

'Pure Junk Science': Researchers Challenge Narrative on CO2 and Warming Correlation

UN claims that human-caused CO2 emissions are imperiling the planet are 'totally garbage,' says scientist. 'CO2 doesn't cause a change in temperature.'

[Epoch Times](#), By [Katie Spence](#), February 20, 2024



Each year from 2023 to 2030, climate change sustainable development goals will cost every person in economies such as the United States \$2,026, the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development [estimates](#). In lower-income economies, the per-person annual cost ranges from \$332 to \$1,864.

In total, the global price tag comes to about \$5.5 trillion per year.

Separately, a [report](#) from the left-aligned nonprofit Climate Policy Initiative found that in 2021 and 2022, the world's taxpayers spent \$1.3 trillion each year on climate-related projects.

It also found that the "annual climate finance needed" from 2031 to 2050 is more than \$10 trillion each year.

"Anyone who willfully denies the impact of climate change is condemning the American people to a very dangerous future," President Joe Biden [said](#) on Nov. 14, 2023, while announcing \$6 billion in new investments through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

"The impacts we're seeing are only going to get worse, more frequent, more ferocious, and more costly."

At its signing in August 2022, President Biden [said](#) the IRA "invests \$369 billion to take the most aggressive action ever—ever, ever, ever—in confronting the climate crisis and strengthening our economic—our energy security."

A [report](#) from Goldman Sachs put the dollar amount much higher, stating, "Critical funding for this next energy revolution is expected to come from the IRA, which will provide an estimated \$1.2 trillion of incentives by 2032."



More: [UN Says Melting Arctic Ice Is Key Indicator of Climate Change—But It's Not Melting](#)

The trillions of dollars being poured into new initiatives stem from the goals set by the United Nations' Paris Agreement's legally binding international [treaty](#) to “substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions” in the hope of maintaining a temperature of no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

But any decrease in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions won't have an effect for hundreds to thousands of years—even under the most restrictive circumstances, according to some experts.

“If emissions of CO₂ stopped altogether, it would take many thousands of years for atmospheric CO₂ to return to ‘pre-industrial’ levels,” the Royal Society states in a report on its [website](#). The organization describes itself as a “fellowship of many of the world's most eminent scientists.”

“Surface temperatures would stay elevated for at least a thousand years, implying a long-term commitment to a warmer planet due to past and current emissions,” the report states. “The current CO₂-induced warming of Earth is therefore essentially irreversible on human timescales.”

A frequently asked questions [page](#) on NASA's website holds the same position.



Steam and exhaust rise from a power plant on a cold winter day in Oberhausen, Germany, on Jan. 6, 2017. (Lukas Schulze/Getty Images)

“If we stopped emitting greenhouse gases today, the rise in global temperatures would begin to flatten within a few years. Temperatures would then plateau but remain well-elevated for many, many centuries,” NASA states.

And, other scientists say, that's because CO₂ isn't the culprit in the first place.

“CO₂ does not cause global warming. Global warming causes more CO₂,” said **Edwin Berry**, a theoretical physicist and certified consulting [meteorologist](#). He called Royal Society's position on CO₂ “pure junk science.”

Ian Clark, [emeritus professor](#) for the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Ottawa, agreed that if all greenhouse gas emissions ceased today, the Earth would continue warming—but not because of CO2.

He said that contrary to popular opinion, temperature doesn't follow CO2—instead, CO2 follows temperature, which, itself, is due to solar activity.

Temperature and CO2

One of Mr. Clark's primary areas of research is paleoclimatology (the study of climate conditions using indirect records such as tree ring data, ice cores, and other proxy records), and in particular, [Arctic paleohydrogeology](#), which is the study of the Earth's water throughout history.



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Ian Clark, Ian Clark, emeritus professor, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Ottawa

“During the ice ages, we had great temperature variations, and this has to do with, not straight-up solar activity, but the amount of solar activity that is hitting the Earth at certain important latitudes, all caused by celestial events,” Mr. Clark said.

“The Earth, in our solar system, is moving around and being jostled. And we have different orbiting patterns that affect solar input, and that creates ice ages and interglacial periods—which we're in now. And CO2 tracks that. So we'll see enormous temperature changes, going from ice ages to interglacials, and CO2 gets very low during ice ages and very high during interglacials.

“And that gives the appearance that CO2 is driving the climate, but it's actually following. It lags by about 800 years.”

Mr. Clark said that during ice ages, and particularly the past 10,000 years, scientists have a fairly good idea of the temperature, thanks to proxy records. He said those records show that the Medieval Warm Period was likely much warmer than today, and agriculture and civilization flourished.

But the Little Ice Age followed that from the 1400s to 1800s. “And that's when we had difficulty with agriculture,” Mr. Clark said.

“The Thames froze over. We have all sorts of recollections about how cold, and some would say miserable, it was back then. But then it started warming up again. So, about every 1,000

years or so, we seem to have these fluctuations. This is due to solar activity, and that's where we see the importance of the sun, which is the ultimate source of energy beyond geothermal and nuclear energy. Solar drives climate."

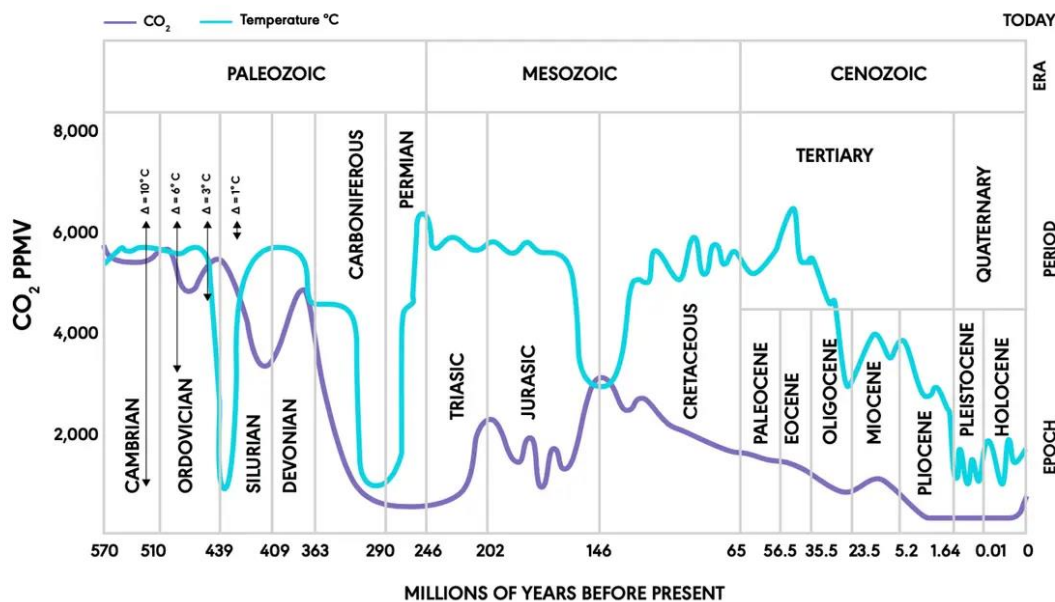
Another peer-reviewed [study](#), by scientist William Jackson, examined the relationship between CO₂ levels and temperature over the past 425 million years.

Mr. Jackson is a distinguished research and emeritus professor for the department of chemistry at UC–Davis who specializes in understanding the role that molecules such as CO₂, nitrogen, and carbon monoxide play in planetary atmospheres.

His paper, published in 2017, found that "changes in atmospheric CO₂ concentration did not cause temperature change in the ancient climate."

Similarly, a group of researchers whose [report](#) was published in Nature found that when looking at carbon isotope compositions at the million-year scale, long-term atmospheric carbon dioxide was unrelated to temperature, and even showed an inverse trend, especially after major events such as volcanic eruptions.

Geological Timescale: Concentration of CO₂ and Temperature Fluctuations



At left is a geological timescale showing the concentration of CO₂ and temperature fluctuations over time. (Courtesy of Dr. Patrick Moore)

They further found that when temperature and atmospheric CO₂ reached a certain level, organic carbon burial drastically increased, eventually resulting in a significant decrease in atmospheric CO₂ levels.

That activity, Mr. Berry said, is nature balancing the levels of CO₂—which is an ongoing process.

Inflow and Outflow

CO₂ flows from the atmosphere into plants through photosynthesis and soil through decomposition, is absorbed by the oceans, and is then released through respiration, evaporation, and fossil fuel combustion. The entire process is called the carbon cycle. Moreover, Mr. Berry said that once CO₂ in the atmosphere increases to a certain level, nature automatically increases the outflow.

“It’s almost like a bathtub, which may have a spout open so that water can flow out of it if it reaches a certain level,” he said. “A certain setting of the inflow will raise the level to a certain point. And as the [water] level goes up, the faster it’ll flow out. There’s a balance level for any inflow setting—a balance level where it all stays the same. In other words, the outflow equals the inflow. And when the outflow reaches the inflow, it’s at its balance level, and it no longer accumulates.”

Mr. Berry said the premise that humans are solely responsible for increasing CO₂ is problematic.

According to the U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), since 1750, CO₂ concentration has increased from 280 parts per million (ppm) to more than 420 ppm, and the IPCC claims that this increase is anthropogenic, or caused by humans.

At right: Sepp Kipfstuhl of the East Greenland Ice-Core Project works with a chainsaw to cut a larger entrance to the new tunnel at the camp on Aug. 6, 2022. (Lukasz Larsson Warzecha/Getty Images)

“Current concentrations of atmospheric CO₂ and CH₄ [methane] far exceed pre-industrial values found in polar ice core records of atmospheric composition dating back 650,000 years,” the IPCC [states](#).



“Multiple lines of evidence confirm that the post-industrial rise in these gases does not stem from natural mechanisms. ... Emissions of CO₂ from fossil fuel use and from the effects of land use change on plant and soil carbon are the primary sources of increased atmospheric CO₂.” Mr. Berry called the IPCC’s statement “totally garbage.”

Mr. Berry said there's no scientific basis for the claim that a 'certain amount of carbon dioxide in the air causes a certain amount of temperature increase.'

"I used the IPCC's own carbon cycle data, which IPCC says is accurate to about 20 percent," he said. "The model doesn't give humans producing 140 ppm. It comes out closer to 30 ppm. Which essentially means the IPCC is wrong."

Mr. Berry said there's no scientific basis for the claim that a "certain amount of carbon dioxide in the air causes a certain amount of temperature increase."

"They say we have to reduce (CO₂) to 350 ppm to cool it down to where temperature was a while ago? There's no physics to that," he said.

"That whole claim is totally garbage. CO₂ doesn't cause a change in temperature; temperature causes a change in CO₂."

Climate Dictated by Sun

"If we completely cut out emissions, CO₂ would stop rising at its current rate," Mr. Clark said. "But it would probably continue to rise to a certain point, and then it could come down. But that would be driven by temperature."

Mr. Clark said that in different parts of the world and at different times of the year, CO₂ fluctuates "between 15 and 20 percent," and that's driven by the temperature of the seasons.

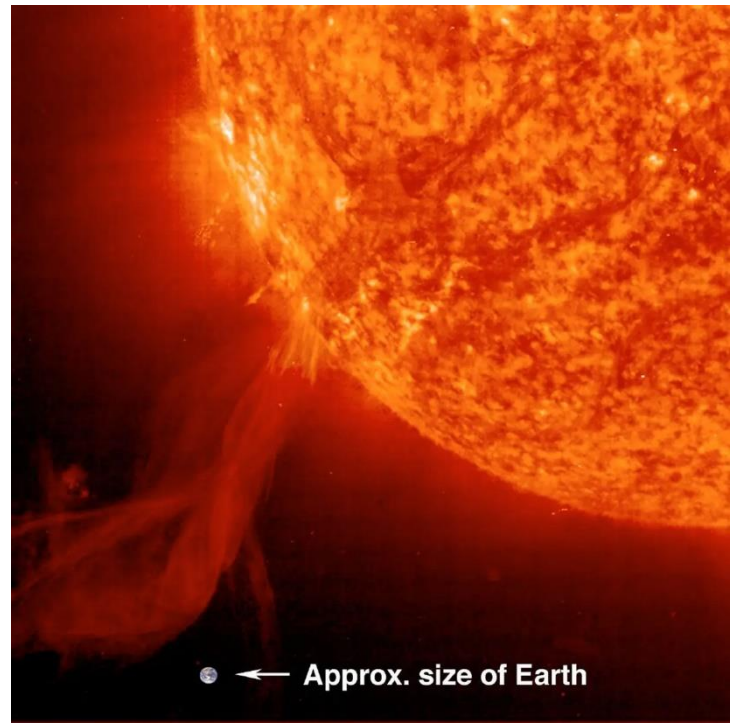
"If we start having cooler summers and colder winters, those fluctuations would start driving CO₂ further down. But overall, climate is going to do whatever the sun dictates," he said.

"We have a fairly good understanding of the different cycles the sun can go through and how they pile up. Sometimes, they amplify each other. Sometimes they cancel each other. So, we get kind of a chaotic signal, but some come through quite strongly—this 1,000-year cycle seems to be quite strong."

Astronomers at the Solar & Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) captured this image of a solar prominence erupting from the surface of the sun on Oct. 25, 2002. It is shown here with the Earth in scale to demonstrate the immense size of this solar phenomenon.

(SOHO/ESA/NASA/Getty Images)

“We had the Roman Warm Period, then the Medieval Warm Period, and now we have the Modern Warm Period; one, two, three. And history and the records tell us they only last a couple hundred years, and we’re already a hundred-some-odd years into this one.”



In addition to not affecting temperature, Mr. Clark said the attempts to reduce CO2 are dangerous because of the anticipated effect on plants.

The majority of plants, such as trees, wheat, and rice thrive at higher CO2 levels.

“C4 plants, like corn, evolved just 20–30 million years ago. And they evolved in response to the declining CO2 in the atmosphere. So, they’re a relative latecomer to our biosphere and reflect the danger of decreasing CO2,” he said.

A majority of plants, such as trees, wheat, and rice, are what’s known as C3 plants, which thrive at higher CO2 levels of 800 to 1500 ppm.

Mr. Clark said one of the benefits of increasing CO2 is improved global grain yields and the general greening of the planet.

In response to The Epoch Times’ request for comment about the **Royal Society’s** findings that temperature will continue to increase for hundreds to thousands of years even if CO2 emissions were to cease today, **Alex Matthews-King**, the group’s senior press officer, said via email, “This is a peer-reviewed report authored jointly by Fellows from the Royal Society and U.S. National Academy of Science.”

King pointed to the report's [foreword](#), which states: "Climate change is one of the defining issues of our time. It is now more certain than ever, based on many lines of evidence, that humans are changing Earth's climate. The atmosphere and oceans have warmed, which has been accompanied by sea level rise, a strong decline in Arctic sea ice, and other climate-related changes.

"The impacts of climate change on people and nature are increasingly apparent. Unprecedented flooding, heat waves, and wildfires have cost billions in damages. Habitats are undergoing rapid shifts in response to changing temperatures and precipitation patterns. Calls for action are getting louder." King wrote



At left a farmer moves an irrigation system in his cornfield near Whiteland, Ind., on July 20, 2012. (Scott Olson/Getty Images)

Mr. Clark agreed that humans "do have a footprint on this planet, there's no question about that."

But he suggested that the underreported larger effect is being felt in the oceans, where humans have "killed off 90 percent of the large fish population, and whales, and all the rest."

He said he believes that the money and resources spent on climate conferences could go to "actually improve environmental problems."

"Anybody who's a climate realist recognizes that the money we're spending on mitigation—where we think that we are turning back the CO2 thermostat or trying to turn back to the thermostat and save the world 1.5 degrees of warming—knows that it's a fantasy. There's no way we will affect climate with what we're doing."