

Hand-out by Hans Schreuder at Harbertonford, 7 November 2011

From a colleague, Joe Olsen, I quote the following:

The main reason behind our earth having a benign climate was proposed by Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius towards the end of the 19th century. It was his idea that our atmosphere acts like a greenhouse. Unfortunately for Arrhenius, he was wrong in 1896 when he first proposed his "greenhouse effect" idea, then proven wrong by Knut Angstrom for failing to control water vapor in his original experiment and then proved wrong again by Angstrom & Koch in 1900 (see ref. 1)

Soon after that, a Mr Langley was proven wrong with his Lunar temperature readings in 1903 and finally forced Arrhenius to admit errors in 1906 and finally, in 1909, Professor Robert Wood proved there is no greenhouse effect (ref. 2), a test that was successfully repeated by Mexican Professor Nasif Nahle (ref. 3).

The debate was finally put to rest by the American Meteorological Society "Compendium of Meteorology" in 1951.

Initially, man-made global warming never was widely accepted and was abandoned when it was found that all the heat coming off the earth that was supposedly absorbed by carbon dioxide was already absorbed by water vapour.

Even in the driest places on Earth the atmosphere contains some 3,000 water molecules for every carbon dioxide molecule and keeping in mind how little carbon dioxide we humans have actually added to our atmosphere – only some 3 percent (ref. 4) – there are some 10,000 water molecules for every "human-produced" carbon dioxide molecule, all absorbing in the same range of thermal radiation frequencies coming off the earth.

As an aside, for the scientifically minded amongst us: CO₂ does have a unique absorption in the 5 micron range, but every absorb/emit causes a frequency shift rendering the emitted photon invisible.

A three atom molecule in free motion has no ability to 'redirect' the outgoing long wave radiation, it merely vibrates as the photon passes.

In the bigger picture, it is the Sun that heats the Earth and the Earth then heats the atmosphere, not the other way around. (ref. 5)

The atmosphere acts in two opposing manners: it cools the earth during the hours of sunshine and it delays the cooling in the hours of no sunshine and during the night.

But at no stage does the atmosphere make the earth warmer, not by any means.

Thank you.

REFERENCES

1. <http://doc.lib.noaa.gov/rescue/mwr/029/mwr-29-06-0268.pdf>
[US Monthly Weather Review, June 1901]
2. http://www.tech-know.eu/uploads/Note_on_the_Theory_of_the_Greenhouse.pdf
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