

Posted by Joan Russow

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THERE IS NO NEW NORMAL; JUST UNHEEDED WARNINGS, LOST OPPORTUNITY AND OPPORTUNISTIC ADAPTING

A Glimpse through time

By Joan Russow

Global Compliance Research Project



Classifying or even postulating the consequences of climate change as the “new normal” has exonerated those who are responsible; the National governments for failing to act, the fossil fuel industry for years of countering climate change, and for other industries foreseeing benefits from disasters.

A Glimpse through time

1.

THE NEW NORMAL

Examples

**In every continent the expression “new normal” has been used to describe the consequences of climate change
Some examples:**

Is Cape towns drought the new normal

<https://allafrica.com/stories/201711010476.html>

Rainfall extremes to become the Nile’s new normal

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2017/05/02/rainfall-extremes-become-niles-new-normal/>

**Extreme weather will be the ‘new’ normal,
warns Meteorological Department chief**

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2018/dec/30/extreme-weather-will-be-the-new-normal-warns--met-dept-chief-1918246.html>

Quirky Winds Fuel Brazil's Devastating Drought, Amazon's Flooding

....the boom-and-bust phenomenon may be **South America's new normal**

<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/02/150226-drought-floods-south-america-brazil-bolivia-flying-rivers-environment/>

[Japan floods a warning for a changed climate | The Interpreter mean disasters such as that in Japan will become the new normal .](#)

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/japan-floods-warning-changed-climate>

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Australia's Burning, Flooding, Disastrous New Normal

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/14/opinion/australia-floods-fires-climate.html>

Are fires and floods the new normal for British Columbia?

<https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/are-fires-and-floods-the-new-normal-for-b-c>

Why California's recent wildfires are the 'new normal'

<https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/californias-recent-wildfires-normal/story?id=59598310>

Are devastating wild fires a new normal?; it's actually worse than that climate scientist says

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/are-devastating-wildfires-a-new-normal-its-actually-worse-than-that-climate-scientist-says/>

2.

UNHEEDED WARNINGS

In 1988, at the Changing Atmosphere Conference in Toronto, the participants including representatives from government, academia, NGOs and industry expressed their concern about Climate Change in the Conference statement:

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Humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment whose ultimate consequence could be second only to a global nuclear war. the Earth's atmosphere is being changed at an unprecedented rate by pollutants resulting from human activities, inefficient and wasteful fossil fuel use ... These changes represent a major threat to international security and are already having harmful consequences over many parts of the globe.... it is imperative to act now.

In 2007, economist Sir Nicolas Stern stated: "The costs of inaction are far greater than the costs of action,"

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/a-climate-change-message-dressed-in-green-pinstripes/article1070805/>

Next year, at Globe 2008 (Vancouver), in a room full of corporations, scientists and governments, Sir Nicolas Stern received a standing ovation when he warned the audience of the economic consequences of climate change.

In 2009. At COP15. the emerging science was ignored and the governments were relying on an outdated IPCC report. I remember at an IPCC Press Conference, a scientist from the IPCC stated: "at 2 degree rise in temperature, the poor, the vulnerable and the disenfranchised would not survive, at 1.5 degree, they might". The developed countries ignored the pleas of the developing ones whose leaders called for the temperature to not rise above 1.5 degrees and some, such as Bolivia, to not rise above 1 degree. Yet, in the Copenhagen Accord, states, excluding many developing states, agreed to a 2-degree rise in temperature. The developing states, such as Tuvalu decried, that they would not sell out their citizens for 30 pieces of silver, and the leader of the African Group declared that, at 2-degree, global rise, there would be a holocaust in Africa.

In 2010, at COP16 I challenged the Nobel Laureate Dr Mario Molina for claiming, in his opening address, That at COP15 all states agreed to 2-degree rise, he responded the US would not agree to anything less than a 2-degree rise",

and I responded, “Is that what science has become, what the US will agree to” A delegate from Bangladesh decried, “for the developed states it would require a life style change but for us it is survival itself”.

In 2012, at GLOBE (Vancouver) a plenary arm-chair discussion with four CEOs from the fossil fuel industry took place. During the question period, they were asked what they thought caused climate change; they all answered that ‘the cause was still up in the air; I was next in line to ask a question. I exclaimed I could not believe that by now they had not agreed that the cause was anthropogenic, and that they had refused to admit their culpability.

3.

OPPORTUNITY LOST: A GLOBAL VISION

In 2015 at COP 21, Ban Ki Moon, in Paris, urged states to negotiate with a global vision not with national vested interests (COP21 press conference)

A global vision would have been

i. to address article 2 of the UNFCCC, the objective of the legally binding UNFCCC;

stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system

ii. to collectively commit to a baseline, percentage and target that would contribute to arise in temperature way below 1.5 degrees

iii. to immediately end all subsidies for fossil fuel,

iv. to calculate the carbon budget for all states

v. to divest in fossil fuels and to reinvest in renewable energy, to conserve sinks -such as old growth forests and bogs,

vi. to strengthen conservation of biodiversity,

vii. to avoid all false solutions such as nuclear, geo-engineering and biofuels which would all violate principles within the UNFCCC,

viii. to compensate for historical emissions,

ix. to institute a fair and just transition for workers affected negatively by the new vision.

x. to promote nature-based solutions and socially equitable and environmentally sound such as solar, wind, tidal, wave and geothermal

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http://pejnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10462:cop21a-lack-of-global-vision-but-not-stemic-constraints-&catid=86:i-earth-news&Itemid=210

At COP 15, in the state negotiating conference room, the fossil fuel states aided by the fossil fuels industries were negotiating with a vested interest national interest,

not a global vision, while, at a press conference, in another room, the World Bank was offering funds to the president of a low-lying state to adapt and be resilient.

4.

OPPORTUNISTIC ADAPTING AND DISASTER RELIEF

**Adapting to the New normal written by Maya Fischkoff
from the Network for Business Sustainability (NBS)**

nbs.net/p/adapting-to-a-new-normal-275999b1-5663-4724-b980-

Network for Business Sustainability

To successfully adapt to climate change, for example, you might want to work with government officials to shape policy **that provides adaptation incentives**, and with activists pressuring your company for a specific response. NBS provides guidance on how to collaborate with different partners:

[government](#)

,
[NGOs](#)

, and even

[competitors](#)

.

Climate change could cost Canada roughly \$5 billion per year by 2020, rising to between \$21-\$41 billion per year by mid century (Figure 1). Adaptation is one key way to drive down the costs. While adaptation and mitigation are related – both strategies may have co-benefits – in practice, firms allocate far more attention to adaptation than mitigation.

Companies have a role in climate change adaptation.

Adaptation involves adjusting to actual or expected climate change effects. This includes managing risk and exploiting opportunities.

5.

2018 RECENT URGENT WARNINGS; A GLOBAL EMERGENCY

a. The 2018 report of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

The report shows that the global average temperature for the first ten months of the year was nearly 1 °C above the pre-industrial baseline (1850-1900). This is based on five independently maintained global temperature data sets.

“We are not on track to meet climate change targets and rein in temperature increases,” said

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WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas. "Greenhouse gas concentrations are once again at record levels and if the current trend continues, we may see temperature increases 3-5°C by the end of the century. If we exploit all known fossil fuel resources, the temperature rise will be considerably higher," he said.

"It is worth repeating once again that we are the first generation to fully understand climate change and the last generation to be able to do something about it," said Mr. Taalas

<https://public.wmo.int/en/our-mandate/climate/wmo-statement-state-of-global-climate>

b IPCC REPORT a life-or-death situation without a doubt

In the 728-page document, the U.N. organization detailed how Earth's weather, health and ecosystems would be in better shape if the world's leaders could somehow limit future human-caused warming to just 0.9 degrees Fahrenheit (a half degree Celsius) from now, instead of the globally agreed-upon goal of 1.8 degrees F (1-degree C). Among other things:

-

Half as many people would suffer from lack of water.

-

There would be fewer deaths and illnesses from heat, smog and infectious diseases.

-

Seas would rise nearly 4 inches (0.1 meters) less.

-

Half as many animals with back bones and plants would lose the majority of their habitats.

-

There would be substantially fewer heat waves, downpours and droughts.

-

The West Antarctic ice sheet might not kick into irreversible melting.

-

And it just may be enough to save most of the world's [coral reefs](#) from dying.

"For some people this is a life-or-death situation without a doubt," said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, a lead author on the report.

Read more at: https://phys.org/news/2018-10-global-life-or-death_1.html#jp

IPCC concluded that reduction of carbon emissions below 1.5° C pre-industrial levels would require 'rapid and far-reaching transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport and cities'.

c. The governments even ignore the recent warning by the famous economist Nicolas Stern who has said

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Economic-Reasons-to-Act-on-Climate-Change)

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/The-Economic-Reasons-to-Act-on-Climate-Change.pdf>

At all these COPs, when the question arose, at press conferences, about where will we get the money to mitigate climate change, I always took the opportunity to propose that states reallocate the over trillion dollar military budget [Now, probably over 1.8 trillion].

d. The most powerful speech at COP24 by Swedish girl Greta Thunberg

A Global Emergency

<https://www.lifegate.com/people/news/greta-thunberg-speech-cop24> .

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg>

Pull the emergency break

The scientists have spoken, economists have spoken, developing countries have spoken and the children around the world have spoken for present and future generations and for the ecosystem and rallied across the world. Will the fossil fuel states and corporations finally listen and act responsibly, or will they continue to be negligent and delude the world into thinking that this is the new normal and we must all just adapt and pay for disaster .