

Opinion

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Column wrong about Trump impact on climate

Peter Goodman's column, one year in, and Trump is worse than expected, displays ignorance of history and the natural world saying President Trump's policies would result in "seas rising faster than they might have, wiping out island countries."

In the early 1800s, the British Admiralty established the Hydrographer's Office to create maritime charts and conduct maritime explorations. The Beagle's second voyage chief scientist was Charles Darwin, budding naturalist and geologist.

Darwin observed coral reefs consist of tiny animals and their exoskeletons. He reasoned if seamounts in tropical seas surrounded by fringing reefs experienced subsidence or rising seas, over thousands of years the seamount would disappear below the waves, leaving a nearly circular coral atoll.

Darwin's Coral reefs, was published in 1842. A little over a century later, drilling accompanying US Pacific atomic tests showed Darwin's deductions were correct: atolls are structures built by corals, as sea levels rose above seamounts, the corals' growth kept pace.

During the last glacial maximum 22,000 years ago, sea levels were 400 feet lower than now; ~15,000 years ago sea levels rose 20 inches per decade. Sea levels were meters higher than at present as recently as the Roman Warm Period as revealed from histories of ancient Ur, Thermopylae, Ephesus, and the Romans' Saxon Sea Forts of England, France and Belgium.

Sea levels fell during the Little Ice Age, and are now rising about 7 inches per century, a rate which hasn't changed since we installed tide gages before the US Civil War.

The IPCC shows multidecadal variations in sea level rise rate; present sea level rise rates, with CO2 production 10 Gigatons/year are indistinguishable from early 20th century rates, when CO2 production was 1 gigaton/year.

US CO2 production is decreasing; the New York Times tells us China's is spiking.

Peter Goodman: wrong again.

Robert C. Endlich

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