

October 14, 2017

Professor Sierd Cloetingh
Global and Planetary Change
Elsevier Publishing

cc: Daniel Lovegrove, Elsevier Publishers

Re: Editorial Procedure applied to the Comment and Reply on Harde (2017):
"Scrutinizing the Carbon-Cycle and CO₂ Residence Time in the Atmosphere"

Dear Professor Cloetingh:

I refer to your correspondence of 2 October, rejecting my Reply to Köhler et al's Comment on my article. Editorial treatment of this material raises serious concerns, specifically concerns over due process and libel.

At my invitation, Professor Murry Salby has consented to participate in this exchange concerning Harde (2017). Unlike me, Salby's native tongue is English.

Impartiality of Review You excluded my Reply to the Comment of Köhler et al. on the grounds that this action was recommended by the reviewers. What you did not acknowledge is that the two reviewers on whom you relied had a fundamental conflict of interest. As you are well aware, the subject of this material is the focus of a highly-polarized debate, between two scientific communities that are mutually exclusive. An impartial review of Köhler et al's Comment and my Reply therefore required input from **both communities**. The review process failed this essential duty, demonstrably. The two reviewers on whom you relied are clearly involved in the IPCC industry – the community whose claims are defended by Köhler et al's Comment. In fact, according to correspondence from Elsevier on 15 May, the reviewers were selected after Köhler et al. recommended reviewers but before I had even submitted my Reply and nomination of qualified reviewers. (To provide balance, I nominated more than half a dozen.) The predetermined circumstances reduced the review process to a foregone conclusion. My Reply to Köhler et al's Comment might as well have been reviewed by Köhler et al.

Discriminated Review Concern over the untimely selection of reviewers and their instruction to proceed with review of only Köhler et al's Comment was raised in my email of 27 June 2017. I then asked Daniel Lovegrove of Elsevier how an impartial review could be achieved when only Köhler et al. had nominated reviewers which, per the framework advised in his email of 4 May, would serve as reviewers of both the Comment and my Reply – and when the review process then proceeded for Köhler et al's Comment alone, pre-empting my Reply and nomination of qualified reviewers to level the playing field. By discriminating input to Köhler et al's colleagues (likewise associated with the IPCC), while omitting input from the opposing community, the one-sided treatment skewed the review process into a *pro forma* exercise. It protected spurious claims of Köhler et al. and the IPCC, which are falsified in my Reply.

Role of Review in the Scientific Exchange Irrespective of bias, the weight you assigned to reviews in this exchange between scientific positions is disturbing, incongruous with the framework advised by Elsevier. In his email of 27 June, Mr Lovegrove noted that the objective of the Comment/Reply exchange is to present opposing positions and articulate arguments concerning the original paper, specifically by responding to points raised in the Comment. Further, Reviewers' remarks were to be considered as "suggestions" to strengthen and clarify the Reply – not to exclude it. Much of those remarks did not even concern the Reply. Rather, they introduced new material which was **not developed** in Köhler et al's Comment, and therefore not developed in my Reply. At the same time, the reviews simply ignored key failures of Köhler et al's claims which **were developed** in my Reply. In fact, the new claims that were introduced in those reviews are, like Köhler et al's

comment: specious and rife with error. The untimely introduction of claims is tantamount to a new Comment on Harde (2017) – one to which I have been deprived of an opportunity to reply. If the reviewers wish to introduce new claims, they can do so **in sunlight** – for all to see. We will then be happy, more than happy, to publish a Reply to those new claims.

Due Process Earlier correspondence from Elsevier (Lovegrove email of 15 May and 27 June) advised that (1) the objective of the Comment/Reply exchange was to publish **both**, to benefit the readership by providing my response to points in the Comment, (2) remarks provided in the reviews were to be considered as “suggestions”, to strengthen or clarify the Reply, and (3) “*we will do all we can to publish both in the same issue.*” In particular, Elsevier advised as follows:

“a Reply would normally only be rejected, if it fails to add significantly to the scientific debate and/or becomes a personal attack on the authors of the Comment.”

My Reply violates neither of those considerations. On the contrary, it establishes key failures in Köhler et al’s claims, which in turn echo the party line: claims of the IPCC. With each passing day, those claims become increasingly dubious. Rejection of the Reply is thus entirely inappropriate, tantamount to censorship.

Aside from bias, which is transparent, the two reviewers upon which you relied make one thing clear: They evidence limited grasp of fundamental laws of physics that govern atmospheric CO₂.^{*} In due course, we will submit a detailed response, pointing out the fallacy of the reviewers’ claims – at least those germane to Köhler et al’s Comment and my Reply. In the meantime, I have been notified by a colleague that GPC has untimely published Köhler et al’s Comment on its website – exclusive of my Reply. **Köhler et al’s Comment should not be published without publishing my Reply – preferably in the same issue.**

Duty of the Publisher Elsevier has operations worldwide, including the US and EU, where due process is an integral expectation of business activity, especially that relied upon by public policy.

The arbiter of this polarized subject shall not be an editor. Nor shall it be individual reviewers – certainly not reviewers who have been discriminated to one side of this polarized debate. The arbiter must be the scientific community – inclusive of both sides of the debate. As a scientific publisher, Elsevier’s responsibility was to provide the scientific community with **both opposing positions**, to enable the community to judge for itself. Instead, Elsevier has silenced one, protecting spurious claims of the other.

Efforts by the IPCC industry to suppress new material that is adverse to its interests are now well recognized, e.g.: “*Kevin and I will keep them out somehow — even if we have to redefine what peer-review literature is!*”[†] But for a publisher to suppress the Reply to a Comment - to silence the rebuttal to a published criticism - is unprecedented.

Elsevier serves as a medium of scientific communication. It holds a duty to facilitate scientific exchange – the mechanism through which scientific understanding is advanced. By publishing Köhler et al’s Comment while simultaneously censoring the Reply, Elsevier has served, not as a medium of scientific communication, but as an instrument of propaganda.

Continued suppression of my Reply to Köhler et al’s Comment will establish that Elsevier has no intention of affording due process and fulfilling its duty as a scientific publisher.

^{*} It is noteworthy that one of us (MS) is a book author of Elsevier. *Fundamentals of Atmospheric Physics* is volume 61 of the *International Geophysics Series*, a volume which Elsevier acquired when it acquired Academic Press. Although superseded by a new volume, *Fundamentals of Atmospheric Physics* continues to be marketed and sold by Elsevier.

[†] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/environment/globalwarming/6636563/University-of-East-Anglia-emails-the-most-contentious-quotes.html>

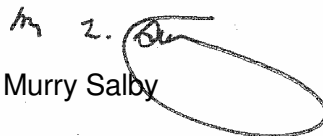
The concomitant damage will then become irreversible. I will then have to proceed accordingly, inclusive of publishing the Reply to Köhler' et al's Comment and Elsevier's censorship of the Reply.

To avoid squandering more of our time, I would appreciate a reply to these concerns.

Kind regards



Hermann Harde



Murry Salby