

## **Update from Jennifer Marohasy – January 2009**

Dear Friends and Colleagues

### **1. Happy New Year!**

If one defines happiness as the Greek philosopher Epicurus does, in terms of friends, freedom and an analysed life, then there is hope for me for happiness. But, news headlines so often spoil what seems like a great start to a day ... or year. An issue is the apparent lack of truth.

### **2. The Great Barrier Reef**

This year began with reports that "Researchers in Australia say the growth of coral on the country's iconic Great Barrier Reef (GBR) has fallen since 1990 to its lowest rate in 400 years." Variations of this message were repeated around the world with global warming, and the associated acidification of oceans, claimed to be the cause.

Having followed GBR issues for many years I was surprised to hear global warming associated with slow coral growth rates; growth rates actually decrease from north to south along the GBR as this corresponds with a cooling temperature gradient of 2-3 degrees C.

Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/8hf nub> (the short address)  
<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2009/01/global-warming-unlikely-reason-for-slow-coral-growth/> (the long address)

### **3. Magazine editor duped**

Distinguishing reality from fantasy, truth from propaganda can be a particular issue for editors of magazines as Keith Windschuttle, the new editor of Quadrant, discovered early this year with anti-GM activist Katherine Wilson duping him into publishing her hoax.

The story made the front page of The Australian and The Age newspapers without explicit condemnation, and incredibly online news service Crikey has actually promoted the hoax as a public service. But it is really just more misinformation from those who distrust science and is illustrative of the increasing blurring of the line between advocacy and science journalism.

I have suggested revenge by way of support for Quadrant. Do your bit, follow this link and subscribe to the magazine: <https://www.quadrant.org.au/subscribe>

My blog piece on the same is here: <http://tinyurl.com/9r877e> (short address)  
<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2009/01/magazine-duped-by-anti-gm-activist-%e2%80%93-a-case-of-more-of-the-same/> (long address)

#### **4. Predictions of Global Cooling and Warming**

At least one well-published research scientist is repeating his prediction for a period of global cooling.

Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/7qgfvy>  
<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2008/12/global-warming-is-over-don-easterbrook/>

But an even larger number are predicting continued warming - at least in the medium-longer term.

As physicist Freeman Dyson explains in his review of 'Global Warming: Looking Beyond Kyoto' for The New York Review of Books there is a "dialogue of the deaf" between those who subscribe to the theory that carbon dioxide is driving global warming and a small minority who are skeptical.

Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/87sdjt>  
<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2009/01/environmentalism-as-a-good-religion-needing-to-be-a-tolerant-of-global-warming-sceptics-freeman-dyson/>

In the same review Professor Dyson suggests:

While environmentalism is a worthy belief system: "holding that we are stewards of the earth, that despoiling the planet with waste products of our luxurious living is a sin, and that the path of righteousness is to live as frugally as possible." There is a need for more tolerance of sceptical views on global warming.

He writes: Unfortunately, some members of the environmental movement have ... adopted as an article of faith the belief that global warming is the greatest threat to the ecology of our planet. That is one reason why the arguments about global warming have become bitter and passionate.

Much of the public has come to believe that anyone who is skeptical about the dangers of global warming is an enemy of the environment. The skeptics now have the difficult task of convincing the public that the opposite is true. Many of the skeptics are passionate environmentalists. They are horrified to see the obsession with global warming distracting public attention from what they see as more serious and more immediate dangers to the planet, including problems of nuclear weaponry, environmental degradation, and social injustice. Whether they turn out to be right or wrong, their arguments on these issues deserve to be heard.

## **5. Sceptical Bloggers**

On the issue of being heard, several blogs by known climate change sceptics are in the running for the 2008 [global] Weblog Awards.

You can vote for Anthony Watt and Steve McIntyre here:

<http://2008.weblogawards.org/polls/best-science-blog/>

The brilliant physicist Lubos Motl here:

<http://2008.weblogawards.org/polls/best-european-blog/>

I am entered in the community section, there is no environmental section. Vote for me here: <http://2008.weblogawards.org/polls/best-online-community/>

If you don't vote, instead of a blog committed to evidence-based environmentalism ... Michael Jackson's fan club could win my section. :-) Be quick, because voting closes on the 15th.

## **6. Saving River Red Gums**

The Victorian Premier, John Brumby, waited until New Year's Eve to announce the end of timber harvesting and grazing in 83,000 hectares of red gum forest in the Central Murray Valley in north western Victoria. The creation of new national parks was a 2006 election promise to secure inner-city votes but is based on a lie - on the false belief that by declaring an area a national park you can somehow "save it".

Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/99tc67>

<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2008/12/no-happy-new-year-for-koalas-in-the-central-murray-valley/>

## **7. Good News on White Possums**

Last year, so many things were blamed on global warming including the extinction of a rare white possum in north Queensland. After some research of my own I discovered the "the white possum" is more commonly known as a lemuroid ringtail (*Hemibelideus lemuroid*) and is usually a charcoal brown colour.

Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/6sqmsg>

<http://jennifermarohasy.com/blog/2008/12/white-possum-probably-not-extinct-from-global-warming/>

## **8. Conference in New York in March**

Confirmed speakers for the climate-change conference in New York in March include a great line up of so-called "climate deniers": Richard Lindzen, the Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Meteorology at MIT; Roy Spencer, a pioneer in the monitoring of global temperatures by NASA satellites; and John Coleman, who founded the Weather Channel in 1982.

More information here:

<http://www.heartland.org/events/NewYork09/newyork09.html>

Kind regards,

**Jennifer Marohasy**

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