

Blockbuster sea level study may turn climate change orthodoxy on its head

By

[Anthony Blair](#)

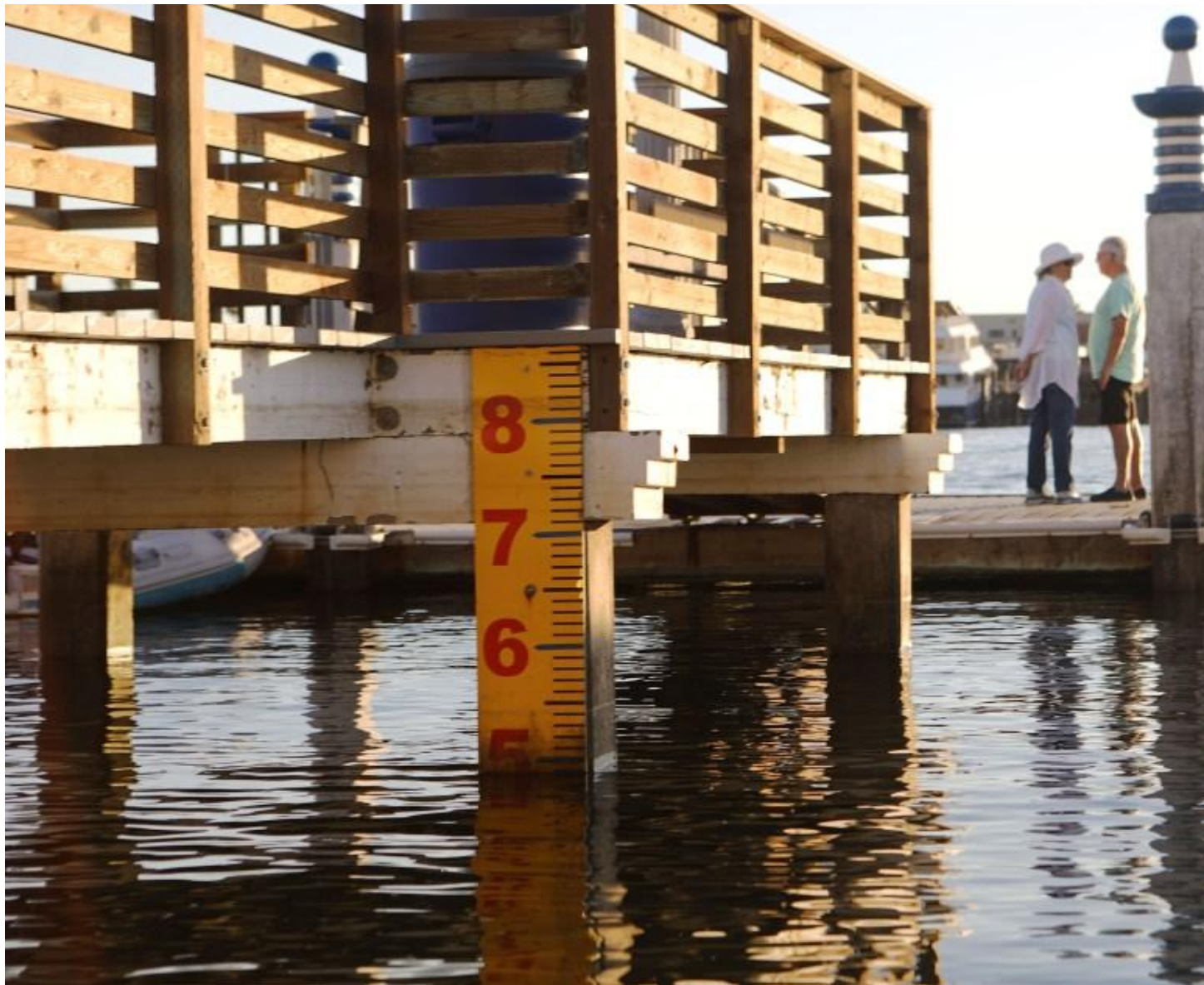
Published Sep. 4, 2025, 4:00 p.m. ET

Global sea levels have not continued to rise at the rates predicted by many scientists — and there is no evidence that climate change has contributed to any such acceleration, a new first-of-its-kind [study has claimed](#).

The research found that the average sea level rise in 2020 was only around 1.5mm per year, or 6 inches per century, according to the paper's authors, Dutch engineering consultant Hessel Voortman and independent researcher Rob de Vos.

"This is significantly lower than the 3 to 4 mm/year often reported by climate scientists in scientific literature and the media," Voortman [told independent journalist Michael Shellenberger](#).

Voortman was shocked that no researcher before had performed an analysis of real-world local data.



4

No evidence exists that climate change has caused an acceleration in global sea levels, a new study has claimed.

“It is crazy that it had not been done. I started doing this research in 2021 by doing the literature review. ‘Who has done the comparison of the projections with the observations?’ And there were none,” he told Shellenberger.

The study was also unlike any of its kind in that it was carried out with no external funding, said Voortman, who has spent the last 30 years as a hydraulic engineer working with flood protection and coastal-infrastructure adaptation projects around the world.

In 2023, Voortman published a bombshell paper claiming that sea level rise across the low-lying Dutch coast hadn’t accelerated.

The study's authors said sea levels have risen by just 1.5 mm a year.

"From practice, I had already encountered the situation that sea level projections were exceeding sea level observations," he said.

He decided to put his theory to the test worldwide, looking at 200 different tide-gauge stations with at least 60 years of data to study.

"For the vast majority of the stations, the differences between the two curves were not significant," Voortman said, adding that this indicated no detectable acceleration in sea level rises.

The vast majority of mainstream scientific studies have pointed to a dramatic acceleration in sea level rise over the past three decades following the introduction of satellite imagery.

But Voortman claims that sea levels were in fact in a "trough" in 1993 and a "peak" in 2020, and that once these fluctuations are taken into account, there is no detectable rise in sea level.

Of the stations Voortman studied that did point to a notable rise in sea level, most were located near others that showed negligible changes in recent decades, "making it unlikely that a global phenomenon like CO₂-driven global warming is the cause," Voortman reportedly said.

Instead, the study attributed such rises to local factors such as earthquakes, extensive construction, or post-glacial effects.

The study claimed the models of the UN climate panel, the IPCC, "significantly overestimate local sea level rise in 2020," according to a press release.

"When designing coastal infrastructure, engineers have long accounted for sea level rise. Both measurements and projections are important sources of information. Understanding the differences between them is crucial for practical applications," Voortman said.

Despite his calls for less fearmongering headlines about sea level rise, Voortman told Schellenberger he is not denying any form of climate change exists, or saying that models are a mistake.

"It is important to stress that there are good reasons to have models. If we as engineers design something in the coastal zone, then we try to achieve a technical lifetime of 50 to 100 years, and that means we need to try to look into the future," he said.

Retrieved September 7, 2025 from [Sea level rise not caused by climate change, study claims](#)