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Our Ref: CS0032786 and CS0032923

16 April 2020

Dear Mr Symmons

Refusal in whole to disclose information under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004

Your correspondence dated 13 March 2020 and 18 March 2020 have been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

You asked:

I have asked repeatedly for global mean annual temperatures since 1959 produced by the latest Hadley Centre Model. I want the whole record without omissions and as figures not as a graph. You have either told me about other data or not replied at all. This is, as I have pointed out, vital information - one might say the crux - of the global warming case. The research is funded from the public purse to which I contribute in my small way. There can be no need to extract the data since it is sent to IPCC. I can think of no valid reason for withholding this information.

For clarification the Met Office has interpreted your request to be for 'global mean annual surface temperatures', as this is the key indicator of global temperature change.

The Met Office holds this information.

Please note that the Met Office has withheld information in accordance with the following exception under EIR:

Regulation 12(4)(d): the information relates to material that is still in the course of completion, unfinished documents or incomplete data.

As such it has been necessary for us to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure. A public interest tests was undertaken in relation to the potential exception and the relevant considerations are summarised below.

The Met Office considered in relation to the exception above that disclosure of the information would be in the public interest because:

- Release of this information would enhance openness and transparency to the public so that they may understand, discuss, and assess the activities of the Met Office.

The Met Office considered, among other things, in relation to the exception above that disclosure of the information would not be in the public interest because:

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- Premature release of incomplete and unfinished data will unnecessarily misinform, mislead and confuse the public.
- Premature disclosure may adversely affect the interests of the Met Office because it would affect the ability of the scientists to work in a free and undisturbed way.
- Release of incomplete information will remove the time and space that is needed for free and frank exchange of views and opinions for the purposes of developing science. This will undermine the impartial scientific process.
- Release of the data would undermine the process of analysis and the next IPCC reports, which in turn would affect the reputation of the Met Office.
- The work is currently under review, so has not yet been approved as being scientifically rigorous. Releasing the data before the review is complete risks undermining our integrity as there could yet prove to be errors in the data or the analysis.
- Releasing the data without the supporting documentation would leave it open to misinterpretation and misuse, which has the potential to damage our reputation.
- Releasing the data before it is published by us in the peer reviewed literature risks compromising our ability to publish the work.
- The finished and complete documents will be published in the future. The public interest in the release of the information is already served by the proactive release of information on the Met Office website.

Taking all these factors into consideration and bearing in mind that there is a presumption in the EIR towards release, we conclude that the balance of the public interest is in favour of withholding the information requested.

In order to provide advice and assistance, we can provide the following information:

- The global mean annual surface temperatures is a quantity that is derived from the model outputs; the model itself does not produce this. Calculating this from model data requires considerable technical effort, and scientific choices;
- No data are sent to IPCC. The raw model data are contributed to the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6 (CMIP6) data sets held on the Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF). IPCC reports are based on peer reviewed literature which includes analysis of the CMIP6 archive;
- The latest Hadley Centre Model is HadGEM3. This model has been used to produce simulations for the historical period (up to 2014) to contribute to the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6. The work still in progress is the documentation of the HadGEM3 historical simulations, for publication in the peer-reviewed scientific literature.
- There are a number of alternative data sources that could be of assistance:
 - Data from a previous model – papers describing earlier model versions have been through the peer review process (e.g. Baek, H., Lee, J., Lee, H. et al. Climate change in the 21st century simulated by HadGEM2-AO under representative concentration pathways. *Asia-Pacific J Atmos Sci* 49, 603–618 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13143-013-0053-7>).
 - Data from observations – these are used as the reference data sets against which the models are assessed, so provide our best knowledge of the surface temperature for the historical period. They also have the advantage that they extend up to close to the present day (whilst the model historical runs end in 2014). There are several such data sets available – the Met Office are involved in production of HadCRUT (<https://crudata.uea.ac.uk/cru/data/temperature/>).

We hope the reasons for withholding this information answers your enquiry.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding to your request, which is due to the current situation with COVID-19 and the diversion of resources.

We note that you have submitted a number of requests for the same information and have also referenced an internal review (references CS0033289, CS0033421, and CS0033501). Please note

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that our response is submitted to address each of these separate requests, however you have the right to ask for an internal review if you are dissatisfied with the handling of this request, as detailed below.

By way of advice and assistance, please see further information on the Information Commissioner's Office website: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/> .

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to me in the first instance. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,
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