

Editorial

The Earth Is Cooling, Not Warming

Even as the U.S. Senate and the G8 nations meeting in Italy continue their endless jabbering about greenhouse gases, nature is not cooperating.

The global climate has entered a phase of cooling and reduced solar activity, which some experts believe could bring on serious crop failures and food shortages. The reality is that the continued low activity of the Sun foreshadows an extended period of cooling, perhaps enough to bring on another Little Ice Age.

The global average temperature for the Earth has been decreasing over the past 8-10 years. The cooling that was shown by the satellite temperature data for May 2008 negated the entire globally averaged temperature increase of 0.6°C for the past 150 years, as hyped by Al Gore & Co.

One of the ways of gauging the likely future behavior of the Sun, is by looking at the length of the solar cycles. The Sun normally goes through an 11-year cycle of increase and decrease in activity, as exhibited by such phenomena as the appearance of visible spots on its surface. Records of these sunspots go back four centuries, to the advent of telescopes.

The current solar cycle, #23, is now 13 years long, and solar cycle 24 has yet to start up in earnest. The last solar cycle more than 13 years long was #3, which preceded the Dalton Minimum, a cold period, from 1796 to 1824, during what is called the Little Ice Age. This was caused by low solar activity during solar cycles 4 and 5. During the Dalton Minimum, there were large crop failures and food shortages.

The recent inactivity of the Sun is consistent with forecasts made by Russia's Pulkovo Observatory in St. Petersburg, over the past two years. On Jan. 22, 2008, Khabibullo Abdusamatov, head of the Observatory's Space Research Lab, told

RIA Novosti, "Temperatures on Earth have stabilized in the past decade, and the planet should brace itself for a new Ice Age, rather than global warming."

Abdusamatov warned that global temperatures would drop slightly in 2008, rather than rise, due to unprecedentedly low solar radiation over the past 30 years, and would continue decreasing, even if industrial emissions of carbon dioxide were to reach record levels. According to Abdusamatov, "By 2041, solar activity will reach its minimum, according to a 200-year cycle, and a deep cooling period will hit the Earth approximately in 2055-60. It will last for about 45-65 years, and by mid-21st Century, the planet will face another Little Ice Age."

Apart from these shorter-term solar cycles, the long-term cycles of the Earth's orbital relationship to the Sun, position us for the onset of new glaciation. In the past several million years of the Pleistocene Era, the Northern Hemisphere has experienced periods of glacial advance lasting 100,000 years on average, punctuated by short-term interglacials, averaging about 11,000 years. In the last glaciation, which ended about 12,000 years ago, a mass of ice, between 1 and 2 miles thick, covered North America, and northern and eastern Europe. The parameters of precession of the equinoxes, ellipticity of the Earth's orbit, and obliquity create the possibility for the onset of another such glaciation. A downturn in the solar cycles could be the trigger that starts such an event.

It is folly for policymakers to be talking about global warming and not about the very real prospect of 20 to 30 years of global cooling, that would cause major food shortages, and add more challenges in the face of the onrushing global economic breakdown crisis.