



EGU Position Statement on Climate Change and Recent Letters from the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce

European Geosciences Union Divisions of Atmospheric and Climate Sciences

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The European Geosciences Union (EGU) Divisions of Atmospheric and Climate Sciences support the joint science academies' statement on global response to climate change of June 2005.

- <http://nationalacademies.org/onpi/06072005.pdf>

Moreover, we welcome the intention of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Chairman to explore the science of global warming and climate change as a basis for future political decisions. We also appreciate the well-established scientific practice of probing the validity of measurement data, mathematical analyses, and mechanistic interpretations, since this is a basic feature and continuously practiced element of scientific research.

On the other hand, we are surprised by the unusual approach which the Committee Chairman has chosen in an attempt to "review" the scientific basis of climate change as summarized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which is the main representative of the global scientific community.

- <http://www.ipcc.ch>

Rather than exploring the extensive scientific evidence and literature on climate change and the underlying processes through a hearing of experts representing the wide range of national and international scientific institutions engaged in climate research, the Committee Chairman has addressed three individual scientists, questioning their scientific and personal integrity on the basis of a newspaper article. In his letters of 23 June, the Committee Chairman has asked these scientists to answer within less than three weeks multiple burdensome and intrusive requests, including detailed information about "all financial support" and "all data archives" related to the research performed throughout their careers.



- http://energycommerce.house.gov/108/Letters/06232005_1570.htm (*no longer accessible*)

We do not consider personal inquisition of individual scientists as an appropriate way of probing the validity of the general scientific statements in the IPCC third assessment report (TAR), which represents the state-of-the-art of climate science supported by the major science academies around the world and by the vast majority of scientific researchers and investigations as documented by the peer-reviewed scientific literature.

- <http://nationalacademies.org/onpi/06072005.pdf>

We urge the Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Chairman to withdraw the highly inappropriate letters of 23 June and instead schedule a hearing of a representative group of climate research experts, presenting and discussing the available scientific evidence on global warming and climate change.

With regard to the scientific questions addressed in the letters of 23 June, we would like to point out that:

1. the scientific statements of the IPCC TAR, including the finding that the increase in 20th century northern hemisphere temperatures is "likely to have been the largest of any century during the past 1,000 years", are based on multiple lines of evidence, not just the questioned study by Mann et al. (1998);
 2. the results of the study by Mann et al. (1998) have been confirmed by an independent team of scientists with freely available computer code and data (Ammann and Wahl, 2005).
- http://www.grida.no/climate/ipcc_tar/wg1/067.htm#232
 - <http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2005/ammann.shtml>