



COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**  
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)**

*Climate Science: Assumptions, Policy Implications, and the Scientific Method*

**Chairman Smith:** Today we will examine the scientific method as it relates to climate change. We must ensure that the underlying science that informs policy decisions is based on credible scientific methodology.

I believe the climate is changing and that humans play a role. However, I also believe significant questions remain as to the extent.

Our actions must be based on sound science. This is the only way we will be able to better address climate change.

Before we impose costly government regulations, we should evaluate scientific uncertainties and ascertain the extent to which they make it difficult to quantify humans' contribution to climate change.

Far too often, alarmist theories on climate science originate with scientists who operate outside of the principles of the scientific method.

The scientific method is a simple process that has been used for centuries. It involves identifying a question, developing a hypothesis, constructing an experiment, and analyzing the results. If the results do not align with the original hypothesis, the hypothesis must be re-examined.

The scientific method welcomes critiques so theories can be refined. And it avoids speculation about distant events for which there is no hard proof.

Alarmist predictions amount to nothing more than wild guesses. The ability to predict far into the future is impossible. Anyone stating what the climate will be in 500 years or even at the end of the century is not credible.

All too often, scientists ignore the basic tenants of science in order to justify their claims. Their ultimate goal appears to be to promote a personal agenda, even if the evidence doesn't support it.

The scientific method is regarded as the "foundation of modern science." It ensures that scientific experimentation is neither arbitrary nor subjective, and that results can be replicated.

In the field of climate science, there is legitimate concern that scientists are biased in favor of reaching predetermined conclusions.

This inevitably leads to alarmist findings that are wrongfully reported as facts.

The scientific method also requires that for a hypothesis to become a theory, a repeated validation of the results – called reproducibility – should be possible. However, a recent survey found that 70% of scientific researchers have tried and failed to reproduce the experiments conducted by other scientists.

The lack of reproducibility is a warning that the scientific method is not being followed and that the theory may lack credibility.

To restore faith in science, we must uphold the principles of scientific integrity. For example, the Science Committee heard from whistleblowers that National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) employees put their “thumb on the scale” during the analysis of data.

This was done to arrive at politically correct results that would disprove the absence of global temperature increases from 1998 to 2012.

More recently, NOAA admitted to Committee staff that there was no legal justification for not complying with the Committee’s lawfully-issued subpoena requesting information.

In fact, we learned that it was simply a political decision to halt any further debate on the subject. This is professional misconduct, if not worse.

A similar event unfolded in 2009. Emails from East Anglia University scientists were uncovered and revealed that they frequently violated principles of scientific integrity and attempted to halt debate about climate science.

Much of climate science today appears to be based more on exaggerations, personal agendas, and questionable predictions than on the scientific method. Those who engage in such actions do a disservice to the American people and to their own profession.

Only when scientists follow the scientific method can policy-makers be confident that they are making the right decisions. Until then, the debate should continue.

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