

Re: OT: Climate Change

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- *From:* bill.sloman@xxxxxxxx
 - *Date:* 11 Apr 2007 08:26:45 -0700
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On Apr 11, 1:38 pm, Eeyore <rabbitsfriendsandrelati...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

bill.slo...@xxxxxxxx wrote:

On Apr 11, 4:13 am, Eeyore <rabbitsfriendsandrelati...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Ian Bell wrote:

The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere is about 0.04% and has been for the last 50 years or more. The proportion of that 0.04% contributed by human emissions is very small. The big source/sink of CO₂ is the sea. The temperature of the sea controls the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere. Human emissions are insignificant.

This seems to make basic sense to me ! In other words CO₂ levels are merely an indicator.

It might make basic sense to you, but it is nevertheless wrong. The current CO₂ level is 0.0383% and it has risen by about 0.006% in the past fifty years.

Purely according to ice core data which does not tally with direct atmospheric measurements.

About 0.01% of the 0.0383% represents human emissions since the industrial revolution, which is a significant (and

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rising) proportion.

Given the minor role of CO₂ as a greenhouse gas it's a drop in the ocean. <http://nov55.com/crunch.html>

I haven't looked in detail at the above yet but feel free to comment.

It looks like rubbish. The author doesn't seem to understand how greenhouse gases work.

The atmosphere is – as he says – more or less transparent to the visible and near infrared radiation that carries the bulk of the energy radiated onto the earth by the sun, where it heats the surface to around 300K.

The earth then loses this heat exclusively by radiation. The spectrum of the black body radiation emitted by a black body at 300K is centred much further down in the infrared, where the atmosphere isn't transparent, so the radiation emitted into space doesn't come from the surface, but from the top of the atmosphere, which is a whole lot colder than the surface. This displacement of the radiating surface is the whole basis of the greenhouse effect, and the author doesn't seem to have a clue about it.

In the past, CO₂ levels have been driven by ocean temperature, but this time around we've managed to reverse the situation.

That hardly sounds very convincing.

The fluctuations in CO₂ level over the past few hundred thousand years seem to have followed and resulted from temperature changes produced by changes in ocean currents. Our digging up and burning lots of coal and oil seems to be driving up the current temperature in the same way that massive CO₂ releases produced by massive vulcanism did in the remote past.

See if you can find Tony Hallam's "Catastrophes and Lesser Calamities" ISBN 0-19-280668-8. It is published in paperback by Oxford University Press – my copy is marked as 8.99 pounds rrp – and is a geologists account of the various mass extinctions over the last few hundred million years.

The book discusses a fair number of mechanisms that can drive and exaggerate climate change. You may find it more convincing.

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Bill Sloman, Nijmegen

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