

Northampton
8 March 2008

Professor Sir Brian Hoskins,
Department of Meteorology,
University of Reading
Reading, RG6 6BB
By Email

Dear Sir Brian,

I am hoping that you will help me with a number of questions about your role as a Review Editor of Chapter 3 of IPCC, 2007 WGI. I have concerns over both the claim that the science of anthropogenic climate change is “settled” and that the IPCC is the most authoritative assessment of it. My reading of the subject has led me to believe that significant controversies remain over the conclusions to be drawn from the science that are not adequately reflected in the text of the WGI assessment reports as is clearly required by the internationally agreed Principles Governing IPCC Work. These say that it is the function of Review Editors to “*ensure that all substantive expert and government review comments are afforded appropriate consideration, advise lead authors on how to handle contentious/controversial issues and ensure genuine controversies are reflected adequately in the text of the Report.*” The reports of you and your colleagues are, so far as I can tell, the only “quality control measure” in what is globally the most important assessment of our state-of-knowledge on any subject.

Following FoI requests here and in the USA, the release, of Expert Reviewers’ Comments and Authors Responses for WGI in June 2007 confirmed that there were many genuinely controversial issues raised that were dismissed in some cases with little detailed rebuttal. At the time WGI TSU claimed not to have the Review Editors’ reports. Subsequently WGI TSU have released a number of the reports including yours but appear still not to have one from every WGI Review Editor. Can you confirm to me that your report which I have attached was correctly dated 7/12/07? Is this your complete report? To whom was it sent? Did you provide any separate report to any department of HMG or anyone else? Do you have any other working papers emails etc. that might shed further light on the assessment of Chapter 3?

I am asking because, with the greatest respect, I find the brevity of your report, which is word for word identical to the all but one of the other WGI reports so far released, astonishing. In particular I note that you confirm accordance with IPCC **procedures** rather than the **Principles**. Your colleagues on WGII all confirmed that “**the review process for the development of the Chapter, as laid out in the Principles Governing IPCC Work, has been properly followed**” and “**my reading of the Final Government Draft of the Chapter confirms that it properly reflects scientific controversies**”. I do not think a reader of your Chapter would imagine that more than 500 expert comments were “Rejected”. Could you in conscience have signed the same assurances as those of the WGII Review Editors without, attaching a detailed report of, exceptions, caveats and concerns as many of the WGII Review Editors did?

So far as I can tell no Government or the IPCC Panel can have undertaken the most basic step of reading the Review Editors reports to establish if the WGI assessment was in accordance with the Principles ahead of their unqualified acceptance of them. Moreover I find it hard to see how anyone that disagrees with the IPCC conclusions could have any recourse to any appeal or “judicial review” such as Greenpeace were able to use last year to require HMG to undertake its nuclear energy consultation in the manner prescribed.

Yours sincerely,

David Holland
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