

— SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT —

“Statistics and Climate Change”

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ABSTRACT

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently released its Fourth Assessment Report claiming "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising mean sea level.... Most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.... Discernible human influences now extend to other aspects of climate, including ocean warming, continental-average temperatures, temperature extremes, and wind patterns." The American Statistical Association has also recently released a statement endorsing these conclusions of the IPCC. I review the development of arguments underlying such claims; how these arguments relate to statistical analysis and the treatment of uncertainty; and how statisticians can contribute to the issues raised in climate change studies. I will also present a recent example of a Bayesian approach to multi-model information processing for developing climate forecasts.

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