

TODAY: Regional/Local/Personal efforts

Outline

Seattle Times debate: HW 5 debrief

Opportunities for involvement

- monitoring nature

- UW Climate Action Plan

- programs at UW

- sustainable cities

Course evaluation

Example of "debating the science"

Seattle Times Pro/Con editorial July 25, 2003

"Does human activity affect climate?"

synopsis

"Yes" by J. W. Anderson, Resources for the Future

- a. The world has grown measurably warmer over the past century.
- b. The chief cause is probably carbon dioxide... from fossil fuels.
- c. What will happen next, as CO₂ keeps rising? "nobody knows..."
- d. Increasing CO₂ "increases the risk... of a huge calamity"
- e. The solution is to implement modest policies that will send the right market signals without upsetting the economy.

analysis

**a and b support Sci. Assertion 1; d supports Sci. Assertion 3.
c undermines Sci. Assertion 2; e undermines Sci. Assertion 4.
Almost no scientific argument is advanced. Editorial is almost entirely about politics - i.e. how should we respond to the scientific knowledge.**

Political topics are appropriate to an editorial page. [Although, that wasn't the topic being debated.]

Key Assertions of Global Warming Science

1. Human-induced global warming, amounting to 0.3 ± 0.1 C over the past 50 years, is real. [90% confidence]
2. BAU policies will result in additional, human-induced global warming of 1-6 C by 2100. [70% confidence]
3. Global warming in excess of ~ 2 C would entail dire risks for both human and natural systems. These risks increase at higher levels of warming.
4. Preventing global warming in excess of 2 C would require GHG emissions (primarily from fossil-fuel combustion) to be rapidly and dramatically reduced (of order 50% global reduction by 2050).