

## Popular Science and Agnotology

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### **Comments to Earth System Dynamics Discussion paper “Agnostology: Learning from mistakes” by R. E. Benestad, H. O. Hygen, R. van Dorland, J. Cook and D. Nuccitelli (BHDCN-Paper)**

#### **Introduction**

In the BHDCN paper various topics and articles reflecting, in their opinion, agnotology within the field of climate, are summarized. Their analysis do not reflect the methodology required to draw the given conclusions. In addition, there are numerous misquotations and partly irrelevant elements on which they base their critique.

In Norway we have experienced reference to the BHDCN-paper in the public debate where it more easily can be accepted as a sound scientific paper which is not the case. This probably reflects the main intention of the paper and why also popular scientific articles, names and organizations that are not actively taking part in the scientific work, are included in the paper.

BHDCN start, as we have experienced several times with Benestad, with a description of the general principles of agnotology which intend to leave the impression that they are very concerned and knowledgeable about the principles and therefore have the responsibility to take on their writings. *This is tactics not science.* The paradox becomes clearer when BHDCN defend the "Hockey stick" (in section A3.2 case 12) which has been thoroughly analyzed and criticized by top experts and now is supported only among a gradually smaller group of scientists.

#### **The organization Klimarealistene is attacked**

In the following, I will concentrate on the activities of the organization Klimarealistene which is a non-political organization, including members with various political views. The object of the organization is to participate in the public debate and distribute relevant information about climate as a supplement to the official information.

We have produced booklets which describe the well accepted natural variations like ENSO, PDO, AMO, sunspot activity and their influence on cloud formation as well as the Urban Heat Island (UH)-effect. In addition, we have pointed to the severe weaknesses of the AGW theory and the climate models like the missing hotspot finger print, flattening of the global mean temperature over the last 16 years and the severe discrepancy with the model calculations as well as the low level of understanding of cloud formation and the questionable positive forcing of water vapor.

We consider this to be highly relevant and generally accepted as important climate phenomena. What is controversial, but not necessarily wrong, is our statement that natural variations seem to be the dominating mechanism. Among the given critical statements by BHDCN is that the relation between sunspots and climate has failed to stand up to new data, and information presented on sunspots and cosmic rays, which include the work by CERN, has been characterized as nonscientific.

Our distribution of the booklet to the schools reflects the low standard of information provided by the school authorities. The information the primary school children in Norway get on natural

climate variations is only two sentences about the Milancovic relations. The rest of the climate variations are stated to be AGW. This is a far stronger statement than the conclusion in the IPCC 2007-report that “most of the observed increase in temperatures since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century is *very likely* to have been due to the increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.” We interpret ‘most’ as more than 50 %, which means that up to 49,9% of the warming can have other causes, which should be explained to the pupils.

For Norway being close to and partly within the Arctic area and with a Gulf stream (AMO) along our coast and into the Arctic, we find it highly relevant to inform about the observed systematic variations over years which certainly influence our climate. This is done in the official publication “Klima i Norge 2100” (pages 44-46; Fig. 3.3.2, and 3.3.3), which shows temperature flattening the next 20 years, but not communicated to the general public.

### **Other remarks**

Klimarealistene do not give input to research activities as stated under Case 9. We publish popular science about climate and participate in the public debate. Our meager income, based on contributions from members, is mostly used for printing, postage and public meetings. Our written material is produced without salaries.

In summary we find the approach of the critique by BHDCN highly inappropriate.