

Trump says climate change not a hoax, not sure of its source

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is backing off his claim that climate change is a hoax but says he doesn't know if it's manmade and suggests that the climate will "change back again."

In an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that aired Sunday night, Trump said he doesn't want to put the U.S. at a disadvantage in responding to climate change.

"I think something's happening. Something's changing and it'll change back again," he said. "I don't think it's a hoax. I think there's probably a difference. But I don't know that it's manmade. I will say this: I don't want to give trillions and trillions of dollars. I don't want to lose millions and millions of jobs."

Trump called climate change a hoax in November 2012 when he sent a tweet stating, "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive." He later said he was joking about the Chinese connection, but in years since has continued to call global warming a hoax.

"I'm not denying climate change," he said in the interview. "But it could very well go back. You know, we're talking about over a ... millions of years."

As far as the climate “changing back,” temperature records kept by NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration show that the world hasn’t had a cooler-than-average year since 1976 or a cooler-than-normal month since the end of 1985.

Trump, who is scheduled on Monday to visit areas of Georgia and Florida damaged by Hurricane Michael, also expressed doubt over scientists’ findings linking the changing climate to more powerful hurricanes.

“They say that we had hurricanes that were far worse than what we just had with Michael,” said Trump, who identified “they” as “people” after being pressed by “60 Minutes” correspondent Leslie Stahl. She asked, “What about the scientists who say it’s worse than ever?” the president replied, “You’d have to show me the scientists because they have a very big political agenda.”

Trump’s comments came just days after a Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a warning that global warming would increase climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth. The report detailed how Earth’s weather, health and ecosystems would be in better shape if the world’s leaders could somehow limit future human-caused warming.

Citing concerns about the pact’s economic impact, Trump said in 2017 that the U.S. will leave the Paris climate accord. The agreement set voluntary greenhouse gas emission targets in an effort to lessen the impact of fossil fuels.

On a different topic, Trump told “60 Minutes” that he’s been surprised by Washington being a tough, deceptive and divisive place, though some accuse the real estate mogul elected president of those same tactics.

“So I always used to say the toughest people are Manhattan real estate guys and blah, blah,” he said. “Now I say they’re babies.”

He said the political people in Washington have changed his thinking.

“This is the most deceptive, vicious world. It is vicious, it’s full of lies, deceit and deception,” he said. “You make a deal with somebody and it’s like making a deal with — that table.”