emissions trading system in advance of the failed conference were derailed by a new and reinvigorated Opposition, under Tony Abbott, at the eleventh hour.

Had Malcolm Turnbull's plan to go along with the Labor Party succeeded, Australia would now be suffering under a new tax scheme that would have ensured the collapse of industries fundamental to the economy.

The collapse at Copenhagen into a weak, almost meaningless morass of platitudes and "legally non-binding" (how's that for humbug?) agreement with no firm limits on emissions provided real-time proof of the inability of the United Nations to organise, let alone operate, anything. That Australia sent more than 100 people to Copenhagen to participate in this gabfest only to return with a piece of paper that reads like a drunk's New Year's resolution is an absolute disgrace. What's more, the whole show will be repeated in Bonn in six months in another exercise of futility, fatuity and duplicity.

Left-leaning nations and taxpayer-funded organisations went to Copenhagen prepared to give the dysfunctional global bureaucracy the power to operate the largest, most intrusive, supra-national tax-and-police authority ever envisaged.

Characters dressed as polar bears and pandas cheered such irrational leaders as Venezuela's Hugo Chavez as he called for the end of capitalism, for only with the end of rationalism can such endangered fruit-loops hope to survive.

One of the few to show any independent thinking was Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who said his nation supported a collective global agreement, but any compromise must not ignore the science. "To settle for something that would be seen as diminished expectations ... would be in our view a very wrong message to emerge," he said.

Without doubt, the wrong message has been sent.

As Patrick Michaels, formerly professor of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia, wrote in *The Wall Street Journal*, Climategate - the now famous leaked emails from the University of East Anglia Climatic Research Unit - demonstrate some arbitrary manipulating of various climate data sources in order to fit preconceived hypotheses, deliberate blocking of freedom of information requests related to data provided to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the silencing of climate scientists sceptical of the prevailing orthodoxy.

In effect, the global warming claims of the so-called science has been ripped apart. The crowd who gathered in Copenhagen were there pushing a fraud.

The Russians were on to it early when they checked the claims being put forward on the basis of the

data they had supplied.

Last week, the Moscow-based Institute of Economic Analysis (IEA) was issued a report claiming that the Hadley Centre for Climate Change based at the headquarters of the British Meteorological Office in Exeter (Devon, England) had probably tampered with Russian climate data.

The IEA said Russian meteorological-station data did not substantiate the anthropogenic global-warming theory and that the Hadley Climate Research Unit Temperature UK (HadCRUT) survey had cherry-picked available data.

It had ignored material that showed no substantial warming in the late 20th century and early 21st century and included incomplete data, rather than using uninterrupted observations.

The London Daily Telegraph's James Delingpole, a keen student of Climategate, noted: "What the Russians are suggesting here, in other words, is that the entire global temperature record used by the IPCC to inform world government policy is a crock."

In The Weekend Australian yesterday, a number of respected scientists dismissed the alarmist warnings about the extinction of the Great Barrier Reef. The widely anticipated extreme weather predicted by climate alarmists has not eventuated.

Even the threats of rising sea levels have been rejected by one of the world's foremost sea-rise experts, Nils-Axel Morner, the leader of the Maldives Sea Level Project, who wrote in October to Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed telling him that the results of extensive testing of the sea levels in the Maldives over several decades showed "overwhelming evidence that sea level was by no means in a rising mode in the Maldives, but had remained quite stable for the last 30 years". The same goes for Tuvalu and the other island nations claiming to be threatened by calamitous sea rise, he said. Very emotive, but a fraud.

There we have it. As yet, the global warming crowd have failed to produce any observation-based evidence that carbon dioxide levels have led to rising temperatures, but have shown that they are willing to distort data, manipulate facts and censor those who disagree with their ideology. May all those who have peddled this dangerous and unscientific nonsense wake to a lump of coal in their stocking on Christmas Day.

[To comment, join Piers Akerman's blog](#)

akermanp@sundaytelegraph.com.au

6. Mr Rudd, your misguided warming policies are killing millions

Christopher Monckton From: The Australian January 06, 2010 12:00AM

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/mr-rudd-your-misguided-warming-policies-are-killing-millions/story-e6frg6zo-1225816411782>

YOU say I am one of "those who argue that climate change does not represent a global market failure". Yet it is only recently that opinion sufficient to constitute a market signal became apparent in the documents of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which is, however, a political rather than a scientific entity. There has scarcely been time for a "market failure".

Besides, corporations are falling over themselves to cash in on the giant financial fraud against the little guy that carbon taxation and trading have already become in the goody-two-shoes EU, and will become in Australia if you get your way.

You say I was one of "those who argue that somehow the market will magically solve the problem". In fact I have never argued that, though in general the market is better at solving problems than the habitual but repeatedly failed dirigisme of the etatistes predominant in the classe politique today.

The questions I address are a) whether there is a climate problem at all; and b) even if there is one whether waiting and adapting, if necessary, is more cost-effective than attempting to mitigate the supposed problem by trying to reduce the carbon dioxide our industries and enterprises emit.

Let us pretend, *solum ad argumentum*, that a given proportionate increase in CO₂ concentration causes the maximum warming imagined by the IPCC.

By the end of this month, according to the Copenhagen Accord, all parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change are due to report what cuts in emissions they will make by 2020. Broadly speaking, the Annex 1 parties, who will account for about half of global emissions over the period, will

commit to reducing current emissions by 30 per cent by 2020, or 15 per cent on average in the decade between now and 2020.

Thus, if every Annex 1 party to the Copenhagen Accord complies with its obligations to the full, today's emissions will be reduced by about half of that 15 per cent, namely 7.5 per cent, compared with business as usual. If the trend of the past decade continues, with business as usual we shall add 2 parts per million by volume/ year, or 20 ppmv over the decade. Now, 7.5 per cent of 20 ppmv is 1.5 ppmv. One-fiftieth of a Celsius degree of warming forestalled is all that complete, global compliance with the Copenhagen Accord for an entire decade would achieve. Yet the cost of achieving this result - an outcome so small that our instruments would not be able to measure it - would run into trillions of dollars.

You say "formal global and national economic modelling" shows "that the costs of inaction are greater than the costs of acting". Yet, every economic analysis except that of the now discredited Lord Stern, with its near-zero discount rate and its absurdly inflated warming rates, comes to the same ineluctable conclusion: adaptation to climate change, if necessary, is orders of magnitude more cost-effective than attempts at mitigation. In a long career in policy analysis in and out of government, I have never seen so cost-ineffective a proposed waste of taxpayers' money to stop the tide from coming in.

I have done this calculation on the basis that everyone complies with the Copenhagen Accord yet precedent does not look promising. The Kyoto Protocol has been in operation for more than a decade. So far, after billions spent, global CO2 emissions have risen.

Remember, too, that we have assumed the maximum warming that might occur in response to an increase in CO2 concentration. Yet even the IPCC's central estimate of CO2's warming effect, according to an increasing number of serious papers in the peer-reviewed literature, is a five-fold exaggeration. If those papers are right, warming forestalled may prove to be just one-thousandth of a degree.

You led a delegation of 114 people to Copenhagen to bring back a non-result. Half a dozen were all that was really necessary. If you and your officials are not willing to tighten your belts, why should the taxpayers tighten theirs?

You say that our aim, in daring to oppose the transient fashion for apocalypticism, is "to erode just enough of the political will that action becomes impossible". No. Our aim is to ensure that the truth is widely enough understood to prevent the squandering of precious resources on addressing the non-problem of anthropogenic "global warming". The correct policy response to a non-problem is to have the courage to do nothing.

You say that I and others like me base our thinking on the notion that "the cost of not acting is nothing".

Well, after a decade and a half with no statistically significant "global warming", and after three decades in which the mean warming rate has been well below the ever-falling predictions of the UN's climate panel, that notion has not been disproved in reality.

However, the question I address is whether the cost of taking action is many times greater than the cost of not acting? The answer is yes.

Millions are already dying of starvation in the world's poorest nations because world food prices have doubled in two years. That was caused by a sharp drop in world food production, caused by suddenly taking millions of acres of land out of growing food for people who need it, to grow biofuels for clunkers that don't. The policies that you advocate are killing people by the million. At a time when so many of the world's people are already short of food, the UN's right-to-food rapporteur, Herr Ziegler, has rightly condemned the biofuel scam as "a crime against humanity".

Yet this slaughter is founded upon a lie: the claim by the IPCC that it is 90 per cent certain that most of the "global warming" since 1950 is man-made. This claim - based not on science but on a show of hands among political representatives, with China wanting a lower figure and other nations wanting a higher figure - is demonstrably false. Peer-reviewed analyses of changes in cloud cover over recent decades - changes almost entirely unconnected with changes in CO2 concentration - show that it was this largely natural reduction in cloud cover from 1983-2001 and a consequent increase in the amount of short-wave and UV solar radiation reaching the Earth that accounted for five times as much warming as CO2 could have caused.

Nor is the IPCC's great lie the only lie in the official documents of the IPCC and in the speeches of its current chairman, who has made himself a multi-millionaire as a "global warming" profiteer.

It is also a fact that, while those of the UN's computer models that can be forced with an increase in sea-surface temperatures all predict a consequent fall in the flux of outgoing radiation at top of atmosphere,

in observed reality there is an increase.

In short, the radiation that is supposed to be trapped here in the troposphere to cause "global warming" is measured as escaping to space much as usual, so that it cannot be causing more than about one-fifth of the warming the IPCC predicts.

It would be kinder to your working people to wait another decade and see whether global temperatures even begin to respond as the IPCC has predicted? What is the worst that can happen if you wait? Just 0.02C of global warming that would not otherwise have occurred. It's a no-brainer.

7. Sceptics use temperatures to cast doubt on carbon theory

Natasha Robinson From: The Australian January 06, 2010 12:00AM

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/sceptics-use-temperatures-to-cast-doubt-on-carbon-theory/story-e6frg6nf-1225816385293>

THE weather bureau's latest climate statement has nothing to suggest that warmer temperatures are the result of increased carbon dioxide emissions, climate change sceptics say.

And despite the new figures indicating that the past decade was the warmest since record-keeping began, the sceptics point to the fact that there has been relatively little upward shift in temperatures since the 1980s.

Meteorologist William Kininmonth, a former head of the Bureau of Meteorology's National Climate Centre, said yesterday the globe was still coming out of the Little Ice Age.

"The globe has been warming for the past 300 years and so it is not surprising that the recent decade is probably warmer than anything else we have experienced in the last century," he said.

"We don't understand the climate system that well, and there are a lot of unknowns about what is causing these variations from year to year. In the last decade temperatures haven't really risen very much.

"It's not as if, as carbon dioxide increases, temperatures have systematically increased as well."

Engineer and climate modeller David Evans yesterday blamed an "urban heat island" effect on thermometers, as well as the location of many thermometers at airports, for the higher temperature data.

He also claimed that the weather bureau's unadjusted raw data showed a cooling trend of temperatures.

"It's pretty clear that global warming is not predominantly due to carbon dioxide," Dr Evans said. But National Climate Centre climatologist Blair Trewin said yesterday that the latest data indicated that long-term warming was probably the result of increased carbon emissions.

"It's pretty solid evidence that warming trends that we have seen over the last century globally are consistent with what we would expect given the change that has happened in the atmosphere," Dr Trewin said.

"What this data is is further evidence that we are seeing long- term climate changes."

A lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, University of Melbourne meteorology professor David Karoly, said yesterday there was no doubt the increased temperatures recorded were the result of human factors.

"It is clear that there will be ongoing warming globally and in Australia, and that that warming will accelerate due to increased emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere," he said.

8. Rudd should never have tied carbon cuts to Copenhagen

Richard Denniss From: The Australian January 07, 2010 12:00AM 66 comments

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/rudd-should-never-have-tied-carbon-cuts-to-copenhagen/story-e6frg6zo-1225816748842>

AH, Copenhagen. Never before have so many gathered for so long to achieve so little. Of course, we all know now that it was the fault of the Coalition and the Chinese, but we didn't know that before.

Kevin Rudd used to say it was rich countries that were causing climate change and that we needed to show early leadership. Australia's emissions have risen since the 2007 election and will likely rise again this year.

In 2007, the then opposition leader declared: "Mr Howard has a responsibility to act . . . on climate change. This is a challenge which goes beyond national boundaries . . . If we are to get countries like China and India to accept global targets themselves then developed countries must act . . . Australia must show leadership."

Some opposition leaders might suggest that before they became prime minister they were naive about diplomacy, especially relating to China; not Rudd. Did he mean it at the time but, now that it matters, he's lost his nerve? Or was he just saying it to distinguish himself from John Howard?

It's unlikely we'll ever know what the Prime Minister was thinking, but he was right then and is wrong now. Without the leadership Rudd once advocated, there is little chance of achieving a meaningful international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Diplomacy aside, it's in Australia's interests to cut emissions as quickly as possible. The advice from Nicholas Stern, Ross Garnaut and most economists is that early efforts to reduce emissions will be cheaper than delayed efforts. A stitch in time will save nine. So where should Australia start?

Even the climate sceptics should agree the first step is the abolition of the billions of dollars worth of perverse subsidies and tax loopholes that encourage the consumption of fossil fuels. When individuals buy petrol, they pay 38c a litre in fuel excise. Airlines don't. And Fringe Benefits Tax arrangements ensure that the more you drive a company car, the bigger the tax savings are.

Surely it makes sense to stop paying the polluters before we implement a polluter pays scheme.

The second thing the government needs to do is to start shutting down Australia's brown coal-fired power stations, which are among the most polluting in the world. Climate Change Minister Penny Wong likes to talk about creating a low-carbon economy but the reality is the government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will neither result in a reduction in Australia's emissions compared with today's levels or lead to a single coal-fired power station shutting down. What we should do is increase the size of the renewable energy target and start building gas-fired power stations on the sites of the existing brown-coal power stations.

Third, we should start taking energy efficiency seriously, in homes and commercial buildings.

Ever wondered why there aren't any doors on supermarket fridges and why it is so cold in the store? Coles and Woolworths know the answer; people buy more food when they are cold and when they don't have to open doors. Given that Australians threw out \$5 billion worth of food last year, perhaps redesigning retail spaces to reduce Australia's energy use wouldn't be such a bad thing.

Australia's homes are the largest in the world. Every year, we build tens of thousands of homes with black-tile roofs, vast amounts of glass facing the afternoon sun and no shade trees. Who needs shade when you can air-condition? Does anybody really believe we are doing everything we can to tackle what the Prime Minister once called the moral challenge of climate change?

Finally, we need to tackle the politically difficult task of introducing a carbon price. The spectacular divisions in the Coalition led to the failure of the government's CPRS. No serious economist disputes the need to introduce a carbon price but there is much division about the how, what, when and where, and that is just among the economists. So, rather than argue about where we should end up in 2020, why not focus on where we should start?

The CPRS legislation proposes that we begin with a fixed pollution permit price of \$10 a tonne. Wong has said while her scheme isn't perfect, something is better than nothing. She should take her own advice and introduce a carbon price; \$10 isn't enough but it's better than nothing.

The advantage of a \$10 starting price is it would raise revenue to invest in efficient technologies and send a signal to new investors that the old days are over, while not being so high that it would have a significant effect on our so called emission-intensive trade-exposed tries. (And, if those industries mounted a scare campaign, the government could always propose to refund carbon tax paid by exporters in the same way the GST is refunded on exports.)

In the past year, the government has consistently linked the need to pass the CPRS with the need to get a binding agreement at Copenhagen. Rather than focusing on the real dangers of climate change and the benefits of early action, the government chose to suggest the fate of the world's climate negotiations was in the hands of the Coalition. Now it is blaming the Coalition for blocking the domestic legislation and the Chinese for not negotiating in good faith in Copenhagen. When will it be time for the government to take some responsibility?

Rudd was right before the last election. It is in Australia's interests to reduce emissions quickly. Now is the time to stop hiding trivial domestic politics behind bad policy and get on with reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

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9. Beat poverty first, then tackle emissions

Alan Oxley From: *The Australian* January 08, 2010 12:00AM

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/beat-poverty-first-then-tackle-emissions/story-e6frg6zo-1225817130035>

THE climate change debacle at Copenhagen last month underlined the reality that any new global agreement will be on the terms set by developing countries. Leading commentators have written that China's leading role in this was a demonstration of its new influence as an economic power.

In one important sense they are wrong. This was not just China, but India, Brazil and the Arab oil states as well. Furthermore, the position of these countries and the rest of the developing world has not changed in the 20 years since climate change has been on the global agenda.

For developing countries, climate change and other environmental strategies which retard economic development are unacceptable. They scored this into UN orthodoxy at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. They executed the principle when they emasculated the Kyoto Protocol by insisting only rich countries cut emissions.

The failure at Copenhagen was not the result of the greater influence of developing countries, it was a failure, yet again, of Green activists and environmental officials in rich countries to understand the position of developing countries and the political implications of that.

China used its enhanced authority to deliver the developing country message in the form of a humiliating public snub to Western leaders at Copenhagen.

China sent an official, not a political leader, to negotiate with Barack Obama.

The European Community, the champion of the Kyoto Protocol, was shut out of the negotiations between the US and the leading developing economies. When the Danish Prime Minister nominated an Indian minister to pair with Penny Wong to sort out differences on one issue, the

Indian minister simply did not show up.

The zealotry which has imbued the campaign to halt global warming has blinded environmental officials and many politicians to the reality of what can be achieved. Any experienced UN negotiator would have warned it was a mistake to send a large number of heads of government to Copenhagen in the belief that that would overcome the deep and fundamental divide between rich and poor.

The justification for engaging in such a diplomatic suicide mission is that stopping global warming is the overriding moral issue of the time. Not to everyone.

In India and China alone there are 600 million people living below the poverty line. Eradicating poverty is the moral imperative in the developing world.

The leading US climate change economist, William Nordhaus at Yale, has maintained for years that if developing countries cut emissions too sharply and too soon as advocated by Greenpeace, WWF and the European Union, they would further impoverish their people.

What is the solution of environmental activists? Greenpeace and WWF laid theirs out before Copenhagen. They recognised that the result of their strategies to increase power costs and cease conversion of forests to more economically productive activities in developing countries would lower economic growth and hinder efforts to increase agricultural production.

Their solution? Double current aid budgets (presently about US\$100 billion per year).

This became a mantra among Western leaders before Copenhagen. If more aid is not on the table, no deal is possible, intoned Gordon Brown, Nicolas Sarkozy and Hillary Clinton. But they were talking to Green activists, not developing countries, and still viewing climate change through a rich country lens. They had bought the Green line that the world's poor were on the same side as the activists. They clearly are not.

Welfare is provided to the disadvantaged in rich countries (as in the Rudd plan to compensate low-

income earners harmed by the emissions trading). So do the same to compensate the world's poor for the cost of global emissions trading.

They have forgotten a golden rule of aid that developing countries have not used it to promote economic growth, not to provide cash. The rich country plan is correctly perceived as a form of global green welfare compensation for the loss of jobs and income which would be caused by deep and early cuts in emissions by developing countries.

Zealots have short life spans when the cost and impracticality of what they urge becomes apparent. Only now are the costs of their climate change plans becoming apparent. If Copenhagen was not a climate change epiphany for Western leaders, they will never be able to envisage a practicable global strategy to reduce global warming.

Any strategy has to protect the capacity of poor countries to eradicate poverty. What rational person would reject that proposition?

Alan Oxley is chairman of World Growth, a US-based free market NGO which attended the Copenhagen Summit.

10. The future's hottest topic

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http://www.afr.com/p/lifestyle/review/the_future_hottest_topic_1U6P03YnRDbIWrpUXyO

For now, it is a hideous sight. In Cadarache, 60 kilometres north of Marseilles, workers have cleared over 40 hectares of wooded land and moved more than two million cubic metres of soil. However, this scar on the Provençal landscape has been earmark...