Conference Report

The Kyoto Protocol Is In Shambles

by Prof. Kirill Kondratyev

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This article appeared in the Polish-language weekly Polityka, *Nov. 22, 2003, and is adapted and reprinted here with permission.*

Two years ago, the G-8 Group of governments decided to organize a World Climate Change Conference, to discuss climate changes and the possibility that these changes are caused by human beings. The conference was held in Moscow from Sept. 29 through Oct. 3, 2003, and was attended by more than 2,000 participants from 100 countries, including scientists and representatives of governments, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

The official goal of the Conference was a "discussion of the natural and anthropogenic factors driving the climate; approaches to reducing anthropogenic emissions; impacts and adaptation measures to ongoing climate changes; and hence, to achieve a maximum mutual understanding among scientists, governments, business circles and the public."

It is interesting that before the conference it drew rather eager interest among the media and numerous environmental organizations, but not at its end, when the final conclusions were announced. This was perhaps because the expected unanimous support for and understanding of the Kyoto Protocol were not achieved. Even the basic questions posed by the chairman of the organizing committee, Prof. Yuri Izrael, were not answered: "What is really going on this planet—warming or cooling?" and "Will ratifying of the Kyoto Protocol improve the climate, stabilize it, or make it worse?"

It also became clear that without ratification by Russia, the Kyoto Protocol will crumble.

Climate has always been changing, ever since the Earth was formed; it is changing now, and will be changing in the future. The alternating warm and cold climatic cycles extend from tens, to many thousands, and even millions of years, and depend on variations in the radiative and magnetic activity of the Sun, the position of Earth in its orbit, and the migration of the Solar System across the arms of our galaxy.

Since the formation of the oxygen atmosphere hundreds of millions of years ago, the changes in its chemical composition have had rather minor influence on climate. Water is a dominant component of the atmosphere, responsible for about 98% of the "greenhouse effect." There were periods in the past when concentrations of carbon dioxide, a trace "greenhouse gas" (which is not a pollutant, but a gas of life, building all living organisms) were about 10-20 times higher than now. No catastrophic "runaway" greenhouse effect occurred on the Earth then, and glaciers were covering parts of continents and islands.

As stated at the Climate Conference by Andrei Illarionov, the chief economic advisor of Russia's President, "According to scientific data, in the past 400,000 years, a dramatic rise of temperature on Earth occurred every 100,000 years, and this was not in the least linked with man's activity. In the past millennium, considerable changes of temperature were observed, also in the 11th, 14th, and 17th centuries."

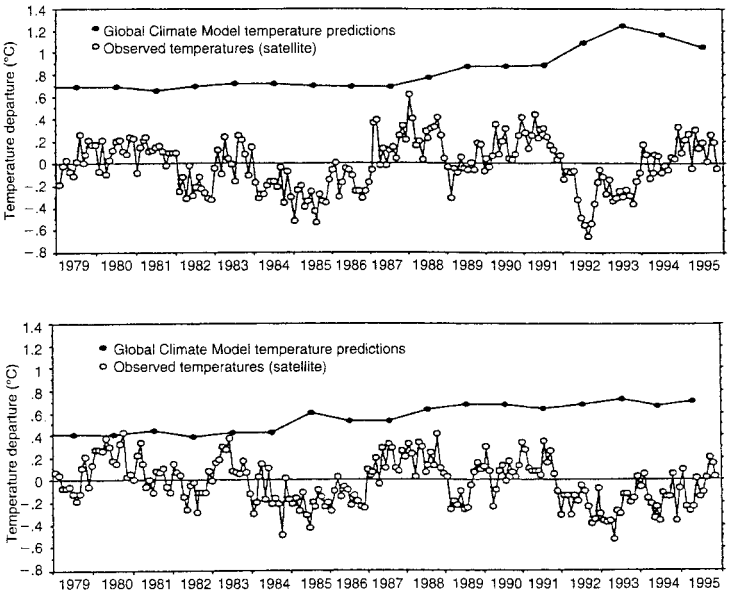
In the 11th Century, the air temperature around the North Atlantic Ocean, in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia, and Antarctica, was about 1.5° Celsius warmer than now. Still earlier, for a long time, between 3,500 to 6,000 years ago, the period of the "Holocene Warming" enjoyed temperatures about 2°C higher than now.

Illarionov raised ten important questions shattering the shaky edifice of the man-made global warming hypothesis. His litany was followed by presentations by numerous Russian and foreign critics of this hypothesis. They did not receive satisfying answers from the global warming proponents.

If there is nothing unusual in the current climate changes, why is such enormous attention being paid to climate problems in scientific literature, mass media, and public opinion? Why are such great resources, and the very future of our civilization put in jeopardy? The answer to this question is not at all simple. In addition to science, it involves politics, business, industry, a lot of misanthropic ideology, enormous money, and special interest groups.

Putin's Surprise

The conference was opened by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, who stated that "Even 100% compliance with the Kyoto Protocol won't reverse climate change." In response to those calling for quick ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, Putin mentioned, half jokingly: "They often say, either as a joke or seriously, that Russia is a northern country and if temperature gets warmer by 2 or 3° Celsius, it's not such a bad thing. We could spend less on warm coats, and agricultural experts say grain harvests would increase further."



Source: Patrick J. Michaels, testimony Nov. 16, 1995, before the House Committee on Science Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

Dr. Kondratieff shows that "global warming" is less than past natural temperature fluctuations in man's post-Ice Age history, and the climate models being used to predict it are intrinsically useless; here, these predictions are compared to actual results for the Northern (top) and Southern Hemispheres. The Kyoto Treaty can't go into effect without Russian ratification, and that looks less likely after comments by President Putin and Economic Advisor Andrei Illarionov (inset) at the Moscow conference.

The President of Russia also said that Moscow would "be reluctant to make decisions simply based on financial considerations. Our first concern should be the lofty idea and goals we set ourselves and not short-term economic benefits. . . . The government is thoroughly considering and studying this issue, studying the entire complex of difficult problems linked with it. The decision will be made after this work has been completed. And, of course, it will take into account the national interests of the Russian Federation."

U.S. President George Bush rejected the Kyoto Protocol in March 2001, as "fatally flawed," because: 1) the Protocol does not have an adequate scientific substantiation, and 2) because the use of fossil fuels dominates energy production, so that following the Protocol would result in serious negative economic consequences, without any real environmental improvement. (Estimates are that it would decrease the expected temperature increase by 0.2°C in the year 2100, a postponement of the expected increase by six years.)

What President Putin will finally decide is still unknown, but from what he said at the Moscow conference, it seems that he is thinking along the same lines as the American President, and that probably he will not succumb either to the short-term, seemingly lucrative proposal of selling surplus Russian carbon dioxide emission quotas for about $8 billion per year,* or to the saber-rattling during the conference by European Union Environmental Commissioner Margot Wallström, who warned Russia that it "would lose politically and economically by not ratifying the Kyoto Protocol."

The decision-makers must recognize that limiting CO_2 emissions will cause a reduction of the world domestic product, which, added up across the whole [coming] century, represents $1,800 trillion. In Eastern Europe and Russia, by the year 2050, this reduction would reach 3-3.5%, and certainly would bring a dramatic rise of joblessness. Andrei Illarionov warned: "The Kyoto Protocol will stymie economic growth. It will doom Russia to poverty, weakness and backwardness."

Illarionov's words echoed the statement in 1998 by the great British astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle, that implementing restrictions in CO_2 emissions would be "ruining the world's industries and returning us all to the Dark Ages." It is my opinion, that the only people who would be affected by the abandonment of the Kyoto Protocol would be those several thousand people who make a living attending conferences on global warming in attractive places.

Climate Change Myths vs. Truth

The most important problems concerning the climate change myths include the following:

1. The observational data do not confirm the presence of unusual uniform "global warming," caused by the human contribution to the CO_2 content in the atmosphere. (This is especially true for the surface temperature in rural regions, which are not influenced by the so-called urban "heat islands" effect, and in the American, Canadian, Russian, Norwegian, and Danish Arctic, the satellite remote-sensing results, and

**Editor's Note:* Countries that produce fewer greenhouse gases than they did in 1990, can sell the difference as emissions "credits" to countries that are now overproducing. Because Russian greenhouse emissions have decreased by 32% since 1990—a direct result of the collapse of the Russian economy as it was looted—if it signs the Protocol, Russia could make a bundle in the new international emissions market.

Protocol Bound To Fail

The Kyoto Protocol was proposed in December 1997, at the fourth world meeting on climate change organized by the United Nations after the famous Rio de Janeiro "Earth Summit" environmental conference in 1992. The Protocol was ratified by 119 countries, but not by the United States, Australia, China, and Russia.

The Protocol is focussed, contrary to scientific substantiation, on the anthropogenic origin of the current climate warming and, recommends that the industrially developed countries reduce by 2008-12 the emission of greenhouse gases (mainly CO_2) to 5% below the 1990 emission levels.

All this was concluded despite the well-known fact that such reductions will have a trifling effect on climate change, but will cause a disastrous decline of the global economy, the loss of jobs, and mass pauperization. Until now there is has been absence of any noticeable progress in the reduction of CO_2 emissions. Global carbon dioxide emissions continue and will continue growing, not only in the developing world, but also in industrially developed countries, including the United States, Russia, and China.

The position of the developing states is naturally based on their striving for the increase of the standard of living as the first priority; thus, they are not prepared to curtail their industry for the sake of carbon dioxide emission reduction. However, this is the requirement proposed by the rich countries as a condition for their participation in a treaty limiting CO_2 emissions.

According to the Kyoto Protocol, if a country exceeds its emission limit, it could be *forced* to cut industrial production. However, to be implemented, the Protocol must be ratified by no fewer than 55 countries that account for at least 55% of the global emissions in 1990. That minimum can be reached only with the inclusion of Russia in the Protocol. The United States, China, and Australia, which did not sign the Protocol, account for nearly 70% of global emissions, so the Kyoto Protocol will fail anyway.

balloon measurements.)

2. The increase of the atmospheric greenhouse effect assumed for the supposed doubling of the CO_2 concentration in the atmosphere, is about 4 watts per square meter. But the uncertainties caused by the unreliable accounting for the effects of atmospheric aerosols, clouds, and numerous other factors, reach several tens, or more than a hundred watts per square meter.

3. The results of numerical climate models that substantiate the "greenhouse global warming" hypothesis, are nothing else but mathematically expressed opinions of their creators on how the climate works.

4. Recommendations concerning levels of reduction of emission of greenhouse gases are senseless; from the standpoint of their impact on climate change, they would be utterly ineffectual.

At the Moscow conference, the views from the "Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change" (IPCC), an official United Nations body strongly supporting the "man-made global warming hypothesis," were presented by Prof. B. Bolin (Sweden), the former chairman of the IPCC. He also discussed the questions posed by Andrei Illarionov.

To illustrate the nature of disagreement in assessing climate change, I will give just one example: According to the Third Assessment Report, there is a good agreement between observed long-term variations of global surface air temperature and those calculated with computer models. Calculations accounted for the "greenhouse warming" caused by increasing CO_2 concentration, and for the cooling caused by aerosols (tiny particles). The Third Assessment Report calculated the cooling for sulfate aerosols, but neglected the other ones.

I pointed out at the conference that if the Third Assessment Report would take into account also other types of aerosols, many of which lead to warming, there would be a clear disagreement between the modelling results and the temperature observations. The agreement claimed by the Third Assessment Report is just a result of unidirectional adjustment, through arbitrary selection of the input parameters used in the computer calculations. Therefore, the main conclusion of the Report is wrong.

The Moscow conference demonstrated that the often repeated IPCC statement that there is "a consensus" among the scientists as to the man-made global warming hypothesis, is also wrong. The obsessive concentration on "greenhouse gases," as an allegedly dominant factor among the multitude of other powerful climatic phenomena, is a false track, and not only compromises science but also may hamper the socio-economic progress of the developing and industrially developed countries. That numerous scientists expressed such views, and the realistic approach to the problem presented by the Russian government, is why the recent discussions at the World Climate Change Conference in Moscow were so important.

The principal conclusion to be made is that we badly need further studies and more discussions.