

Climate Decision Making Center

Carnegie Mellon University

Funded by the National Science Foundation ([NSF](#))

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About the CDMC

How uncertain is the science of climate change? How much will global temperatures rise in the next 50 years? What about sea level? Will there be more tropical storms and habitat loss? How much can we reduce emissions through more efficient use of energy? How can the power system deal with large amounts of variable renewable power? Will electric cars ever be economically viable?

Climate and energy system researchers have been tackling these questions for decades now, but the uncertainty in climate change and our energy future remains and is likely to remain even with more research. If policy makers are to do anything about global warming, they will have to make decisions now, in spite of the uncertainty. At the Climate Decision Making Center (CDMC), researchers are studying the limits in our understanding of climate change, its impacts, and the strategies that might be pursued to mitigate and adapt to change.

CDMC investigators are developing and demonstrating methods to characterize these [irreducible uncertainties](#), focusing on uncertainties about [climate and technologies](#) for mitigation. They are also creating, illustrating, and evaluating [decision strategies and tools](#) for policy makers that incorporate such uncertainties.

Much of CDMC's work has involved direct collaboration with decision makers. These have included resource managers dealing with [energy systems](#); [forests and fisheries](#); [climate risks](#); and many others.

The methods and approaches being developed and demonstrated by CDMC researchers can be applied to a wide range of problems beyond the domain of climate change and energy technology. The [Ph.D. students](#) that the Center is educating combine strong technical, social science, and decision-analytic skills that prepare them to work on a wide variety of important societal problems.

The Climate Decision Making Center is anchored at [Carnegie Mellon University's Department of Engineering and Public Policy](#). It was founded in 2004 with a five-year, \$6.9 million grant from the National Science Foundation. Collaborating investigators and graduate students are located at the University of British Columbia, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Calgary, Oxford University, Stanford University, Pacific Risks, and The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Through the spin-off [CCSReg](#) project, we also have collaboration with the University of Minnesota, the Vermont Law School and the law firm of VanNess Feldman.

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Policy Briefs

The Many Meanings of "Smart Grid"
(July 2009)

Economic, Environmental and Security Implications of Plug-in Vehicles
(April 2009)

Cap and Trade is Not Enough: Improving US Climate Policy
(March 2009)

Managing Emissions of Carbon Dioxide from Coal-Fired Power Plants
(April 2008)