

# The Augusta Chronicle

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Letter to the Editor

## Opportunists distort science

The 20-year track record of the Center for a Sustainable Coast is a tribute to applying science to advocate improved protection of Georgia's environmentally vulnerable coast.

As director of that non-profit group, I am deeply concerned about the cynical manipulation of science, exploited unfairly to win vacuous victories that are politically convenient and dangerously deceptive.

Most disturbing in that regard is the conspicuous silence that neutralizes the preponderance of scientific documentation of human-caused climate change. For three decades, scientific evidence has been accumulating, clearly indicating that dangerous amounts of carbon in the earth's atmosphere – emissions called "greenhouse gases" (GHGs) – are causing our climate to increasingly overheat.

Alarming, equally well-documented consequences of climate-change have been reported based on compelling scientific evidence.

Sea-level rise, rapidly expanding wildfire damage, destruction of marine food supplies, and extreme weather conditions, including both drought and flooding, are all confirmed by scientific research of global systems. According to science-based trends, these impacts will worsen as GHGs continue accumulating.

At a regional level, consider the ill-fated amendments to Georgia's Shore Protection Act, which were doomed by their willful neglect of scientific evidence documenting erosion. Despite such neglect, many legislators, DNR staff, and even some environmental groups endorsed HB 271, which misrepresented or subverted scientific evidence by taking unjustifiably compromised positions.

If we are to benefit from scientific information, such research must be used consistently in taking actions supported by overwhelming evidence. Opportunists who distort science to leverage their political advantage are corrupting the critical importance of scientific inquiry.

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