

BLACK SWANS

By Dr Gerrit J. van der Lingen (© 2015)

Christiana Figueres is a Costa Rican diplomat. She was appointed Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on May 17, 2010. She succeeded Yvo de Boer.

The UNFCCC organises annual climate conferences, called COPs (Conferences Of the Parties to the UNFCCC). The first one was held in Berlin in 1995. The last one (COP20), at the time of writing this essay, was in Lima, Peru, 1-12 December 2014. Christiana Figueres chaired that conference. In her opening address she said, among other, the following: “The calendar of science loudly warns us that we are running out of time”, and “Here in Lima we must plant the seeds of a new, global construct of high quality growth, based on unparalleled collaboration building across all previous divides. History, dear friends, will judge us not only for how many tonnes of greenhouse gases we were able to reduce, but also by whether we were able to protect the most vulnerable, to alleviate poverty and to create a future with prosperity for all”.

Maurice Newman, Chairman of the Australian Prime Minister’s Business Advisory Council, wrote an article in *The Australian* newspaper of 8 May, 2015, titled: “The UN is using climate change as a tool, not an issue”. About Christina Figueres he wrote:

“Why then, with such little evidence, does the UN insist the world spends hundreds of billions of dollars a year on futile climate change policies? Perhaps Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the UN’s framework on Climate Change has the answer? In Brussels last February she said, “This is the first time in the history of mankind that we are setting ourselves the task of intentionally, within a defined period of time, to change the economic development model that has been reigning for at least 150 years since the Industrial Revolution.” In other words, the real agenda is concentrated political authority. Global warming is the hook. Figueres is on record saying democracy is a poor political system for fighting global warming. Communist China, she says, is the best model. This is not about facts or logic. It’s about a new world order under the control of the UN. It is opposed to capitalism and freedom and has made environmental catastrophism a household topic to achieve its objective. Figueres says that, unlike the Industrial Revolution, “This is a centralised transformation that is taking place”. She sees the US partisan divide on global warming as “very detrimental”.

As Figueres is saying that democracy is not the best political model to fight global warming, it will be useful to define again what democracy is. Ibn Warrack in his book “Why I am not a Muslim” gives the following definition:

“Democracy functions by critical discussion, by rational thought, by listening to another point of view, by compromise, by changing one’s mind, by tentative proposals that are submitted to criticism, and by the testing of theories by trying to refute them”.

Warrack wrote this definition in discussing Islam, a totalitarian religion. However, it also pertains to the climate debate. His definition also holds for science, just replace “democracy” by “science”. The belief that human emissions of carbon dioxide cause, or will cause, catastrophic global warming is also a totalitarian belief. It does not allow “critical discussion”. Those scientists who try are vilified. Over the years I collected the following abuses: “climate change deniers”, “cash-amplified flat-earth pseudo-scientists”, “the carbon cartel”, “villains”, “cranks”, “refuseniks lobby”, “polluters”, “a powerful and devious enemy”, “profligates”. The list is endless.

Incidentally, Ibn Warrack also wrote the following: “*To assess the truth of a doctrine by the number of people who believe it is totally ridiculous*”.

The above definitions are violated on all fronts. By saying that the science of climate change is “settled” and not open to further discussion, clearly shows that the belief in man-made global warming is not based on proper science, but is a neo-Marxist, intolerant ideology. It is anti-science, anti-capitalist, anti-democracy, anti-growth, anti-humanity, anti-progress.

There are plenty of examples of this ideology. For instance, Maurice Strong, a leader of the international green movement, said: “*Isn't the only hope for the planet that the industrialized civilizations collapse? Isn't it our responsibility to bring that about?*” Timothy Wirth, ex-President of the UN Foundation, made it quite clear: “*We've got to ride this global warming issue. Even if the theory of global warming is wrong, we will be doing the right thing in terms of economic and environmental policy.*”

I have often wondered why it is that the pro man-made-global-warming scientific fraternity is refuting basic scientific principles. Such principles have been clearly formulated by science philosophers like Karl Popper (1902-1994) and Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996).

In 1934 Karl Popper published his book “The logic of scientific discovery”. In which he put forth his well-know **theory of falsifiability**. He developed this theory to distinguish science from pseudo-science. In short, this theory states that “A proposition or theory cannot be considered scientific if it does not admit the possibility of being shown false”. To put this in another way, “A scientific statement must be able to be tested and proven wrong”. One of the corollaries is also that scientific observations and experiments must be reproducible.

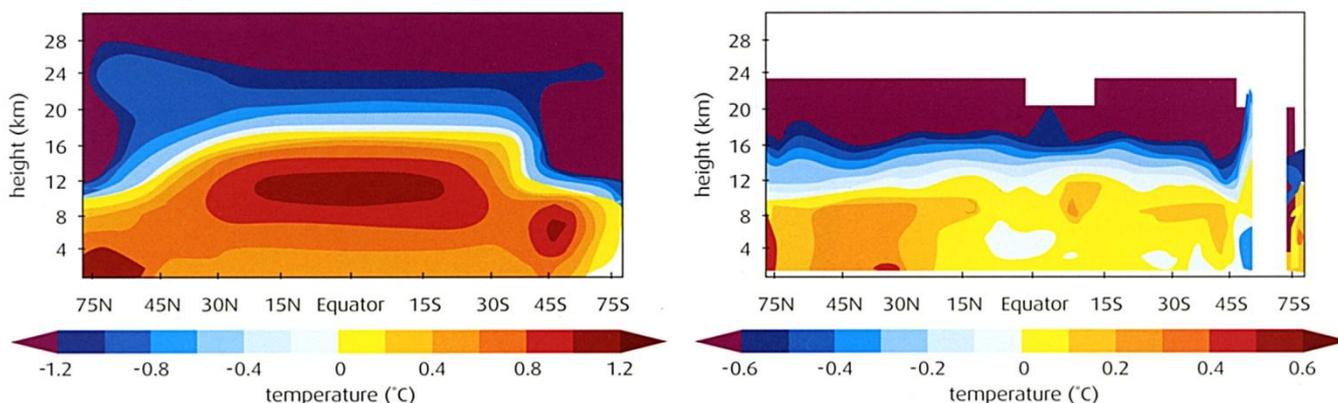
As an example, Popper uses the statement “All swans are white”. This was generally believed in Europe until the end of the seventeenth century, when the Dutch explorer, Willem de Vlamingh (1640-?1698), discovered black swans during an expedition in Western Australia.

Thomas Kuhn published his science-philosophical ideas in his book “The structure of scientific revolution”. His ideas are closer to the way humans actually carry out their scientific research. He argues that scientists work within a **conceptual paradigm** that determines the way they view the world. Scientists go to great length to defend their paradigm against falsification. Changing one's paradigm is not easy, and only through some pain and angst does science change paradigms.

The theory of catastrophic man-made global warming has been falsified several times, but these “falsifications” have been totally ignored. To give a few examples:

1. A recently published, peer-reviewed, scientific publication provided the most devastating falsification of the IPCC hypothesis (Douglas et al., *International Journal of Climatology*, 2007). According to all climate computer models used by the IPCC, the increase in CO₂ in the atmosphere should cause a decadal rate of warming (especially in the tropics) of the mid-troposphere, called the “Hot Spot” (the troposphere is that part of the atmosphere directly above the surface of the Earth, about 20km thick at the tropics and 7km at the poles), which then radiates that heat back to Earth, causing the greenhouse warming. However, they found that real world, direct measurements by weather balloon radiosondes since the 1960s and satellites since 1979 did not show any such rate of warming (Figure 1).

Figure 1 : Comparison between computer model predictions of atmospheric warming vs real-world actual data



A – Virtual-reality computer modelling, predicting a decadal rate of warming of the mid-troposphere (red and orange areas) due to increased human CO₂ emissions. B – Real world radiosonde measurements, not showing any such predicted rate of warming. (Source: Monckton 2007).

2. There has been no warming in the last 18 years. However, computer models used by the IPCC predicted continued warming (Figure 2).

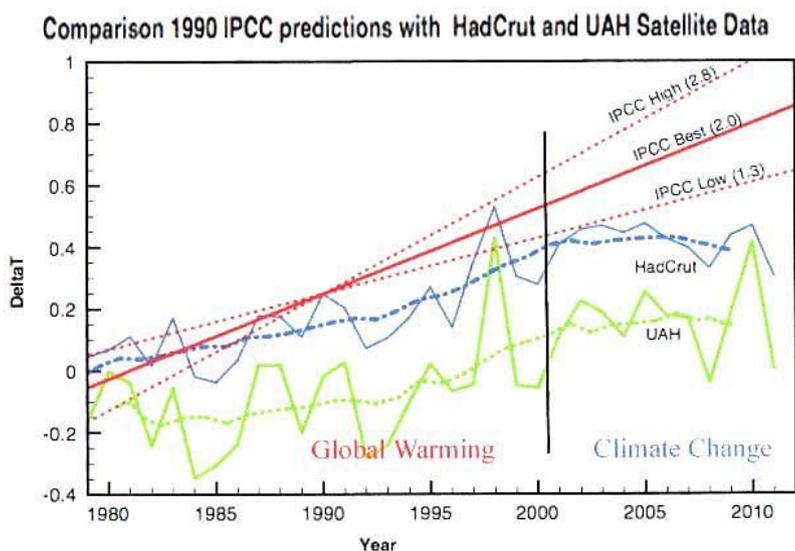


Figure 2 – Comparison computer-generated temperature predictions vs real-world temperature measurements. Source: Tim Ball – *Principia Scientific* 25 August 2013.

3. The IPCC made predictions about sea-level rise. Over the years, they lowered their predictions. In their 1990 report they predicted 124 to 367 cm by 2100, in 1995 124 to 3 cm, in 2001 77 to 11 cm and in 2007 in draft version 43-14 cm, in final report 59-18 cm. Real-world

data (from tide gauges) recorded 1.7 mm per year (17 cm per century) since the Little Ice Age. Over that period there has been no acceleration of sea-level rise, in contradiction to IPCC predictions

A full discussion about sea-level rise can be found here:

<http://nzclimatescience.net/images/PDFs/luctor%20et%20emergo%20-%20august%202013-3.pdf>

But climate scientists associated with the IPCC stick to their “conceptual paradigm”. They do indeed go to great lengths to defend their paradigm against falsification. Thus, according to Karl Popper’s philosophy, it can be concluded that the belief in catastrophic man-made global warming can be characterised as “pseudo-science”.

Another way of looking at this could be to contrast “proper science” with “post-modern science”. With “proper science” I am referring to scientific principles and philosophies established over centuries. Proper science deals with facts, observations, experiments, numerical representations of the natural world around us, and, most important, the continuous testing of hypotheses and theories. As already said, proper science must adhere to the principle of *falsifiability*.

Post-modern science calls into question conventional notions of truth and reality. It states that there is no objective truth. All scientific theories and hypotheses are simply narratives, often culturally determined, and one narrative is as good as another. Science is just another tall tale. It comes down to a rejection of objectivity and realism. Such post-modernist thinking has also invaded education. The idea is that students can find out by themselves the truths about scientific theories, by just using “common sense”, unencumbered by what scientific theories had been developed in the past. Whatever they come up with is just as valid as the “old” theories. Such an approach was of course common in “pre-science” times. To give an example, thousands of years ago the Egyptians observed that the sun went under in the west and came up again in the east. Common sense told them that at night the sun travelled through the underworld. A whole religion was built on that premise. Pharaohs, after death, also had to travel through the underworld, meeting all sorts of obstacles. To get safely through it, they needed all sorts of spells and assistance. How to go about it was recorded in the “Book of the Dead”.

In more recent times, before Copernicus, it was thought that the Earth was flat and the centre of the universe, and that the sun turned around the Earth. That’s what common sense told them.

D.F. Mercer (*The Scientific Review of Alternative Medicine, Vol 4(1): 29-32, 2000*) wrote an excellent article on the effects of post-modern ideas on medicine, how it blurred the distinction between “proper” medical science and alternative medicine. He writes that postmodern ideas “*renders medicine open to infiltration from unscientific, emotionally, and ideologically motivated individuals. Postmodern equates and allows for different forms of knowledge*”. The same could be said in relation to climate science.

Another related concept to “post-modern science” is “post-normal science” (Ticker, *Principia Scientific, 21 August 2013*). In relation to climate change, Ticker calls the IPCC dogma “*a perversion of the standard definition of science as commonly understood. It appears to be an elaborate and dishonest attempt to pass off the preferences of a single group as some kind of pseudo-science. It brazenly casts aside the need for any factual basis and declares in the most*

unambiguous terms that whatever values it chooses to promote constitutes a truth unimpeachable by reality and a set of values that none dare challenge”.

A consequence of “post-modern” scientific thinking is that one can change observations and data at will. Whatever the outcome, all results are equally valuable. This approach is often used by the promoters of the dogma of catastrophic man-made climate change. A good example is temperature records. I will mention two:

1. The temperature record for New Zealand from 1900 to 1975 (Figure 3).

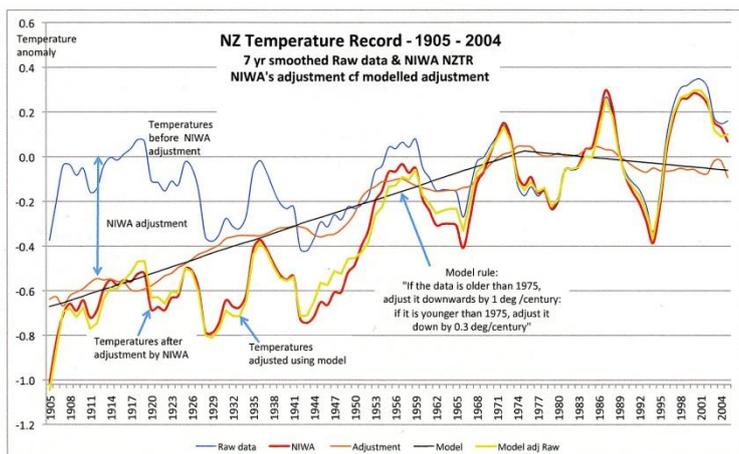


Figure 3– New Zealand temperature record 1905-2004. The blue line represents measured temperatures. The red line the temperatures as “corrected” by NIWA. *Source: Bryan Leyland, member of the New Zealand Climate Science Coalition.*

Temperatures are commonly “corrected”, also called “homogenized”. Such corrections are generally based on factors such as shifts of measuring stations, changes in measuring techniques, incomplete sequences, etc.

In the case of the NIWA (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, New Zealand) record this was done by “homogenizing” measurements from before about 1970 downwards. By “tweaking” the data, they created warming. Things have become even more confusing by the fact that the original data of these corrections have been lost. Moreover, their “homogenized” record indicate a warming of 1°C, which is surprising, because global temperatures are thought to have increased by only 0.7 °C.

2. The temperature record for Darwin (Northern Territory, Australia) (Figure 4).

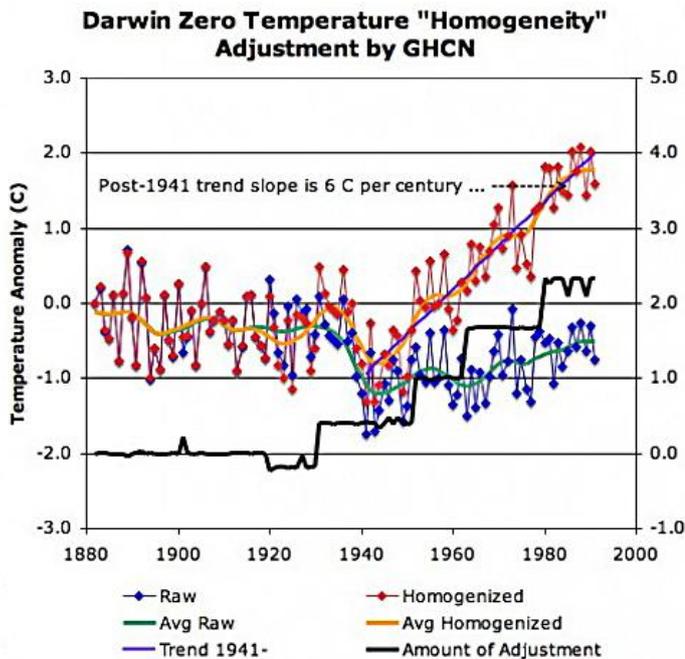


Figure 4 – Measured temperature and “homogenized” temperature graphs for Darwin, 1880 to 1990. GHCN = Global Historical Climatology Network. Source: Willis Eschenbach: *The smoking gun at Darwin Zero*. Watts Up With That, 8 December 2009

The blue graph represent the “raw” measurements, showing no warming, even some cooling since the beginning of the 20th century. The red graph represents the “homogenized” data, creating substantial warming of 6^oC per century (!), while globally the increase was not more than 0.7^oC per century. The black line represents the amount of “homogenization” (aka “tweaking”) applied to the raw data. Eschenbach (2009) gives an excellent detailed account of the homogenizations used for the Darwin record. It is a devastating analysis. For example, when necessary to adjust a temperature record (for instance, when there is a gap in the record), one can use the records of neighboring stations. Because there are not many stations in Australia, they used a “neighboring” station 500 km away (!). As Eschenbach comments: “*when these guys “adjust”, they don’t mess around*”. It is important to realize that the results of such “homogenizations” have been used in the IPCC reports.

In some cases such corrections may be justified. However, it seems peculiar, to say the least, that in most cases, the “homogenization” produced a warming trend, never a cooling one.

Two meteorologists, D’Aleo and Watts, made an in-depth study of this practice of homogenization, titled “Surface Temperature Records: Policy-driven Deception?” (*SPPI Original Paper, August 27, 2010, 209 pages*).

The following are a few quotes from their publication:

“Just as the Medieval Warm Period was an obstacle to those trying to suggest that today’s temperature is exceptional, and the UN and its supporters tried to abolish it with the “hockey-stick” graph, the warmer temperatures in the 1930s and 1940s were another inconvenient fact that needed to be “fixed”. In each of the databases, the land temperatures from that period were simply adjusted downward, making it look as though the rate of warming in the 20th century was higher than it was, and making it look as though today’s temperatures were unprecedented in at least 150 years.”

“And their homogenization process and other non-documented final adjustments result in an increase in apparent warming, often by cooling the early record as can be seen in several case studies that follow.”

They even made the following conclusion in their “Summary for Policy Makers” chapter:

Instrumental temperature data for the pre-satellite era (1850-1980) have been so widely, systematically, and uni-directionally tampered with that it cannot be credibly asserted there has been any significant “global warming” in the 20th century.

All this shows that such warming is truly “man-made” (or “man-created”) - by homogenization, not from human CO₂ emissions. Because it is based on data “tweaking”, it can be called “virtual warming”.

Physicist Lawrence Krauss, in one of his lectures (see YouTube: “Best of Lawrence Krauss amazing arguments and clever comebacks Part one”) gives the following characterization of science:

“The ethos of science – open questioning, no authorities, honesty, transparency, reliance on evidence, peer review, and testability – can make the world a better place by burying myth, superstition, and dogma.

Honesty and transparency: respect for rational and honest discussion, not respect for distortion and misrepresentation.”

He mentions peer review as important in the proper practice of science. However, as shown by the 2009 climategate scandal, in the field of climate science this principle has been severely corrupted. The leaked climategate emails from the Climate Research Institute (CRU) of the University of East Anglia show that the peer-reviewed system in relation to climate change publications has been controlled and subverted by a small coterie of ideology-driven scientists. In an email from professor Phil Jones of CRU to Mike Mann, dated July 8, 2004, and marked HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL, he wrote (a.o.) *“The other paper by M[cintyre][and]M[cKitrick] is just garbage – as you knew. De Freitas [is the editor] again. Pielke is also losing all credibility as well by replying to the mad Finn [Hamiranta?] as well – frequently as I see it. I can’t see either of these papers being in the next IPCC report. **Kevin and I will keep them out somehow – even if we have to redefine what the peer-review literature is!**”*

It is not only in climate science that basic scientific principles are dispensed with, a recent article in the medical journal *The Lancet* (vol. 385, April 11, 2015) made the same criticisms in relation to biomedical research:

The case against science is straightforward: much of the scientific literature, perhaps half, may simply be untrue. Afflicted by studies with small sample sizes, tiny effects, invalid exploratory analyses, and flagrant conflicts of interest, together with an obsession for pursuing fashionable trends of dubious importance, science has taken a turn towards darkness. As one participant put it, “poor methods get results”. The Academy of Medical Sciences, Medical Research Council, and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council have now put their reputational weight behind an investigation into these questionable research practices. The

apparent endemicity of bad research behaviour is alarming. In their quest for telling a compelling story, scientists too often **sculpt data to fit their preferred theory of the world**. Or they **retrofit hypotheses to fit their data**. Journal editors deserve their fair share of criticism too. We aid and abet the worst behaviours. Our acquiescence to the impact factor fuels an unhealthy competition to win a place in a select few journals. Our love of “significance” pollutes the literature with **many a statistical fairy-tale**. We reject important confirmations. **Journals are not the only miscreants. Universities are in a perpetual struggle for money and talent, endpoints that foster reductive metrics, such as high-impact publication**. National assessment procedures, such as the Research Excellence Framework, incentivise bad practices. And individual scientists, including their most senior leaders, do little to alter a research culture that occasionally veers close to misconduct .

The same is true for “activist” climate research. I have highlighted parts of sentences that pertains equally to IPCC-related climate science. There are many examples in these memoirs.

Quasi religion. Several observers noted similarities between religious dogmas and the man-made global warming beliefs. For instance, Nigel Lawson, the Chairman of the British *Global Warming Policy Forum*, wrote in the *Financial Post* of 18 June 2015 an article titled *The Church of Climatism*. In it he argues that green alarmism and global salvationism, of which the climate change dogma is a prime example, has filled the vacuum left by Christianity and Communism.

Taking this a step further, one could elaborate on those religious similarities.

A – REVELATIONS. Revelations of the man-made global warming quasi-religion come from modelling on super computers. The outcomes of these models are taken as revelations, as infallible truths. They can therefore not be subjected to criticisms.

B – INFALLIBILITY – The Summaries for Policy Makers of the IPCC reports are taken by most media and politicians as absolute truth. No critique or debate is allowed. They are considered as infallible, as “Holy Writ”.

C – CATECHISM. A Catechism has been developed from the super computer revelations. This catechism contains several articles of faith.

In 2002, Professor Chris de Freitas of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, wrote an article critically analysing the various beliefs of the man-made global warming dogma as espoused by the IPCC and others (*Bulletin of Canadian Petroleum Geology*, vol. 50, nr 2, p. 297-327). He divided his article in chapters headed by what he called “fallacies”. These can also be called “articles of faith”. They are: 1 - Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is increasing at alarming rates; 2 - Humans are big players in the global carbon cycle; 3 - There is a close relationship between changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide and global temperature; 4 - Global temperature has increased over the past two decades; 5 - Satellite data support IPCC claims on observed and projected global warming; 6 - Global climate trends during the past century are very unlike those of the past; 7 – There are reliable forecasts of future climate; 8 – Significant anthropogenic global warming is underway; 9 – Global warming will produce a rise in sea level; 10 – Global warming will result in more extreme weather events; 11 – IPCC’s predictions are reasonable; 12 – Observed temperature trends are those predicted by climate models; 13 – There is a consensus that greenhouse-induced climate change is a major threat; 14 – The threat of

human-caused climate change justifies taking the action proposed in the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol.

Although de Freitas's paper was published thirteen years ago, all these fallacies ("articles of faith") are still pertinent today.

D – SCRIPTURE. Scripture is represented by the reports of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), especially their "Summaries for Policy Makers".

E – COUNCILS (*Concilia*). Councils are held each year, in the form of climate conferences (COPs), organised by the UNFCCC.

F – HIGH PRIESTS. The man-made global warming quasi-religion has many "high priests", such as Al Gore, Rajendra Pachauri (since defrocked because of sexual misconduct), professor Phil Jones (of climategate fame), professor Michael Mann (of Hockeystick fame), professor James Hansen (famous for his predictions of an 8 metres sea-level rise by the end of this century), as well as many secondary-level priests. Many cartoonists have depicted Al Gore as priest or saint.

G – INDULGENCES. A system of "indulgences" has been developed, called "carbon credits". One can emit as much carbon dioxide as one wishes, provided one has bought enough carbon credits to cover those emission. One can even buy indulgences for air travel. As emitting carbon dioxide is considered a sin, the similarities with the monk Johann Tetzel, who in the sixteenth century sold indulgences for sins, even for sins not yet committed, are obvious.

H – EXCOMMUNICATION. Anyone who dares to criticise or doubt the dogma (i.c. the "Articles of Faith") runs the risk of being excommunicated. Such excommunications can take different forms. Some examples are: loss of funding, loss of employment, being refused publication of scientific articles (see Climategate), being abused in websites or blogs (good examples are the DeSmogBlog, which excels in *ad hominum* attacks (just see their hatchet job in discrediting the well-respected astrophysicist, Dr Willie Soon), and HotTopic, which keeps calling climatesceptics "Crank").

I – PUNISHMENT. Related to excommunication is the concept of punishment for sins committed. During the Middle Ages in Europe, when Roman Catholicism was the only accepted religion, unbelief and blasphemy were punishable by death. The maintenance of the "true religion" was in the hands of the Inquisition. Under Islam, being an infidel or being an apostate is still punishable by death. Criticism and unbelief in the man-made global warming dogma is not yet punishable. However, several true believers have demanded that non-believers be prosecuted and thrown in jail. For instance, David Roberts of Grist magazine wrote on September 19, 2006: *"When we've finally gotten serious about global warming, when the impacts are really hitting us and we're in a worldwide scramble to minimize the damage, we should have war crimes trials for these bastards (the "bastards" being the climate sceptics) – some sort of climate Nuremberg"*. Recently, Climate high priest Al Gore told an audience in Austin, Texas that *"we need to punish climate-change deniers"*. Environmental activist Robert F. Kennedy Jr said during the recent New York City's People's Climate March (21 September 2014) that *"there should be a law that lets authorities punish sceptics and deniers – those who engage in "selling out the public trust ... These guys are doing the Koch Brothers bidding and are against all evidence of the rational mind, saying global warming does not exist. They are*

contemptible human beings ... I think it's treason". An Australian columnist proposed that climate change denial should be outlawed. She wrote: "David Irving is under arrest in Austria for Holocaust denial. Perhaps there is a case for making climate change denial an offence. It is a crime against humanity, after all". In 2012, Richard Parncutt, professor of systematic musicology at the University of Graz, Austria, suggested that man-made global warming deniers should be sentenced to death. He posted his opinion on his university website. He wrote: "I have always been opposed to the death penalty in all cases. Even mass murderers (like Breivik) should not be executed, in my opinion. GW (global warming) deniers fall into a completely different category from Behring Breivik. They are already causing the deaths of hundreds of million future people. We could be speaking of billions, but I am making a conservative estimate. If a jury of suitably qualified scientists estimated that a given GW denier had already, with high probability (say 95%), caused the deaths of over one million people, then s/he would be sentenced to death".

J – REPENT. Like in the Middle Ages, according to professor Parncutt, climate sinners could repent. He writes: *"The sentence would then be commuted to life imprisonment if the accused admitted their mistake, demonstrated genuine regret, AND participated significantly and positively over a long period in programs to reduce the effects of GW (from jail)".* Further on he writes: *"some GW deniers would never admit their mistake and as a result they would be executed".*

If a musicology professor can be indoctrinated so profoundly by the man-made global warming propaganda, what does that mean for the indoctrination of the general public?

Some real (God-based) religions have joined the man-made global warming quasi-religion, lured by the belief that they can help to save the planet for their children en grand-children.

The situation with the Roman Catholic Church is worrisome. Catholics have started a "Global Catholic Climate Movement", which purpose is *"to care for God's creation, for the poor (who are the most vulnerable to extreme weather events) [they refer to typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines], and for our children (who will face the worst impacts)".* They have sent a statement to Pope Francis. Other organisations, like 350.org, are urging the Pope to take action on climate and to divest from fossil fuels.

The Pope has listened to these environmental activists and released on 18 June 2015 an Encyclical, titled *"Laudato Si"* (be praised). It was launched by Cardinal Peter Turkson and German Professor Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, a well-known radical climate alarmist. Schellnhuber had advised the Pope on climate change matters. It was therefore not surprising that the Encyclical did not mention any contrary scientific opinions. It was made clear that one of the aims of the Encyclical was to put pressure on the upcoming UN climate change conference (COP21) in Paris later this year (2015). Although climate change forms only a small part of the Encyclical, the world media seem to have focussed almost exclusively on that part. The Christchurch *The Press* reported on the Encyclical under a large headline "Pope urges action on climate change" (20 June, 2015).

Professor Schellnhuber is a member of the *Club of Rome*, the organisation that produced a report in 1972, titled *The Limits to Growth*, predicting that the world would run out of oil before 1992. They are the new Malthusians.

Schellnhuber is also chairman of the German *Advisory Council on Global Environmental Change*. They admit frankly that decarbonisation can only be achieved by the limitation of democracy. They want a total change of the present economic world order. They wrote: “*The transformation to a climate friendly economy is morally as necessary as the abolition of slavery and the outlawing of child labor*”. Schellnhuber also stated that the carrying capacity of our planet is less than one billion people. That can only be achieved by radical birth control. One wonders what the Pope thinks of that. Does he realise that he may be cherishing an adder to his bosom? These activists can be characterised as *neo-Marxists*.

The Encyclical has already provoked many critical comments. This is not surprising as one reads the climate change chapter. It states, among others, that “*A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climate system*”. No mention of the fact that warming has stopped 18 years ago.

A Dutch economist wrote a witty critical analysis of the Encyclical under the heading *Laudato Si – Laudato No*. Australian John McLean wrote a critical article in the online newspaper *Quadrant* (17 June, 2015). In it he mentions that the Pope should have heeded Biblical warnings against false prophets. For instance, Matthew 24: 11 states “*Many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many*”. Others have pointed to parallels with the Galileo affair. Historically the Catholic Church has positioned itself several times against science. Galileo was the most famous case. It took the Church over 300 years to admit that it was wrong. It also resisted Darwin’s theory of evolution for a long time. It is now again pontificating on controversial scientific matters. It will come to rue this.

Not to be outdone by the Vatican, the Anglican Church (Church of England) in the UK, during their General Synod in July 2015, declared that fighting climate change was a holy duty. They called for a new generation of vicars to be trained in “*Ecotheology*”, and to promote “*Eco-justice*”. Churchgoers were to be encouraged to skip lunch on the first day of every month as a “*fast against climate change*”. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, said that Church of England faithful must set an example to others, and that people could help save the planet by downloading fewer photographs from their mobile phones and attaching solar panels to vicarage roofs. He also suggested that the Synod could make a gesture of using less paper and by cutting back on their travel. It can’t get more absurd.

Earlier, the Anglican Church in Britain had divested itself of some of their investments in fossil fuel companies. But they are, after all, not stupid. They have restricted their divestments to thermal coal and Canadian oil sands, probably as not to have to sell too many shares.

The man-made global warming belief can be typified as a “*mania*”. There have been several mania in history, like the Tulipomania in Holland in the 17th century. Tulip bulbs became very desirable. A single bulb could be worth more than ten times the annual income of a skilled craftsman. People even put up their houses as collateral. When the bubble finally burst, many people went bankrupt and lost their houses. In 1999, the British journalist Charles MacKay wrote a book about it, titled “*Extraordinary popular delusions and the madness of crowds*”, in which he also mentions the Tulipomania. A big difference between the two is that Tulipomania only affected a small country, bankrupting many of its burghers, and that its government finally put a stop to it. The man-made global warming hysteria, however, is affecting the entire world and is strongly promoted by almost all governments. This has never happened before.

It is expected that the climate mania will reach its peak during the upcoming UNFCCC climate conference in Paris, from 30 November to 11 December 2015 (COP21). Its main aim is to reach a binding legal international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Expectations are

high, like it was for the COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009. That became a fiasco. I will watch the Paris proceeding with baited breath. I do not expect a substantial binding agreement, but no doubt a compromise will be reached to enable many more international meetings.

While writing this essay I realised that the topics of debate have not changed much during the 15 years of my involvement in the climate debate. I wondered why. The only reason I could think of was that climate science, as practised by the IPCC crowd, has not progressed much at all. This is the result of the brief of the IPCC to study the effects of human greenhouse gases on the climate, especially CO₂. Other aspects of climate change, such as the effects of the sun, cosmic rays, volcanism (especially submarine), oceanic oscillations (Pacific Decadal Oscillation, Atlantic Multi-Decadal Oscillation), speleothems, stomata, etc. were largely ignored.

In 1990 we attended a performance of Richard Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* during the Wellington International Festival of the Arts. Looking back at my fifteen years of involvement in the climate debate, a song from that opera keeps popping up in my memory. It is the song the main character in the opera, Hans Sachs, sings: "Wahn! Wahn! Überall!, Wahn!" (Madness! Madness! Everywhere!, Madness!).

I have tried to combat this global "Madness" since 2000, without much success. The mania is too deeply engrained to stop any time soon. The only hope for an end to this collective madness will be when the planet continues to cool, as predicted in many "peer-reviewed" scientific articles.

When earlier discussing the science philosophy of Karl Popper and his "falsifiability" principle, I mentioned his "white swan – black swan" example. As climate realists (sceptics) have falsified the catastrophic man-made global warming dogma time and time again, we can now call them the "black swans of climate science".

Nelson, New Zealand, September 2015