

PIELKE JR. IMPLIES CONSPIRACY OVER ROUTINE JOURNAL PROCEDURE

In a [blog post](#), Roger Pielke Jr. has strongly implied a connection between an earlier critical post about a climate change paper and his subsequent dismissal from the editorial board of the journal to which it was submitted. The editors of the journal, *Global Environmental Change* (GEC) rebutted these implications point by point, and requested that their response be [posted](#) on Pielke Jr.'s blog. Pielke then conceded that the incident was a miscommunication. Despite this thorough response, some anti-science [media](#) have continued to portray the story as a "peer-review conspiracy" to shut out skeptical views.

The facts:

Pielke Jr.'s dismissal had nothing to do with his criticism of the paper. The editors had already decided to remove him from the board in November 2012 due both to Pielke's sparse contributions of editorial reviews and to standard journal protocol. GEC board members are expected to review up to five papers per year, as part of their official duties. Pielke Jr. did not meet this quota. The only misstep by the journal was the long delay before the publisher, Elsevier, communicated with Pielke Jr.

The claim:

In Pielke Jr.'s own words: "Five days ago I [critiqued](#) a shoddy paper by Brysse et al. 2013 which appeared in the journal *Global Environmental Change*. Today I received notice from the GEC editor-in-chief and executive editor that I have been asked to 'step down from the Editorial Board.' They say that it is to 'give other scientists the chance to gain experience of editorial duties'... [Editor Neil Adger] did not comment on my critical blog post. I take his response to mean that I am indeed the only one who has been removed at this time. So there you have it, another climate ink blot. Coincidence? You be the judge."

Straight from the editors:

- "To create clarity let us put this on the record for you... The timing of you receiving a letter from Elsevier is a coincidence."
- "The Editors reviewed the Board at our meeting in November 2012 and subsequently informed Elsevier of who to rotate off. We had no further correspondence with Elsevier about this till they wrote to you on 20th February 2013... In addition to yourself, five other Board members have been not been reappointed for the new term and this has been conveyed to them in the past few days by Elsevier."
- "In the original appointment letter we wrote that we expected Board Members to review up to five papers per year. We have invited you to review 18 papers in the six years, of which you agreed to review just six and submitted five reviews (on one occasion we uninvited you before submission of your review as the review process had been completed). Your last review was submitted in August 2010. Last year, in 2012, we invited you to review, and you declined to review, in January, May and August."

Pielke Jr.'s concession:

- "I will chalk this up to poor communication coupled with unfortunate timing... For the record, just now I received a very gracious apology from Elsevier for how this situation was handled. I appreciate it."