

A failure to explain climate-change link with CO2

Letters, 12:00AM December 22, 2018

You correctly point out that “Australia shouldn’t accept measures that would damage our economy for nugatory gains in climate mitigation” and that “too often there is a yawning gap between climate rhetoric and reality” (Editorial 21/12). [Too often too the rhetoric originates from the UN Chief you quote].

The missing reality is the failure of some climate scientists and politicians to examine whether the predicted effects of climate changes actually happen. [Yet] since the year 2000, temporary increases aside, global temperatures have been relatively stable despite the strong increase in carbon emissions staying in the atmosphere. Temperatures also remained stable in the post WW2 period to the late 1970s in the face of increasing emissions. Where is the explanation of the apparent lack of a correlation between increases in carbon emissions and temperatures, which the rhetoricians claim?

This unanswered question suggests the [danger] threat claims from usage of fossil fuels have lost credibility, and policies aimed at reducing emissions should be re-examined . Australian governments should not continue policies to reduce emissions unless climate scientists can explain the periods of relative [price] stability in the face of increasing emissions. As Doug Hurst wrote (Letters, 20/12), “the best Christmas present we could give ourselves would be to accept reality and cancel our futile and wasteful renewables policies”.

Des Moore, South Yarra, Vic (Ed deleted bits in brackets)

Bjorn Lomborg introduces two welcome dimensions to this subject — debate and balance (“Let’s find some balance in managing climate change”, 20/12). But he persists with the theory that managing climate change is merely a matter of economics. A weakness in this argument is that we mere mortals are capable of managing the climate without defining how much of it is within our control. This is a problem shared by climate scientists who will not, or cannot, enlighten us.

Another weakness is the assumption that the solution is shutting off fossil fuel usage or limiting its use in the meantime by fiscal imposition.

Unsurprisingly, coal is least expensive and nuclear comes in between. All it needs is for state and federal governments to open their eyes and minds and, with the media, provide the much-needed encouragement of competition.

Derek Fern, Box Hill, Vic

The CSIRO's latest climate report comes to a false conclusion. It says the "recent warming can only be explained by human interference". Perhaps, the warming is caused by the sun. The climate has changed for millennia so why should it suddenly remain stable now?

People should be reminded that CO₂ makes up 0.04 per cent of the atmosphere. Even if CO₂ levels doubled or tripled it would not cause global warming. It is time for the vilification of CO₂ to stop. CO₂ is the gas of life and without it we would not exist.

Chas Barter, Lower Mitcham, SA

How much more scientific evidence do climate sceptics need before they see the light? Barely a week passes without some international or national professional body or group of respected scientists warning us to wake up and take decisive action.

This week it's a joint study by the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO alerting us to the devastating effects warming has on coral reefs, kelp forests and fisheries. It seems to be a case of "out of sight, out of mind" concerning rising sea levels with many seemingly ignorant of its effect on infrastructure in coastal areas.

Kevin Burke, Eltham, Vic

A difficulty in discussing any sensitive topic is the amount of labelling going on. For instance, I don't consider myself a climate change denier but think that CO₂ greenhouse theory is hot air. CO₂ is a trace gas. That such an innocuous trace gas has been singled out as supposedly detrimental is overly reductionistic. If plants could talk then they would sing a very different tune called photosynthesis.

Before the 1970s and the advent of remote sensing satellites the amount of data we had on weather patterns was a relatively diffuse collection of data points scattered across the globe.

So by comparison with the recent past, weather records now show huge amounts of information that would have fallen through the net in 1970.

Justin White, Bardon, Qld