

Karen Y. Knutson 06/04/2002 03:32:16 PM

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To: Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP@EOP, James Connaughton/CEQ/EOP@EOP, Joel D. Kaplan/WHO/EOP@EOP, Robert_C._McNally@OPD.EOP.gov

cc:
Subject: Adler piece on NYT article on climate

OVERHEATED TIMES TWO [Jonathan Adler]

> A front-page New York Times story
> <<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/03/science/03CLIM.html>> claims that the
> U.S. government has officially acknowledged the coming greenhouse
> apocalypse. Last week, the administration submitted the 2002 Climate
> Action Report
> <<http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming/publications/car/index.html>> to the
> United Nations. This report summarizes recent national and international
> syntheses of climate science, and describes some of the "likely" and
> "possible" impacts of increased emissions of greenhouse gases and
> resulting climate changes.
> As is to be expected from any document produced by the Environmental
> Protection Agency and Department of State, the report accentuates the
> negative. (For a more balanced presentation of the science see here
> <<http://www.rppi.org/rr103.html>> and here
> <<http://www.rppi.org/ebrief105.html>>.) At the same time, however, the
> report time and again reiterates the uncertainty of climate science. The
> Times nonetheless opens its story by claiming the report "detail[s]
> specific and far-reaching effects that it says global warming will inflict
> on the American environment." Not quite. The report outlines some specific
> potential scenarios, but it carefully states all of its predictions in
> probabilistic terms and reiterates the National Academy of Sciences'
> conclusion that specific predictions about climate change are, as yet,
> impossible. More importantly, the report notes (and the Times
> acknowledges) that global warming is likely to increase agricultural and
> forest productivity and that insofar as some climate change is inevitable,
> current policies should embrace adaptive measures, not crash energy diets.
> There's no need to wait to see how the report will be spun. The Times was
> ready this morning with an editorial
> <<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/03/opinion/03MON1.html>> calling for
> congressional action to regulate greenhouse gases. No doubt Senator
> Jeffords will do his best to oblige.