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Are We Blocking Out the Sun?

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Theme: Environment, Science and Medicine
In-depth Report: Climate Change

Climate change is real. However, serious scientific evidence is pointing to a very different causality than most discuss. Climate is a huge subject, an immensely complex one. There is controversy around whether we must implement drastic new taxes on fuels or other measures to reduce or "capture" CO2 to reduce Man-Made Global Warming. So far however, there are strong indications we are ignoring what might be a far greater factor in our climate and in increasing occurrence of severe weather around the world, from hurricanes to volcanic eruptions to earthquakes to severe cold, severe warm and severe rainfall. One causal factor being ignored in all the discussion is what influence solar activity has on our climate. We might well be ignoring this to our peril.

Sunspots and solar minimum

Pretty much everything in nature moves in some form of cycle, whether it is the Earth around the Sun or the moon around the Earth. Those cycles have been known for ages to influence the ocean tides or growing seasons. What is less known is the fact that there are cycles to solar eruptions, giant electromagnetic storms often called sunspots. It has been measured over time that solar cycles have short cycles of approximately 11 years.

According to the US NASA,

> "The solar cycle is the cycle that the Sun's magnetic field goes through approximately every 11 years…The solar cycle affects activity on the surface of the Sun, such as sunspots which are caused by the Sun's magnetic fields."

These shorter 11 year cycles take place within longer cycles of around 90 to 100 years, 200 years or longer.

Astrophysicists measure such cycles from the number of sunspots daily by year. It takes eleven years to proceed from minimum solar eruption year to a peak and down to the next minimum–think sine waves. That means the number of solar eruptions is at a minimum before beginning the next cycle of 11 year rise and fall. The relevant point for us on earth is that those giant solar eruptions, as well as the relative absence of same, have huge impact on our earth and on climate. The sunspot activity has been noted and measured for about 350 years.

What is less well understood but empirically measured are the larger longer wave cycles of sunspot rise and decline. In 2019 we are at the apparent bottom of what is called Cycle 24. If the present spotless pattern continues to year-end 2019 it could be perhaps the deepest Solar Minimum of a century. Notable here is that the peak number of sunspots has been

declining with each cycle since Cycle 22 that began in around 1986. Some scientists predict that Cycle 25 in 2020 will begin a series of even more unusually low sunspot activity lasting perhaps into 2055 or even longer. If so, it will have significant influence on our climate and weather.

The year 2019 will be marked as solar minimum year, before Cycle 25 begins, to run until about 2030. What is notable about this is the fact that NASA's forecast for the next solar Cycle 25 predicts that it will be the weakest of the last 200 years. That means weakest sunspot activity since early 1800. Notably, that period is known to astrophysicists as the Dalton Minimum, lasting from about 1790 to about 1820. It is referred to as a Grand Solar Minimum, the low of a 200 year cycle atop the 11 year cycles. Notable during the Dalton Minimum era were significant volcanic eruptions, the most notable of the past centuries being the highly explosive 1815 eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia, the largest in known history. Scientists have postulated a link between the eruption of huge volumes of volcanic ash high above the atmosphere and cloud creation that blocks the sun, leading to cooler oceans. Notably 1816 became known as the "year without a summer" due to the impact of Tambora on North American and European weather. In the Northern Hemisphere, crops failed and livestock died, resulting in the worst famine of the century.

The point to be noted is that the frequency and intensity of sunspot activity has proven profound influence on Earth weather, atmosphere, ocean temperature, Gulf Stream flows and more. It is also notable that the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Control dismisses such solar influence as not significant. That is a huge mistake by all serious evidence.

While governments and the UN have funneled billions of dollars to computer modelers to create various models of CO2 and other greenhouse gases since the 1970s, far too little attention has been given to the effect of our sun on earth climate. The ancient Inca or Maya cultures had a better respect for the energy and influence of the sun than we seem to have. At a minimum, in the interest of science, if not survival, we need to remedy this.

2019: Solar Cycle 24 Minimum

This year 2019 has been notable in its low sunspot occurrence. The sun continues to be very quiet. As of October 11, the sun has been without sunspots on 207 days so far during 2019 or 73% of the time, the highest percentage since 2008. One feature of such decreasing solar activity is the weakening of the ambient solar wind and its magnetic field. That allows more cosmic rays to penetrate the earth. Intensification of cosmic rays affects Earth's cloud cover and climate.

Some scientists have correlated volcanic and earthquake activity with increased periods of galactic cosmic ray penetration. For most of 2019 as just one example, the Shiveluch (Kamchatka) volcano in Russia has been regularly ejecting huge volumes of volcanic ash particulates into the stratosphere as high as 70,000 feet and cooling the planet. Other volcanic eruptions or earthquakes during recent months have taken place from Chile, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Puerto Rico and Washington State and California to name a few.

According to Prof. Masayuki Hyodo of the Research Center for Inland Seas, Kobe University, "The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has discussed the impact of cloud cover on climate in their evaluations, but this phenomenon has never been considered in

climate predictions due to the insufficient physical understanding of it." He stresses, "When galactic cosmic rays increase, so do low clouds, and when cosmic rays decrease clouds do as well, so climate warming may be caused by an opposite-umbrella effect." Galactic cosmic ray penetration decreases during periods of high sunspot eruptions.

Likely Effects on Climate

If astrophysicists' predictions are accurate, and we soon will know, we are in for a long series of extreme weather events and climate changes globally over the coming decades until perhaps 2055, owing to the onset of what is being called a new Grand Solar Minimum beginning around 2020, the conjuncture of an 11-year series of declines in sunspot numbers with longer wave 100 year or longer cycles. If this is so, the extreme weather events from volcanoes, ultra-severe cold waves across the Midwest USA growing regions, severe heat in other places, volcanoes and earthquakes, could be a pre-taste of what is coming. Along with that could come shortened growing seasons around the world and harvest failures.

Among the issues scientists believe we likely will experience during this period of an emerging Grand Solar Minimum, if accurate, will be a further slowing of the Atlantic Conveyor or Gulf Stream, a dramatic decline in the Total Solar Irradiance, or solar power incident on the Earth's upper atmosphere over the coming decades.

One of the most respected astrophysicists studying solar cycles is Professor Valentina Zharkova, an astrophysicist who teaches mathematics at Northumbria University in the UK. Zharkova was one of only 2 scientists out of 150 who accurately predicted that Solar Cycle 24 would be weaker than Cycle 23. At a conference of the Global Warming Policy Foundation in October, 2018, Zharkova presented findings that suggest in 2020 a "Super Grand Solar Minimum" period could begin. Until now her models have run at a 93-97% accuracy. Grand Solar Minimums are prolonged periods of reduced solar activity, and in the past have gone hand-in-hand with times of global cooling.

Whether Prof Zharkova is right or not is not the issue, so much as the fact that we tend to block the possible influences of the sun on Earth climate at all. Increasing evidence from independent scientists such as Zharkova suggest that we need to invest far more resources into understanding better our sun and its effects on our climate long-term if we are to avoid major climate catastrophe in coming years. Climate Change is real, but far more complex than we are imagining.

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