

Global Warming, Unfortunately, Is All Too Real

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To the Editor:

S. Fred Singer, in "Global Warming Remains Unproved" (letter, Sept. 19), criticizes the conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an international group of thousands of scientists who analyze data and advise the world's governments of climate change.

Contrary to Mr. Singer's claim, the atmosphere has indeed warmed. Surface temperature data indicate a warming of a little less than one degree Fahrenheit over the past 130 years, and the 10 warmest years in the record have occurred since 1980.

Satellite data, available only since 1979, also show a warming trend at higher altitudes when adjusted to eliminate short-term "noise" like the cooling effect of recent, unusually large volcanic eruptions.

The climate change panel's 1992 report did not predict a warming of 2.7 degrees to 8.1 degrees Fahrenheit "by the middle of the next century" as Mr. Singer asserts. Rather, it projected a warming of roughly this size for the year 2100.

Your Sept. 10 front-page article correctly states that projected warming of 1.5 degrees to 6 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100 represents only 50 percent to 70 percent of eventual heating from gases emitted by then, because the oceans slow the greenhouse warming of the atmosphere. Mr. Singer gets the situation backward by arguing that only 50 percent to 70 percent of the 1.5 to 6 degrees will be realized by 2100.

The climate change panel's work represents the best judgment of the international scientific community. Governments should use its assessment as a basis for swiftly developing sound plans to limit global warming.

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