

## ISSUES WITH JANE VELEZ-MITCHELL

Aired March 6, 2012 - 19:00ET

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JANE VELEZ-MITCHELL, HOST: I'm Jane Velez-Mitchell, coming to you live from New York City.

VELEZ-MITCHELL: What's behind all that extreme weather? In just a second, but first, I think we all deserve a laugh break.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

(BABY TALKING ON CELL PHONE)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: A fierce severe weather outbreak, the haunting sights and sounds of Friday.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: It's not just one tornado.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Just pretty much leveled the whole area.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Entire neighborhoods are flattened. Schools are in ruins.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: It's almost like that movie, "Twister".

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I've never seen anything like this.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VELEZ-MITCHELL: At least 40 people now dead from that string of devastating tornadoes that tore through the south and Midwest. Entire towns leveled, leaving scenes some compared to war zones. And when we see weather like this, following last year's crazy storms, and one of the warmest winters on record for America, I have to ask, what's next? Did we anger Mother Earth? These extreme weather patterns have a lot of us worried. People have lost their homes, their lives. Is this just the beginning? Straight out to my very special guest, Bjorn Lomborg -- he calls himself the skeptical environmentalist, named one of "Time's most influential people in the world, and the man behind the book and documentary, "Cool It Now". He's been nice enough to join us all the way from Denmark. Bjorn, thank you for being here. I'm looking at this stuff, I'm seeing people running for their lives, screaming, not knowing where their kids are, their homes destroyed, and I am saying, "This is crazy. It's not normal." And somebody from the National Weather Service also echoed that and said, "This weather is crazy." Is Mother Nature angry at us?

BJORN LOMBORG, DIRECTOR, COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS CENTER: Well, Jane, I don't know if Mother Nature is angry at us, but it's clearly something that we want to tackle. And I think the cause of this is global warming comes virtually every time we see something damaging happening. But what we have to recognize is, we just don't know whether global warming actually affects tornadoes. The U.N. climate panel tells us, we just don't know.

But if we look at larger impacts, which we do have some sense of, namely flooding, and hurricanes, we have seen increasing damage costs, but not because of global warming making it worse, but simply because there are many more people with much more stuff.

VELEZ-MITCHELL: Yes.

LOMBORG: And so in some sense, what you're seeing here is just a lot more people with a lot more stuff. You will get more damage.

VELEZ-MITCHELL: Well, you have a lot more people. We have the world population exploding. We're going to hit 9 billion people by 2050. You've got all those people consuming more than they ever have in the history of the human race. And so it comes back to physics. For every action, there's an equal and opposite reaction.

Even if there was a chance, a possibility that climate change was responsible for some of this wreckage, wouldn't it make sense to change our lifestyle and decrease our consumption? Because wouldn't that actually increase the chance of, well, the stuff we do have, we get to keep. It's not going to be destroyed in some kind of natural disaster?

I mean, Bjorn, when I look at this, I think, all these people suffering so much, maybe lifestyle change would ultimately leave them with more than accumulating a lot and having it all swept away.

LOMBORG: And Jane, that has a lot of argument for it. We should definitely try to change our behavior. My concern is just do we change it in the right way? A lot of people tell you, well, you should drive your car less. That's an incredibly inefficient way to try to help people from for instance not experiencing tornadoes and hurricanes and damaging floods. Instead, what we should be focusing on is making sure that those people are much safer by focusing on getting more information beforehand, for instance, better modeling of tornadoes and the other freak happenings from nature. We should have better building codes, better enforcement codes. This is important stuff.

VELEZ-MITCHELL: More on the other side.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

VELEZ-MITCHELL: Last April was the second deadliest outbreak of tornadoes in U.S. history. This past January was the fourth warmest January in U.S. history. We are breaking records left and right.

Now, Bjorn, you say, well, we can't prove that climate change is responsible, therefore humans are responsible, but with all the consumption that we, humans, are engaging in, climate change is impacted, because you're going to have an increase in temperature, increase in temperature warms the water, warm water creates hurricanes. I mean, you don't have to be a scientist to do the math.

LOMBORG: There's two things to this. Global warming is definitely happening and global warming is a problem. I think just making the very simple statement. We're going to see worse hurricanes; that is a much more complicated matter, actually. The U.N. has spent about 20 years trying to figure it out.

(INAUDIBLE)

VELEZ-MITCHELL: Got to leave it there. END