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**Meeting with Prof Keith Briffa – 18 December 2009 3.45-4:30pm**

Independent Reviewer Sir Muir Russell (MR),  
Prof Keith Briffa (KB)  
Prof Trevor Davies (TD)  
Notes taken by Lisa Williams (LW)

MR general outline.

published on CRU website

KB outlines he has nothing to hide.

There are objective commentators but there are also deniers who wish to twist and distort, misrepresent, suggest he has used fraudulent means. However they are not genuine seekers after truth.

He feels that climate scientists are “damned if we do, damned if we don’t.”

Difficulties of knowing how best to respond to attacks - try and give an objective assessment. His own personal policy has been to get on with the science, publish work and “let cream rise.”

KB – climate debate very politicized in US. In UK scientists have been treated with respect until recently. Now the press has done some really poor reporting of the issues.

Discussion re: recent Mail online article.

KB says there is no truth in the allegations made in the article, and there are no references to back them up. Confused hotchpotch of issues. KB emphasized that the main point in the article that KB would manipulate data to please Michael Mann is completely without foundation.

Stephen McIntyre – an individual with a long history of criticising KB’s work.

KB did eventually write a response (published on CRU website) to sustained attacks,. Made no difference to McIntyre or his followers who just persist in their attacks.

KB – Uncertainty over how do you respond.

He does not respond to slander, innuendo in blogs or articles based on stolen information. One shouldn’t have to defend academic freedom to discuss matters with colleagues in private. He felt this was an attack on academic freedom.

MR – noted that in the media treatment of science it sometimes appears that equal weight is given to both established and minority positions.

KB agrees – uncertainty is main point to get over about scientific results but this is little understood. Scientists’ role is to try and weigh uncertainty. “Given the data, given the uncertainty, this is all we can say.”

MR – So the green smudge (of error bars) may be valid on a graph.

MR – his job to establish whether there has been any evidence of deliberate manipulation of data.

MR – would it be possible to release all the data? Danger of squibs – comments or phrase that might undermine conclusions of this review.

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KB – Over the years, mindset of scientific community has changed, and now transparency is vital.

KB – released tree ring data has been misinterpreted, minor problems will be deliberately misinterpreted. Leads to reluctance to publish data not just for trees but for various types of proxy data.

MR – IPCC role? KB – Understandably, they had to be nervous in the sense of not making early statements of support as they don't know what might or might not have been done in CRU. But he is confident that the data and work will be shown to be robust. MR – Aware that the IPCC Chair said that is just one bit of the science on AGW and that he accepted that CRU's data parallels other datasets.

Action: KB should think about sceptics' arguments about not releasing data. Best answer is to get everything out. It will not be good enough for MR as chair of the review panel to simply say "I've done a review."

KB – will you get an expert to look at my scientific data?

MR – The Review will aim to look at whether scientists selected or destroyed data which did not fit the hypothesis, picking up on the criticisms following the e-mails. Not aiming to repeat the work itself.