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Follow the (climate change) money



People walk down the stairs inside the venue of the COP24 U.N. Climate Change Conference 2018 in Katowice, Poland, Tuesday, Dec. 4, 2018. The two-week meeting brings together diplomats and interested pressure groups from almost 200 countries to discuss the 2015 Paris Accord and other climate issues. (AP Photo/Czarek Sokolowski)

By [Stephen Moore](#) - - Sunday, December 16, 2018

OPINION:

The first iron rule of American politics is: Follow the money. This explains, oh, about 80 percent of what goes on in Washington.

Shortly after the latest Chicken Little climate change report was published last month, I noted on CNN that one reason so many hundreds of scientists are persuaded that the sky is falling is that they are paid handsomely to do so.

I noted that "In America and around the globe governments have created a multi-billion dollar Climate Change Industrial Complex." And then I added: "A lot of people are getting

really, really rich off of the climate change industry.” According to a recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Federal funding for climate change research, technology, international assistance, and adaptation has increased from \$2.4 billion in 1993 to \$11.6 billion in 2014, with an additional \$26.1 billion for climate change programs and activities provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009.”

This doesn't mean that the planet isn't warming. But the tidal wave of funding does reveal a powerful financial motive for scientists to conclude that the apocalypse is upon us. No one hires a fireman if there are no fires. No one hires a climate scientist (there are thousands of them now) if there is no catastrophic change in the weather. Why doesn't anyone in the media ever mention this?

But when I lifted this hood, it incited more hate mail than from anything I've said on TV or written. Could it be that this rhetorical missile hit way too close to home?

How dare I impugn the integrity of scientists and left-wing think-tanks by suggesting that their research findings are perverted by hundreds of billions of dollars of taxpayer hand-outs. The irony of this indignation is that any academic whose research dares question the “settled science” of the climate change complex is instantly accused of being a shill for the oil and gas industry or the Koch brothers.

Apparently, if you take money from the private sector to fund research, your work is inherently biased, but if you get multimillion-dollar grants from Uncle Sam, you are as pure as the freshly fallen snow.

How big is the Climate Change Industrial Complex today? Surprisingly, no one seems to be keeping track of all the channels of funding. A few years ago Forbes magazine went through the federal budget and estimated about \$150 billion in spending on climate change and green energy subsidies during President Obama's first term.

That didn't include the tax subsidies that provide a 30 percent tax credit for wind and solar power — so add to those numbers about \$8 billion to \$10 billion a year. Then add billions more in costs attributable to the 29 states with renewable energy mandates that require utilities to buy expensive “green” energy.

Worldwide the numbers are gargantuan. Five years ago, a leftist group called the Climate Policy Initiative issued a study which found that “Global investment in climate change” reached \$359 billion that year. Then to give you a sense of how money-hungry these planet-saviors are, the CPI moaned that this spending “falls far short of what's needed” a number estimated at \$5 trillion.

For \$5 trillion we could feed everyone on the planet, end malaria, and provide clean water and reliable electricity to every remote village in Africa. And we would probably have enough money left over to find a cure for cancer and Alzheimers.

The entire Apollo project to put a man on the moon cost less than \$200 billion. We are spending twice that much every year on climate change.

This tsunami of government money distorts science in hidden ways that even the scientists who are corrupted often don't appreciate. If you are a young eager-beaver researcher who decides to devote your life to the study of global warming, you're probably not going to do your career any good or get famous by publishing research that the crisis isn't happening.

But if you've built bogus models that predict the crisis is getting worse by the day, then step right up and get a multimillion dollar grant.

Now here's the real scandal of the near trillion dollars that governments have stolen from taxpayers to fund climate change hysteria and research. By the industry's own admission there has been almost no progress worldwide in actually combatting climate change. The latest reports by the U.S. government and the United Nations say the problem is getting worse not better and we have not delayed the apocalypse by a single day.

Has there ever been such a massive government expenditure that has had such miniscule returns on investment? After three decades of "research" the only "solution" is for the world to stop using fossil fuels, which is like saying that we should stop growing food.

Really? The greatest minds of the world entrusted with hundreds of billions of dollars can only come up with a solution that would entail the largest government power grab in world history, shutting down industrial production (just look at the catastrophe in Germany when they went all in for green energy), and throwing perhaps billions of human beings into poverty? If that's the remedy, I will take my chances on a warming planet.

President Trump should tell these "scientists" that "you're fired." And we taxpayers should demand our money back.

• *Stephen Moore, a columnist for The Washington Times, is a senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation. His latest book, co-authored with Arthur Laffer is "Trumponomics: Inside the America First Plan to Revive the American Economy."*

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