

By Curtis Johnson

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This week, Trump's head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Scott Pruitt, denied that carbon dioxide was a main cause of global warming. In an interview with CNBC's *Squawk Box*,

Pruitt said, "I think that measuring with precision human activity on the climate is something very challenging to do and there's tremendous disagreement about the degree of impact, so, no, I would not agree that it's a primary contributor to the global warming that we see."

First off, Pruitt is just lying. It *is* challenging to measure the impact of human activity on climate, but scientists are now doing it with increasing precision. And among climate scientists who have studied "human activity on the climate," *there is 97 percent agreement, basic unanimity or what scientists call consensus, that not only is climate change happening as a result of human activity, but that it is clearly caused by the burning of fossil fuels and other human practices that produce CO2 and other greenhouse gases.*

[1](#)

And second—really, Pruitt? We should believe you? You, who have absolutely zero knowledge and zero expertise to determine this? Instead of believing the thousands of climate scientists who have studied this issue from many angles, over decades, and found that human-caused climate change is real and evidence for it is overwhelming? Somehow you have authority or legitimacy to speak as an expert on this, when your whole career and position has been as a toady for fossil fuel conglomerates? When you have slavishly copied memos written by energy companies who stand to earn millions in profits, into your press releases, to brazenly cover efforts to eviscerate climate and clean water standards that would give some protection to people and nature?

And what do you have to back up your conclusion with? What evidence can you bring to explain what the planet is experiencing? Tell us, how would you explain the cause of rising sea levels and the disappearance of islands and coastlines worldwide? How would you explain the melting and shrinking of Arctic and Greenland polar ice masses, which is being measured year by year? <sup>2</sup> How would you explain the global average temperature records being broken in 2016, and before that in 2015, and 2014? And that of the Earth's 17 warmest years in recorded history, 16 have occurred since 2000? <sup>3</sup> And how these temperatures are rising in close step with the rise of carbon dioxide levels measured independently by 40 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) sites worldwide?

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Or the fact that the greenhouse effect—the connection between levels of certain gases like CO2 in the atmosphere with warming of the Earth—is a well-established scientific fact and has been understood since the late 1800s?

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How, Pruitt, do you explain the increasingly severe storms that have destroyed people's lives—like those fueled by warming oceans that killed thousands and displaced millions in the 2010 flooding in Pakistan, or the occurrence in recent years of the most powerful hurricanes in recorded history, such as Haiyan in the Philippines, where 10,000 people drowned or were swept out to sea? <sup>7</sup> Or the recent studies documenting how warming is decreasing oxygen in the seas, threatening to disrupt ocean life critical to all life on this planet? <sup>8</sup>

The idea that anyone should believe you—or reality-denying lunatics like Trump, who claims climate change is a hoax—and the confusion and lies you're spreading that production of greenhouse gases by capitalist energy production is not connected to global warming, would be laughable if it wasn't so dangerous. You would have us disbelieve mountains of evidence, thousands of scientific studies, and glaring reality. *The truth is, yes, human activity—and its production of greenhouse gases along with other practices—is warming the planet, changing the climate, and helping destroy the basis for much of Earth's natural world, and the basis, too, for human beings to continue to exist on this planet.*

That a man like Pruitt would be given authority to head a government agency that supposedly has as its whole reason-to-be the protection of nature and the safety and health of people makes this regime totally illegitimate. That the president of supposedly the “most advanced” country in the world would appoint such a man, and himself claim climate change is a hoax, demonstrates, as do many other things, the complete illegitimacy of this regime. And what does it say about this capitalist-imperialist system which, due to its inexorable drive for profit and its expand-or-die competitive dynamic, has now brought forward a “Trump” and is rushing headlong to make things worse?

This regime is moving to eliminate programs that research or monitor climate change. It's planning to erode or eliminate whole programs and sections of government agencies that would limit climate change. It's on a mission to eliminate protections and limits on plundering the environment by wiping out all manner of regulations and rules. An all-out savage war on the natural world is being launched by this regime, in the service of unfettering unlimited feasting and plunder by U.S. capitalist monopolies. If this is allowed to fully unfold, it will guarantee, and further intensify, the accelerating erosion of ecosystems. It will put humanity—especially the poorest and most oppressed of humanity who have done the least to cause this—in the crosshairs of eco-catastrophe.

The Trump/Pence cabal is not only denying climate change and its connection to human activity but is working to hamstring the ability of people to prevent such an engulfing catastrophe already swirling like floodwaters around our legs. This should scream out another sharp alarm—along with all the other outrages they are carrying out—that this fascist regime must be swept from power at the soonest possible time.

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1. [Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers, IPCC](#)
  2. [Arctic Sea Ice & News Analysis, National Snow & Ice Data Center](#)
  3. “[Earth Sets a Record Temperature for Third Straight Year](#),” *New York Times*, January 8, 2017
  4. [Carbon dioxide levels rose at record pace for 2nd straight year](#) , NOAA
  5. [What Is the Greenhouse Effect?](#) Livescience.com
  6. [Greenhouse effect](#) , Wikipedia

7. “[The Human Cost of Climate Change](http://www.revcom.us),” <http://www.revcom.us>

8. “[It's official: the oceans are losing oxygen, posing growing threats to marine life](#),” *Washington Post*,  
February 15, 2017