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A weblog on climate, global change and climate measurements

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EEA report on climate change

Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2012

An indicator-based report



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The EEA has published a new report ([EEA report 12/2012](#)) on climate change, that should discuss and document climate change in Europe over the last decade (2001 to 2011): "*This European Environment Agency (EEA) report presents information on past and projected climate change and related impacts in Europe, based on a range of indicators*".

As always the case with these official and generously funded reports, the graphical quality is excellent, and the writing style is easy to read. So I recommend to download this blockbuster of 304 pages and read it carefully. As I am touring in Australia for the moment, I read through the report rather quickly, so the following comments may be provisional.

Here my overall appreciation:

1. The title suggest a report centered on Europe, but in fact there is much rehashing and copy/paste form IPCC (especially AR4) with a recall "ad nauseam" of global climate evolution, as seen through IPCC's eyes.
2. The overall tone clearly is alarmist, and not neutral. If for example a phenomenon can clearly not be attributed to climate change, one finds this admirable sentence "attribution to climate change is difficult".
3. One author seems to be a Jack of all trades: EEA employe [Hans Martin Füssel](#) is the author/coauthor/contributor of at least 12 chapters/subchapters !
4. The report should analyze the climate evolution of the last decade, but fails to mention the stand-still of global temperature during this period.

Now let's discuss in more detail some gems found in the report:

1. **Temperature:** That "the last 10 years are the warmest since the pre-industrial age" is a truism for a planet leaving the Little Ice Age in 1850. This information is meant to push a sense of urgency and angst, but is particularly nasty as it does not mention the important plateau reached in global temperatures since at least 15 years. I wonder if the constant reference to pre-industrial climate suggests this period of nasty and cold climate as the enjoyable optimum to be aspired too.
2. **Storms:** the report mentions that there was an increase in frequency/intensity during the 1960 – 1990's, but then **a decrease to the present** (emphasis is mine). This latter (and correct) finding should at least be discussed, as it points to a natural cycle in storminess (AMO).
3. **Snow:** Actually, nothing serious to report, as there are no significant changes in winter and autumn (in Europe). So to assure nevertheless some scary feelings, March snow cover is reported down by 7%.
4. **Water limited crop production:** Yields of several crops (like wheat) are stagnating, but others are increasing (maize). Could the stagnation be caused by economic factors and not by climatic ones?
5. **Ground ozone:** Tropospheric ozone is the scare-gas that always comes handy when other catastrophes seem going little: the report speaks of estimated 20000 premature deaths attributed to ozone in Europe, but nevertheless concedes that "*attribution to ozone exceedances to climate change is difficult*".

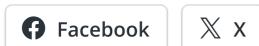
The 20000 premature deaths are a red herring that I do not believe at all. In most part of Europe, ground ozone levels are falling since quite a time (see for instance [here](#)).

6. **Ocean heat content:** There is practically no change since 2000, so the graph extends to a longer period to impress the reader.

This is a trick that always seems to work!

These comments are, as said above, written after a very rapid lecture of the full report (not only the summary). If time permits, I will come back to this report, that I consider interesting to read, but in -informative to a large degree, and, what is my greatest critique, overtly alarmist and one-sided.

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