

There're ways to work with flaws in the IPCC report

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The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report concluded that under existing policies coal use will likely be phased out by 2050 and there is a risk the Great Barrier Reef might disappear. Yet the main response to such possible important changes for Australia by Prime Minister Scott Morrison is that the report is not binding while Environment Minister Melissa Price says it is not policy prescriptive.

By contrast, US meteorology professor Richard Lindzen, reportedly said Australia's political class had "gone completely bonkers in their response to climate change alarmism and hadn't taken the time to actually read and understand the science". He added: "I can't imagine what suicidal instincts reside in Australia's political class. In asking me to comment on the Australian response, you are asking the wrong person. You need to speak to someone specialising in abnormal psychology."

The opportunity exists for the Morrison government to take advantage of the serious deficiencies in the IPCC report and modify existing climate change policies including by withdrawing from the non-binding Paris accord. Labor's emphasis on renewables can be dismissed by Lindzen's conclusion of an "obvious need for something more plausible to 'sustain' the renewables bubble".

Des Moore, South Yarra, Vic

Malcolm Turnbull's gift of \$6 billion to NSW and Victoria for their Snowy Hydro assets added nothing to Australia's infrastructure or electricity supply — a waste of money that rendered any resulting addition to reliable power at enormous and unwarranted cost ("Joyce pushes coal over Snowy 2.0," 15/10). Barnaby Joyce is right to prefer coal-fuelled base-load power stations rather than wasting more money on Turnbull's futile scheme.

Michael Cunningham, West End, Qld

Have anti-IPCC politicians lifted their heads from the sand lately? Are they unaware of the economic costs associated with the escalating number and frequency of natural disasters across the world, and from which Australia is far from immune? A significant part of the country, that grows a significant proportion of our food, is in drought with summer only just getting underway.

Bushfires are now an ever-present threat, and if fires are raging in one part of the country, another part faces floods.

Those who continue to dismiss the science, and champion the very industries known to exacerbate the crisis, are reckless in the extreme. It's also economically dumb given the renewable energy sector offers far cheaper power options and considerably more job opportunities.

Anne Layton-Bennett, Swan Bay, Tas

I have degrees in the biological sciences and in the earth sciences. I am not an expert in matters of climate but I do have the skills to read, challenge and comprehend what the climate experts write on climate change. This science is not settled and their models do not forecast accurately but in both cases there has been significant advances over the past decade or so. Climate is extremely complex and it takes time to improve the models.

Consider economic models, another complex area where the models, that have been around a lot longer, are unable to forecast future economic scenarios, yet that seems to be tolerated without comment. This debate reminds me of when continental drift was first proposed and how people couldn't get their heads around the fact that continents were floating and moving, albeit very slowly. Today we know this for a fact.

As an important newspaper, The Australian has a responsibility to inform its readers about important matters and present various points of view. Some areas such as politics and religion will, by their nature, have a wider spectrum of opinion, but matters scientific will, typically, be on a somewhat narrower spectrum and should be met by informed scepticism, not belief.

John Whiteing, Willoughby, NSW

Many of Bjorn Lomborg's articles reach the same conclusion: spend more on research ("Climate unsuited to saving lives", 13/10). Yet curiously, none of his acolytes can see the self-interest — ironic when they believe that all of the world's climate scientists are part of a global conspiracy motivated by financial self-interest (Letters, 15/10). Fortunately, our universities aren't swayed by Lomborg's schtick

Chris Roylance, Paddington, Qld