

Press Release

For immediate release

25 November 2015



South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

Media Contact: Mienke Steytler

Tel: (011) 482 7221 ext 2003

Email: mienke@sairr.org.za

No scientific basis to climate change scare

“Belief that mankind is changing the climate in a dangerous way has become a ruling ideology of today,” writes Andrew Kenny, an engineer and energy expert, in the latest issue of *@Liberty*, the policy bulletin of the IRR.

This ideology provides enormous amounts of money for an army of scientists, activists, journalists and politicians around the world. But it has no basis in science.

It is true that mankind, mainly by burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), has increased CO₂ in the air from about 280 ppm in the 19th century to about 400 ppm. But it is not true that this presents a danger to the world.

Writes Kenny: “On the contrary, this increase is doing a power of good for the plants upon which we depend. In the past, they were used to CO₂ above 1 000 ppm and were starving at 280 ppm. They are responding gratefully to the increase and so ‘greening’ the arid Sahel region south of the Sahara.”

During the Mediaeval Warm Period a thousand years ago, temperatures worldwide were rather higher than now while CO₂ was lower. This warm period was not exceptional, as there were even warmer periods before it. All were natural and were probably caused by changes in solar activity. There is no reason to believe the slight warming of the 20th Century, about 0.7°C, was not natural too.

Kenny adds: “The climate changes all the time and extreme weather events happen all the time. There has been no increase in climate extremes in the last 50 years, and there is no scientific reason why rising CO₂ should cause such an increase.

“South Africa is currently suffering a serious drought. Unfortunately they are perennial in the history of our dry country. The world is now experiencing El Niño, an important but natural climatic event that warms the eastern Pacific Ocean, and can cause drought in South Africa.

More...

“Next week in Paris is COP21, a climate conference where people with little knowledge of science will try to force us to emit less CO₂. If they succeed it will be bad for the planet and disastrous for poor countries, which will be denied the fossil fuels that helped make the West rich.

“Let us hope they fail, as COP has failed in the past. But, make no mistake, if they succeed, the consequences could be dire.

“Certainly, South African policymakers should steer clear of ideas such as carbon taxes, which will increase the costs of investment and reduce economic growth. Such interventions will harm the country’s capacity to alleviate poverty and create jobs without bringing any benefits to the environment.”

Download the policy bulletin [here](#).

Ends.
