



CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCOPE 27

Edited by

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Studies of the Interaction of Climate and Society

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CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Studies of the Interaction of Climate and Society

SCOPE 27

*Edited by Robert W. Kates, Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts,
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and Mimi Berberian, Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts*

This is the first comprehensive handbook of climate impact assessment. The growing climate consciousness, both popular and scientific, which began in the 1970s, was sparked by a series of extreme climate events and related disruptions, and by scientific speculation on increased climate variability and possible climate change. The pace and degree of change are under debate, but it is widely agreed that at least one change, a long-term global warming derived from the enrichment of the atmospheric content of the 'greenhouse' gases, is underway. There is also emerging scientific consensus that human-induced alterations in the chemical constituents of the atmosphere can lead to large regional, and even global, changes of the atmosphere in the form of more acidic rain and greater ultraviolet radiation.

Within the time period of the projected global average warming, sustained variations of climate will occur in many places, and lesser periods of favourable or unfavourable climate will occur in most places. Where these changes are very large—the extremes greater than usual—where people and places are vulnerable, or where human activity meshes poorly with natural opportunity, significant climate impacts are likely to occur. This book addresses the important issues of how to identify, study and respond to such impacts, i.e. adjusting to changing climate, coping with extremes and matching human needs to climate endowment. The book will be of interest to atmospheric scientists, resource economists, environmental scientists, geographers, ecologists and agricultural scientists.

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