

Fake Invisible Catastrophes and Threats of Doom

by

Patrick Moore

Summary: The idea that humans are causing a dramatic rise in global temperature by burning fossil fuels is simply not true. The small contribution to carbon dioxide – a trace element in the Earth’s atmosphere – made by human beings is actually highly beneficial. The notion that it is harmful or dangerous is false. So are all the other dire predictions made by climate alarmists. Patrick Moore shows us why in this refreshingly clear, well-written and illuminating book.

Patrick Moore is a mild-mannered, softly spoken Canadian with a doctorate in ecology from the University of British Columbia. Growing up in the woods of northern Vancouver Island, he developed a lasting love for the natural world which prompted him early on to become an environmentalist. Dr Moore’s love of nature led him to be one of the co-founders of Greenpeace, which started when a small group of like-minded friends and colleagues made a voyage to Alaska in 1971 to protest against US underground testing of hydrogen bombs. Happily, as we know, their efforts were eventually rewarded by the end of all atomic weapons testing by the US and other countries.

Greenpeace expanded rapidly in parallel with growing international awareness of environmental issues. Unfortunately, as it grew, it gradually changed from a group of volunteers with “a noble vision” into “a business with an ever-expanding budget, a matching payroll to meet” and by 1986 “was ... rapidly transforming into a racket peddling junk science” (p.10).

Scientist, and ‘sensible environmentalist’ Patrick Moore began to think about quitting. The final straw was the decision by his fellow directors of Greenpeace International, none of whom had any formal scientific training, to launch a campaign to ban chlorine. Dr Moore writes; “chlorine is the most important of the 94 natural elements for both public health and medicine ... more than 85% of our prescription medicines are made using chlorine chemistry. Twenty-five percent of our medicines actually contain chlorine. And then there’s polyvinyl chloride, also known as PVC or simply vinyl, the most versatile of all the plastics.” Banning chlorine would be madness. Dr Moore had to leave.

The theme of the book is explaining how Greenpeace and other environmental groups have managed to persuade huge numbers of ordinary people, politicians, journalists and even many scientists, that human beings are facing a series of catastrophes of their own making, global warming being the most pressing, and one which requires urgent, drastic action to prevent it.

Dr Moore explains how this persuasion works: “the great majority of scare stories about the present and future state of the planet, and humanity as a whole, are based on subjects that are either invisible, like CO₂ and radiation, or extremely remote, like polar bears and coral reefs. Thus, most people have no way of determining the truth of these ... [scare stories]. Instead, they must rely on the activists, the media, the politicians, and the scientists – all of whom have a very large financial and/or political stake in the subject....” (p.11).

Chapter Three, “Climate of Fear and Guilt” is the vibrant heart of the book, which had stated at the outset: “During the last 50 years we have adopted a lot of environmental policies that have changed the social and economic landscape considerably. But today there are demands being made that would actually cripple society and the global economy permanently. The push to ‘phase out all fossil fuel consumption in thirty years’ is certainly the biggest threat to civilization in the world today” (p.9).

After a brief exposition of what true science consists of – observation, verification, repetition – the chapter examines the crucial but hugely misunderstood role of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. For Patrick Moore, and for any other genuine scientist, carbon dioxide is “the most important molecule for the existence of life on Earth” (p. 36). Yet, “The entire ‘climate change catastrophe’ narrative, is based on the claim that humans are emitting *too much* CO₂ into the

atmosphere and that this will cause our planet to be *too hot* for life. Both claims are patently false” (p.37). “[The Earth] is actually colder than it has been during most of life’s existence” (p.59). Dr Moore points out that concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which were originally put there by volcanoes when the Earth was young, had been declining steadily across the aeons until they had almost reached the point at which plants can no longer survive, which is 150 parts per million (ppm). The reduction in concentration had actually reached 180 ppm.

Fortunately for us, melting ice and other factors at the end of the last glaciation raised the level back up to 280 ppm which is roughly where it was when industrialisation began in earnest in the 19th century and human activity began contributing to a small increase in atmospheric CO₂. Currently, the level is at 415 ppm, or 0.0415% of the Earth’s atmosphere, which is such a minimal amount that climate scientists call it a ‘trace element.’ Far from being a danger to the planet, this is a highly *beneficial* concentration which is helping to bring about a clearly proven ‘greening’ of the Earth. Just as animal life depends on oxygen, so plant life depends on carbon dioxide – and the more the merrier. The botanical world could easily tolerate, and would benefit enormously, from an atmosphere with **1200 ppm** or more of CO₂ – as it was during the Carboniferous Period when the lush vegetation which became coal was steadily removing CO₂ from the atmosphere; growing, dying, accumulating, being compressed, then stored for millions of years; until humans began using it for fuel and, in a life-saving process, began returning CO₂ to the atmosphere, whence it came in the first place. The bottom line here is that human beings are “life’s salvation, not its destroyers” (p.41).

The chapter includes a discussion of the misnamed ‘greenhouse effect’ which is just as important to life on Earth as CO₂, and equally falsely blamed for imaginary disasters to come. “Life would never likely have existed without the greenhouse effect. And yet the climate alarmists refer to greenhouse gasses such as CO₂ and CH₄ as ‘pollution.’” (p.50). CH₄ is actually the valuable aerial trace element methane which, despite its minuscule presence, makes a not insignificant contribution to our presence on Earth. Flatulent cows should not be made the object of an alarmist pogrom, but rather be worshipped, as they are in India, though not for the same reason!

Another important fact described in the chapter is that global warming – or cooling – only happens in the northern and southern hemispheres. The tropics remain largely unchanged.

While discussing climate predictions, Dr Moore points out that many “are based on simulations, which are computer-generated models created by authors who decide what they want their model to predict and then build assumptions into the model that provide them with the results they [want].... [it] has nothing to do with real science, which is about observing real situations in the real world” (p.33). In other words, we should be **very wary** of climate predictions derived from computer simulations.

Dr Moore also highlights a common evasive tactic employed by alarmists – the claim that there is an ‘overwhelming consensus among scientists’ often put at 97%; or that ‘the science is settled.’ Dr Moore states in contrast that these (highly dubious) assertions say nothing about whether what is being asserted is *true*, and goes on to say, “‘Consensus’ is actually not a valid scientific term. It is a social and political term having to do with agreement on policies....” He quotes the late Michael Crichton: “If it’s consensus, it isn’t science. If it’s science, it isn’t consensus” (p.36).

In fact, citing a consensus of scientists or the IPCC (as government ministers are prone to do) are **logically invalid** arguments; they commit the fallacy of *argumentum ad vericundiam*, or ‘appealing to authority.’ Such arguments establish nothing about the *truth* of what is alleged, as Dr Moore noted. They merely pass the buck in a singularly cowardly fashion.

The other chapters of the book tear to pieces ten more myths, the majority connected with alleged dangers from the small but genuinely *beneficial* human contribution to atmospheric CO₂. Chapter One rips apart a claim that “Africa’s oldest boabab trees are dying at an unprecedented rate, and climate change may be to blame” (pp.15-18). Moore stresses that no evidence is provided for the assertion, which turns out to be no more than a totally unscientific *guess* by a journalist, and no more newsworthy than the indubitable fact that older trees, like older animals, die of old age. Dr

Moore began his book with this story because it demonstrates very effectively his thesis that remoteness is one of the factors that environmental alarmism depends on. How many of us have seen a baobab tree, or know anything about its life cycle?

Chapter Two concerns a more serious example of ‘remoteness trading’ – coral reefs. The chapter explains in a concise fashion how coral reefs are formed; where they thrive and why, and accounts for the phenomenon of ‘bleaching’ which alarmists maintain is the fate of all corals, due to man-made warming of the oceans. It turns out that bleaching is a relatively rare, local occurrence, seldom fatal, and usually short-lived. More significantly, since corals thrive best in warm seawater they would *welcome* warmer oceans.

Later chapters cover the threatened extinction of polar bears (whose numbers are actually rising to the extent of becoming a menace to the Inuit peoples of Arctic Canada); assertions that millions of species face extinction (nonsense); a claim that the Pacific Ocean contains a vast garbage patch of plastic (completely untrue, it does *not*); another that genetically modified food is harmful (a blatant lie); and that we should fear nuclear power (bunkum, it’s our future. Danger? You’re a million times more likely to die in a road accident [p.153]).

Other topics addressed are the causes of forest fires (mismanagement through ‘green’ policies); ocean acidification (imaginary), and mass walrus deaths due to global warming melting Arctic ice sheets (*no!* Due to polar bear attacks on rapidly growing populations of this *protected* species!). All the above are shown to be fabrications based on ignorance of genuine climate science; ignorance of geology and of climate history (paleoclimatology); one-sided, false, or incomplete reporting; disregard of counter evidence; and misrepresentation, gross exaggeration, or outright falsehoods. It really is a shameful record.

One of the more shocking episodes recounted is the assault by Greenpeace – which, as we saw, Dr Moore co-founded – on genetically-modified, life-saving, Vitamin A-enriched Golden Rice. He and some new colleagues were actually led to accuse Greenpeace of a “Crime against Humanity” (p.141) during a campaign for Golden Rice adoption by poor, rice-dependent countries. “While the ‘green’ left calls for socialism and redistribution of wealth, they are fighting against a cure for the very poorest people in the world ... one cup of Golden Rice per day could save millions of them from blindness and eventual death. They die quietly and unnoticed” (p.144).

Another shocker is deliberate falsification or misrepresentation of evidence by the world-famous Sir David Attenborough, towards whom Dr Moore threw down this gauntlet: “I personally challenge Sir Attenborough (sic) to dispute the points presented herein regarding seabirds, plastic, walruses and polar bears. I look forward to his rebuttal” (p.204). One wonders whether a response will be forthcoming.

A prodigious amount of work went into this book, which is very well-illustrated and jam-packed with information, much of it not mentioned in this report, such as the Milankovitch Cycles, which throw light on the *real* causes of historic changes in climate (pp. 67-9); libellous use of the word ‘denier’ (p.12 & *passim*), and failure to consider the social and economic consequences of government policies.

From a literary point of view, it must be added that the quotations used to illuminate points are very well chosen, be they from friend or foe. Since climate alarmism is entirely built on predictions, my favourites were: “The climate system is a coupled non-linear chaotic system, and therefore the long-term prediction of future climate states is not possible” – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, May 2018 (p.51); and, “Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future” – 1922 Nobel Prize for Physics winner Niels Bohr (p.53).

While faultless 95% of the time, *Fake Invisible Catastrophes and Threats of Doom* is not without flaws. One is delayed or missing explanations of two vital pieces of evidence: core samples from ice sheets, and from ocean sediments. These yield huge amounts of information about the history of Earth’s climate but, while Dr Moore rests much of his case on them, he doesn’t explain how the information is actually *extracted* nor why we should place such confidence in it. He says on page 41, “Marine sediment core samples ... go back hundreds of millions of years and the sediment does not lie.” I’m sure he’s right, but I also learned at university that the Earth’s crust

has gone through incredible contortions during its long history and that many sedimentary deposits have been folded, twisted or otherwise displaced. Movement of present-day tectonic plates shows that this is still happening. Some confirmation that the core samples he uses as evidence have not been affected by crust movement would be reassuring.

A similar objection might be made when Dr Moore examines the genetic modification of foodstuffs (Chapter Seven). Clear proof of GM's safety presented earlier would make his discussion more persuasive, although he does make several telling points; e.g., that genetic modification takes place *naturally* and that *we ourselves* – each and every one of us – are created by genetic modification.

There are a few other minor glitches, and an index would have been helpful, but enough of quibbles. Patrick Moore has written a very timely and very important book. In my opinion, panic stricken politicians such as Joe Biden and Boris Johnson should be locked up in solitary confinement until they have read *Fake Invisible Catastrophes and Threats of Doom* and thereafter demonstrated a full understanding that their goals of zero emissions of CO₂; of banning petrol and diesel from motor vehicles, and of smothering the landscape with ugly, very expensive, short-lived, and highly unreliable energy sources – windmills and solar panels – are both fatuous and entirely unnecessary.

The arch sceptic Karl Popper was fond of saying, “we never know what we are talking about.” He also remarked, “Now a little debunking may do us a lot of good.” Patrick Moore has demonstrated time and again throughout this book that Popper – though often wrong elsewhere – was right on the button with climate doomsayers, who emphatically do *not* know what they are talking about. Let's hope Dr Moore's debunking of their myths, misinformation and lies will do them a lot of good. I doubt it will, too many reputations and research grants are at stake. But if we can persuade enough open-minded, educated adults (i.e. *voters*) to read *Fake Invisible Catastrophes and Threats of Doom* that alone might end up doing the rest of us a lot of good indeed.

Postscript

A discussion of the ‘climategate’ controversy and the infamous ‘hockey stick’ graph – showing a dramatic increase in global temperatures – would be a welcome addition to the book, should Dr Moore decide on a new edition, especially after the BBC's heavily biased, October 2021 documentary on the subject. The BBC Four film made no mention of computer modelling, nor of ice and ocean sediment cores; and the only reference to the beneficial effects of CO₂ lasted about three seconds. Michael Mann's hockey stick, which the programme set out to vindicate, may be factually correct to some degree but it only covers a thousand years, a mere blink in geological time. Dr Moore's work covers millions of years, and shows that the Earth is currently in an ‘interglacial period’ – and is thus very likely to get much *colder*!