

Response to Reviewer 3
Frank Ackerman and Elizabeth A. Stanton

February 27, 2012

In our correspondence with the Economics E-journal editorial office, it appeared that Reviews #1 and #2 were the peer reviews on which a decision would be based, and that the decision would be forthcoming soon after we responded to those reviewers. As indicated in our January 23 response, we appreciate their comments and have responded to them in detail, greatly strengthening our article in response. Please see the revised version on the website.

Also on January 23, a third review appeared on the website – and no decision about our article has been made.

Unlike the first two reviewers, Reviewer 3 cites no sources or evidence, claims quite absurdly that our article does not rely on science or economics, engages with almost none of the content of our article, and seems bitterly dismissive of us on partisan grounds - referring, for example, to the economically meaningless (and incorrectly calculated) undiscounted sum of 100 years of future costs, in carefully documented scenarios developed by other researchers, which we cited from the academic and policy literature.

To cite two glaring example of Reviewer 3's errors, he says

- 1) "The authors argue that the end of the world is likely if one does not cap concentrations of carbon dioxide at 450 ppm."

We cannot identify any statement in our article that this comment refers to. If Reviewer 3 is actually responding to our article, it is up to him to be more specific about this and many other claims.

- 2) "The authors hang on the possibility that the climate sensitivity of the earth could be as high as 10."

No such thing occurs in our article. We report on, and accept for purposes of our analysis, the U.S. government's Interagency Working Group estimate of a 95th percentile climate sensitivity of 7.14. We present no results based on any climate sensitivity higher than 7.14. Unlike reviewer 3, we cite the scientific basis for our treatment of climate sensitivity, the widely cited Roe and Baker article. Reviewer 3 offers only his own undocumented opinion, implicitly claiming on his own authority that Roe and Baker, and the Interagency Working Group, must be wrong about climate sensitivity risks.

We do not believe that Reviewer 3 has met the basic standards of responsible peer review, and do not accept the legitimacy of this review as part of the evaluation of our article.