

Re: Global Warming May Raise Hurricane Intensity

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Dave M. <gadget007@rochester.rr.com> wrote in message
news:nSj7d.109241\$Kt5.41110@twister.nyroc.rr.com...

> ...and the subject wouldn't have even come up if Florida wasn't taking a
> pounding (prove it's not a coincidence) this year. If you've read "Chaos",
> you would find it hard to believe the batting of a butterfly's wings in
> China could cause catastrophic weather elsewhere in the world. There is
just
> too much static friction in the atmosphere.
>
> This is not to say CO2 in relatively large quantities couldn't initiate
> trouble.
>
> Mathematicians, are such twits!
>
> Dave M.

I recently read "The Essence of Chaos", by Edward N. Lorenz, and I think you may be taking the butterfly argument a bit out of context. Lorenz qualified the "butterfly wings" argument. To quote briefly from p. 181 of that book:

"1. If a single flap of a butterfly's wings can be instrumental in generating a tornado, so also can all the previous and subsequent flaps of its wings, as can the flaps of the wings of millions of other butterflies, not to mention the activities of innumerable more powerful creatures, including our own species.

2. If the flap of a butterfly's wings can be instrumental in generating a tornado, it can equally well be instrumental in preventing a tornado."

Lorenz seems to take the stance that minute changes to the atmosphere can be amplified over time, due to the atmosphere's chaotic nature, but the results of such amplification are unpredictable, and distributed over the "good" and "bad" range of possibilities (my quotes, not Lorenz's).