

# **'Climategate', Chaos and Scientific Truth.**

## **Jeremy Dunning-Davies.**

The recent disclosures concerning the problems of global warming and climate change raise several important issues for science in general. Most importantly, they bring to the fore the aims of the Telesio-Galilei Academy and hence occasion this article. At the outset, it should be remembered that those aims include furthering the ideal of complete openness in all areas of science. This entails examining all proposals with an open mind and ensuring that none is dismissed for reasons of vested interest. So-called conventional wisdom cannot be allowed to dominate over true scientific method. In the present case, one argument has been advanced, especially to the public, to the exclusion of all others.

It might be remembered that it was through investigating a computer programme dealing with weather that Lorenz came across unusual behaviour in the results which eventually led to the birth of chaos theory. In fact, on the matter of weather forecasting, Lorenz has many words of wisdom in his book *The Essence of Chaos* (UCL Press, 1995). For example, he states that, when asked why weather forecasts cannot be improved, he is often tempted to reply "Well, why should we be able to make any forecasts at all?" This is, indeed, a very sensible question. All such forecasting is based on man-deduced laws of physics in which we actually trust implicitly.

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