Climate Change and the Energy Economy

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Abstract  There is a robust scientific consensus that human-induced climate change is occurring. The recently released Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC states with “very high confidence,” that human activity has caused the global climate to warm. Many well-documented observations show that fossil fuel burning, deforestation, and other industrial processes are rapidly increasing the atmospheric concentrations of CO$_2$ and other greenhouse gases. An increasing body of observations and modeling results shows that these changes in atmospheric composition are changing the global climate and beginning to affect terrestrial and marine ecosystems. In this talk, I’ll review observed and projected changes to the US climate, discuss the sectoral contributions to US greenhouse gas emissions and speculate about the future of the US carbon economy.