

Arctic ice proves to be slippery stuff

The extent of the sea-ice is now half a million square kilometres more than it was this time last year, says Christopher Booker.

By Christopher Booker
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BBC viewers were treated last week to the bizarre spectacle of Mr Ban Ki-moon standing on an Arctic ice-floe making a series of statements so laughable that it was hard to believe such a man can be Secretary-General of the UN. Thanks to global warming, he claimed, "100 billion tons" of polar ice are melting each year, so that within 30 years the Arctic could be "ice-free". This was supported by a WWF claim that the ice is melting so fast that, by 2100, sea-levels could rise by 1.2 metres (four feet), which would lead to "floods affecting a quarter of the world".

Everything about this oft-repeated item was propaganda of the silliest kind. Standing 700 miles from the Pole, as near as the stubbornly present ice would allow his ship to go, Mr Ban seemed unaware that, although some 10 million square kilometres (3.8 million square miles) of sea-ice melts each summer, each September the Arctic starts to freeze again. And the extent of the ice now is 500,000 sq km (190,000 sq m) greater than it was this time last year – which was, in turn, 500,000 sq km more than in September 2007, the lowest point recently recorded (see the Cryosphere Today website). By April, after months of darkness, it will be back up to 14 million sq km (5.4 million sq m) or more.

Mr Ban seems equally unaware that, even if all that sea-ice were to melt, this would no more raise sea-levels than a cube of ice melting in a gin and tonic increases the volume of liquid in the glass. If he is relying for his "100 billion tons" on land ice melting in Antarctica and Greenland, he should note that much of their ice sheets are growing rather than shrinking. His "100 billion tons" is fantasy.

Similarly worthy of the Booker Prize for fiction was WWF's claim that sea levels might rise by four feet (twice the most extreme guess by those UN computer models), let alone the ludicrous claim that this would flood "a quarter of the world". But Mr Ban was indulging in this childish publicity stunt for the same reason the BBC, the Royal Society and others have lately been banging on about various mad schemes for "climate engineering", such as putting up vast mirrors in space to keep out the sun's rays or lining our motorways with artificial trees to suck deadly CO₂ out of the air, to be taken away and buried in holes in the ground.

Why are they all going off their heads like this, in emulation of the "projector" that Gulliver met on his travels, in the Academy of Lagado, who had designed a scheme for

extracting sunbeams from cucumbers? It is because they are desperately trying to whip up alarm over global warming before December's planned "climate treaty" in Copenhagen, when all evidence suggests that they are not going to get the successor to the Kyoto Protocol they want.

The countries of the developing world, led by China, India, Russia and Brazil, continue to insist that, since global warming is all the fault of the already developed countries of the West, it is up to the West to cut its CO2 emissions by 80 per cent, while the rest of the world is allowed to catch up. Some, such as China, are prepared to make token emission cuts, but only so long as they are compensated by the West to the tune of trillions of pounds a year. As some of the gloomier warmists admit, Copenhagen looks to be a dead duck.

According to Government figures, however, we in Britain are already committed to spending, under the Climate Change Act, £18 billion every year between now and 2050 on this nonsense – daft light bulbs, electricity blackouts and all. In other words, we are only beginning to see some of the nastier consequences of this crazy make-believe, based on nothing more substantial than the kind of gibberish we got last week from Mr "Light Bulb" Ban and the BBC.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/6143587/Arctic-ice-proves-to-be-slippery-stuff.html>