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Leading climate scientists welcome Judge's decision on temperatures*

A group of leading New Zealand climate scientists (listed below) welcomed Justice Geoffrey Venning's ruling to throw out the claim by the New Zealand Climate Science Education Trust (CSET, a small group of climate change 'sceptics') that NIWA had acted fraudulently in putting together its '7-station' temperature series.

Spokesperson for the group, Associate Professor James Renwick of Victoria University said he was pleased that the Court had respected and reaffirmed the credibility of the scientific process. It was a strong message to those wanting to challenge widely-agreed scientific findings to do so honestly and openly in scientific forums.

Dr Renwick went on to say, 'Scientific analysis and discussion is carried out through the peer-reviewed literature. The basic science of climate change (global warming) has been established for well over a century, and almost all scientists active in climate research agree that human activity is causing the climate to change. For a small group of scientists to appeal to a court of law to find otherwise is bizarre.'

New Zealand temperatures have warmed by about 1°C in the last 100 years, associated with loss of glacier ice in the Southern Alps, reduced frost occurrence, and other changes. Globally, evidence of climate change includes sea-level rise, melting glaciers, and rapidly diminishing Arctic sea ice.

The Court case has helped raise the profile of the claimants. Much more importantly, the case represents a massive waste of New Zealand taxpayer's funds. In defending the claim, NIWA has spent a huge amount (estimated at well over \$100,000) and has diverted a number of its scientists away from their research. The country can ill afford to waste such an amount. 'This misguided action of a small group adds confusion to a simple issue – the world is warming, and future generations of New Zealanders will have to deal with the consequences', Dr Renwick said.

This release was jointly prepared by, and is endorsed by:

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***Background**

In 2010, the New Zealand Climate Science Education Trust applied to the High Court for a judicial review of the actions of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) in publishing temperature records, claiming that adjustments in the data used led to an artificial increase of 1°C warming between 1909 and 2008.

Justice Geoffrey Venning, in a High Court ruling released recently, rejected the Coalition's challenge of the official NIWA temperature record.

The summary states:

The plaintiff does not succeed on any of its challenges to the three decisions of NIWA in issue. The application for judicial review is dismissed and judgment entered for the defendant.

Justice Venning also awarded costs to NIWA.