

Is a Planetary Cooling Spell Straight Ahead? NASA: We May Be On the Verge of a “Mini-Maunder” Event.

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Global Research, January 13, 2013
[Washington's Blog](#)

Theme: [Environment](#)

In-depth Report: [Climate Change](#)

All climate scientists agree that the sun affects Earth's climate [to some extent](#). They only disagree about whether or not the effect from the sun is minor compared to man-made causes.

We [noted](#) in 2011:

This week, scientists from the US Solar Observatory and the US Air Force Research Laboratory have [discovered](#) – to their great surprise – that the sun's activity is declining, and that we might experience the lowest solar output we've seen since 1645-1715. The [Register describes](#) it in dramatic tones:

What may be the science story of the century is breaking this evening.

Scientists who are convinced that global warming is a serious threat to our planet say that such a reduced solar output would simply buy us more time ... delaying the warming trend, but not stopping or reversing it.

On the other hand, scientists who are skeptical about global warming say that the threat is a new mini ice age. (Remember that [scientists have been convinced in the past that we would have a new ice age, and even considered pouring soot over the arctic in the 1970s to help melt the ice – in order to prevent another ice age](#). Obama's top science advisor was [one of those warning of a new ice age in the 1970s](#). And see [this](#).)

NASA reports this week that we may be [on the verge of another Maunder Minimum](#) (a period with an unusually low number of sunspots, leading to colder temperatures):

Much has been made of the probable connection between the Maunder Minimum, a 70-year deficit of sunspots in the late 17th-early 18th century, and the coldest part of the Little Ice Age, during which Europe and North America were subjected to bitterly cold winters. The mechanism for that regional cooling could have been a drop in the sun's EUV output; this is, however, speculative.



The yearly averaged sunspot number for a period of 400 years (1610-2010).
SOURCE: Courtesy of NASA Marshall Space Flight Center.

The sun could be on the threshold of a mini-Maunder event right now. Ongoing Solar Cycle 24 is the weakest in more than 50 years. Moreover, there is (controversial) evidence of a long-term weakening trend in the magnetic field strength of sunspots. Matt Penn and William Livingston of the National Solar Observatory predict that by the time Solar Cycle 25 arrives, magnetic fields on the sun will be so weak that few if any sunspots will be formed. Independent lines of research involving helioseismology and surface polar fields tend to support their conclusion.

NASA explains that interactions between the sun, sources of cosmic radiation and the Earth are very complicated, and [it takes an interdisciplinary team of heliophysicists, chemists and others](#) to quantify what is really going on. And the Earth's climate is also [affected by cosmic radiation](#).

So – even if NASA's prediction of a period of an unusually low amount of sun spots is proven correct – it is [hard to know](#) whether that will lead to a large or small reduction in temperature trends.

The original source of this article is [Washington's Blog](#)
Copyright © [Washington's Blog](#), [Washington's Blog](#), 2013

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Washington's Blog](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca