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## Are We at a Tipping Point on Tipping Points?



Source material: Axios Generate



# The climate community loves tipping points



**Stop making predictions is one of the strategy recommendations I've made to the climate community.**

**Climate science hasn't been around long enough to function with the precision necessary to make confident predictions.**

- The mother of all climate tipping points is the 1.5 degree Celsius goal set by the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Every strategy, tactic, and conversation revolves around keeping global warming below that target.
- Why? Because the world as we know it will come to end if we don't.
- Well then, we're screwed, or not.

# It isn't working



**The climate community has attempted to convince the world that climate change is a crisis.**

**It probably is. The problem is that you're never going to get most people to believe it.**

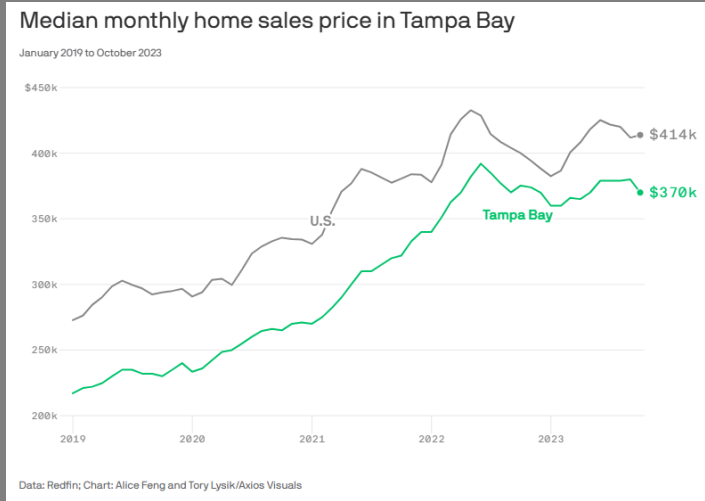
**That's because it lacks the imminent consequences associated with the average person's perception of a crisis.**

- The Axios Generate article that prompted this post referred to a “perspective piece” in *Nature Climate Change* titled '*Tipping points*' *confuse and can distract from urgent climate action*.
- In it, several prominent climate scientists make the argument that constantly using the term tipping point may be “counterproductive and distracting.”

**Say amen!**

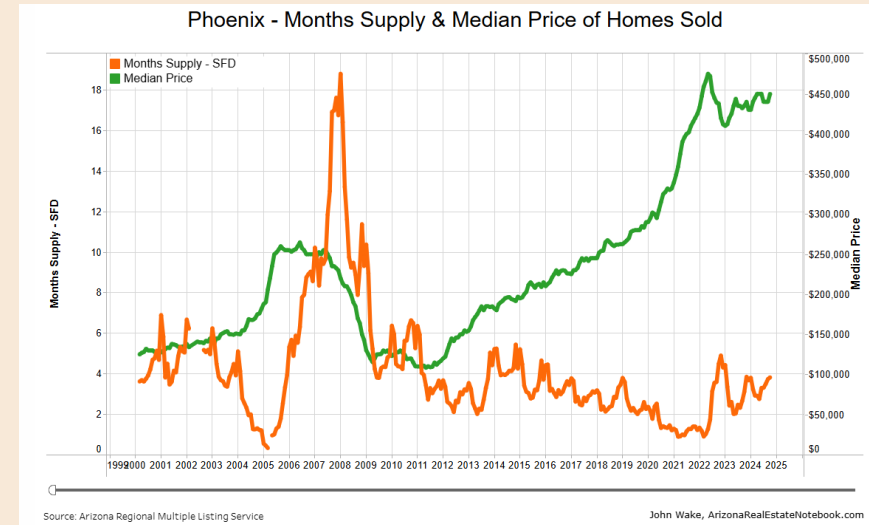
- I've used the recovering from addiction analogy before. The climate community is addicted to tipping points and framing climate as a crisis.
- Perhaps it's ready to take the first step in recovery: admit it has a problem.

# The south still rising



**I think most people understand that weather conditions have, and are changing. Those directly or severely impacted may actually change their attitude toward climate change.**

**But changing weather conditions isn't enough to convince most people. If it was, home prices in places like Florida and Arizona would be plummeting.**



- The abstract for the *Nature Climate Change* article (no – I wasn't going to pay to read the entire article) noted the following:
    - That the critique of the term 'tipping point' is framed as oversimplifying the diverse dynamics of complex natural and human systems and for conveying urgency without fostering a meaningful basis for climate change.
- Say what?**
- That's scientist speak. Let me put it in a way we can all understand:
    - Too many people aren't buying it.



**The authors of the article note that the term tipping point has been used more than 2,200 times in papers.**

**Can you say – the scientist that cried wolf!**

# The crux of the problem



- This says it all. The authors acknowledge:
  - “There is no specific increment of temperature increase that science can identify as the boundary between our current, already dangerous climate and a future catastrophic climate.”
- In other words – climate science really has no idea where any theoretical tipping point may be. They’re just guessing, and that risks losing credibility.

# My advise



**Begin to couch climate change messaging in a way that people can understand and relate to.**

**For example: you wouldn't treat your own home like we are treating the planet.**

## Stop

- Guessing.
- Making definitive predictions.
- And attempting to convince people climate is a crisis.

## Start

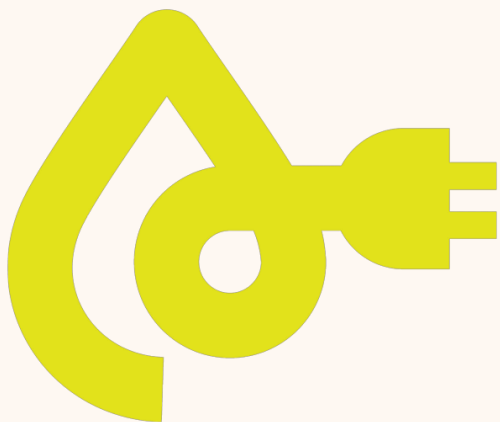
- Speaking in terms that can gain consensus. For example:
  - We are polluting our planet.
  - The tip of the iceberg (frequency of severe weather events) is already visible.
  - If we continue to pollute, at some point we will hit a point of no return. We don't know when that is. It could be 10 or 100 years from now, so it behooves us to act with some urgency.

## A Key Component

- Combined with a shift in messaging must be an associated change of strategy.







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## Unbiased and Unfiltered

- An honest assessment of the climate change effort.
- I cover what's working – but more important - the issues/roadblocks that the industry would prefer to ignore.
- A must-read for anyone with a desire to understand what's really going on with renewable energy and climate change.



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