

Qatar University Life Science Symposium 2016: Biodiversity, Sustainability and Climate Change, with Perspectives from Qatar

Dangerous anthropogenic climate change. Are we closer than we think? A 2016 update

Jeff Obbard*

ABSTRACT

In this presentation, I will outline the fundamentals of climate change science with respect to 'real-world' climate observations, and evidence from the Earth's paleoclimate (climate history) record. In particular, I will highlight evidence showing that the Earth's energy budget is no longer in balance (i.e. there is more energy coming into the earth-atmospheric system than going out), and outline the risks of non-linear change in the Earth's climate system – even below the United Nations temperature target to avoid “dangerous anthropogenic (man-made) climate change” - as defined by two degrees centigrade of warming above pre-industrial temperatures. I will summarize the latest climate data for 2016, and pose the question: Does the COP 21 Paris Agreement go far enough to avoid dangerous climate change?

Environmental Science Center,
Qatar University

*Email: jeff.obbard@qu.edu.qa

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