

Global Warming

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Is climate warming and, if so, are humans contributing to this by emitting carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gasses (GHG) into our all-too-thin atmosphere? These are difficult questions to answer and the uncertainties abound. But ever increasing evidence suggests that the answer is yes. Realizing what such an answer would mean in terms of how humans generate energy (most of it comes from fossil fuels which has carbon dioxide as its main by-product), many have called for much greater certainty before society is asked to make large changes in its way of producing energy. Most people are confused by the resulting arguments. Both sides seem to make good points, while many hold that we puny humans are incapable of changing something as large and powerful as the earth's climate.

This talk will ask the question: "Is enough already known about global warming and natural climate variability for a prudent society to begin to take the first steps at reducing our GHG emissions?" In doing this we will look at climate through the ages to see if any of it looks like our recent warming. We will also look at the accuracy of the temperature measurements that say our climate is warming since the surface ones don't entirely agree with those from satellites. We'll also look at how well we can model climate on computers, and finally we'll try look into our crystal ball and see what the future might hold.