

# ***Extreme Reality and Average Nonsense***

**by Viv Forbes**

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“Average Global Temperature” is a useless piece of data-babble for most people on Earth (even if it could be measured accurately).

Where we live in Southern Queensland, the surface temperature can range from 0 deg C to 40 deg C, so you could say our “average surface temperature” is 20 deg.

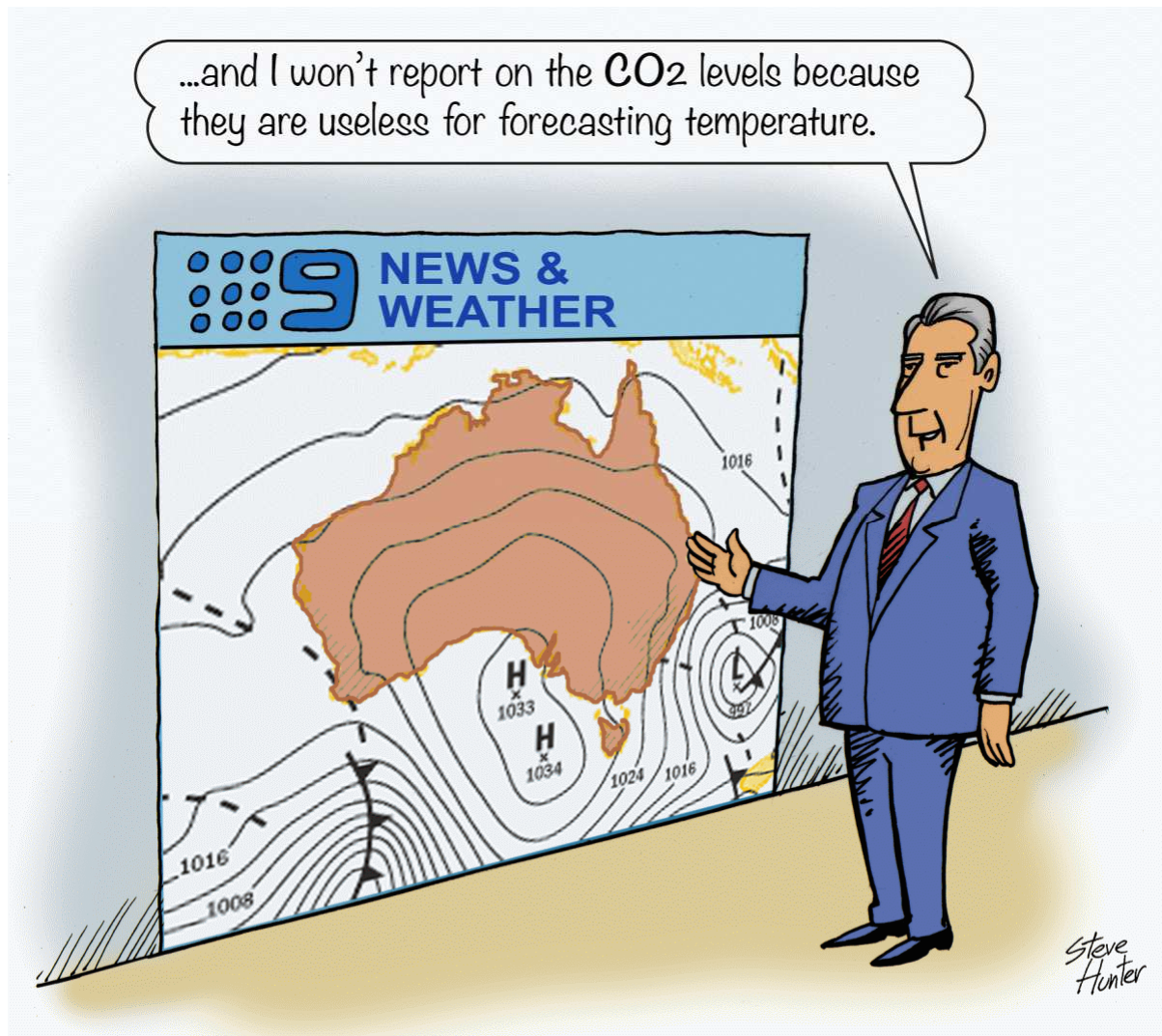
However, none of us live (except briefly) in the average temperature. It is never “average global temperature” that kills crops – they are killed by unexpected frost or extreme heat. People do not die of average global temperature – they are killed in snow storms, cyclones, floods, fires and heat waves. It is the extremes that are important to life.

That is why all weather forecasts focus on possible extremes. Here are examples of useful forecasts:

- “sheep graziers’ alert – sleet and cold winds expected tomorrow.”
- “fire warning – extreme heat and high winds expected all week.”
- “flood warning – cyclone expected to reach the coast tonight”.

When did you last hear a forecaster say:

- “the average global temperature tomorrow will be 21.3 deg C?” or
- “the average CO2 content of the atmosphere will reach 415 ppm tomorrow.



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Earth's natural surface temperature goes from very hot in equatorial deserts to sub-freezing at the poles. It usually reaches a low about sunrise and rises til mid afternoon.

Moreover, anyone can change their climate by moving towards or away from the equator or the seaside. Our ancestors were always on the move, migrating with the weather until they managed to catch and conserve water, build houses and make their own weather with clothing, homes, heating and refrigeration.

Average global temperature figures were first compiled from thousands of weather station records. These have never been a representative sample of surface temperatures as most are in urban or semi-urban areas of the developed world, and few sampled the massive oceans that cover 70% of the Earth. The roads, houses, concrete and engines of big cities all create artificial local heat which is reflected in

their surface thermometer records. As urban heat islands intensified and expanded, this created an artificial “global warming”. Now the usefulness of even these poor samples is being totally destroyed by retrospective “adjustments” which seem designed to help the global warming dogma.

No one lives where it is average. The only weather that really matters is what is happening on one's head at any given time. How can “average be useful other than to frighten people who don't understand statistics and science?

What about the CO2 bogey-man?

CO2 is a rare (0.04%) colourless natural atmospheric gas. It does not generate any heat – it just moves a tiny bit of heat around.

In the atmosphere during the day, it may slightly reduce the incoming solar radiation that reaches the surface in a narrow wavelength, thus reducing daytime peak surface temperature slightly.

At night, CO2 in the atmosphere may slightly reduce night-time radiative cooling, thus producing slightly warmer nights on the surface. The net “average” effect is probably a tiny net warming at night, in winter and in polar regions – all of which are probably welcomed by most people. Even this tiny effect reduces rapidly as CO2 levels rise because all radiation in that narrow band is soon absorbed. After about 100 ppm the effect is negligible.

This effect is not used by any practical weather forecaster. The theory that human production of carbon dioxide can control global climate is totally unproven and looks absurd. Past records show that long term variations in atmospheric CO2 content are more a result of temperature changes than a cause of them.

Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the key nutrient of our carbon-based life on Earth. It has always been there, usually much more of it than now. It is nothing to be scared about. If it increases, the net effects will be highly beneficial for all life on Earth.

It is time to stop the carbon dioxide scare stories.

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Disclosure: Viv Forbes is Secretary of the Saltbush Club

(650 words)

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