

In memory of Stephen H. Schneider

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Recipient of the 2007 Collective Nobel Peace Prize

With the passing away of Stephen H. Schneider, July 19, 2010, the scientific community on climate science loses one of its eminent members. Stephen was a researcher for around forty years and has been on the forefront of gathering scientific knowledge on the very complex domain of the climate of our planet. Moreover, he has participated in discussions with political leaders and was an adviser to several US presidential administrations, as well as to international institutions such as the IPCC, of which he was an active collaborator.

At the latest Copenhagen Conference (COP15) in December 2009, he presented his latest book *Science as a Contact Sport. Inside the Battle to save Earth's Climate* (National Geographic, 2009). This book is a personal and exceptional testimony of the lifetime of a researcher in climate science. His indefatigable commitment to informing stake holders, activist groups, political leaders and business leaders about the consequences of inaction on climate change, is truly exceptional. The battle against ignorance of the leadership and of the climate threat deniers is exemplary. The scientific community lost one of its most eminent climate scientists. *The New York Times* called him a "climate warrior" for his lifetime commitment to climate science and society.

The topic of global warming has climbed high in the societal and political agenda since nearly two decades. However, climate scientists have not all been rewarded by bringing the facts and data to the attention of the public. The impact of human activities on the composition of the atmosphere and the resulting global warming with its dramatic effects on the biosphere, has not been sufficiently accepted by the political and business establishments. Moreover, the negative role of the media in the scientific debate, in particular with S. Schneider, can only astonish the ordinary citizens. A large part of the media has repeatedly misused statements of climate scientists, either modifying the content or the context of their statements.

So far, educating the public and politicians about the complexity of climate change has not been accomplished very well. And unfortunately major enterprises - especially in the branches of energy and automotive technology – so far have been unable to switch from the “business as usual” to sustainable manufacturing processes and products. Thus, we still have seen little progress in solving one of the most dangerous crises that humanity has experienced.

The testimony of Stephen Schneider's book is a precious historical document. It ends with a remarkable but very simple recommendation to all of us: *Teach your children well*". ■ Raoul Weiler