



Communicating uncertainty in climate change

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Bringing Science to the Art of Underwriting™



A fictional interview

- Scenario: A researcher (Professor Joe Bloggs) being interviewed about his research by a journalist (Jim Hack)
- Your job is to spot cases where the researcher deals with major uncertainties, and decide whether he does a good or bad job of communicating them
- There are absolutely no points or prizes for pointing out that the research is fictional!
- You will need to work in pairs: you will have three minutes after the interview to agree your assessment

Some pot-holes in communicating uncertainty

- Using numerical and statistical data to give a false sense of certainty ie to imply a falsely precise quantification of uncertainty.
- Not explaining conflicts between different research results.
- Claiming that we know about, and can quantify, all of the sources of uncertainty that exist, particularly in future forecasts and predictions.
- Presenting particular policy choices as if they automatically followed from the scientific evidence.