



The National Research Council has just issued [a new study](#) on the [U.S. Climate Change Science Program](#). The key conclusion: the current program does not effectively support societal response to climate change, in part because it is too focused on natural science to the exclusion of work on the human dimensions of climate change. The executive summary explains:

The traditional approach of organizing climate change research by scientific disciplines (e.g., atmospheric chemistry) or biophysical processes (e.g., carbon cycle) has led to significant advances in our understanding of the climate system and the creation of a robust observations and modeling infrastructure. However, the paucity of social science research and the separation of natural and social science research within the CCSP, as well as the insufficient engagement of policy makers, resource managers, and other stakeholders in the program are hindering our ability to address the problems that face society. . . .

The committee recommends that the program be restructured so that the existing CCSP research elements (e.g., atmospheric composition) and cross-cutting themes (e.g., modeling, observations) contribute directly, although not exclusively, to critical scientific-societal issues such as fresh water availability, extreme weather, and sea level rise. . . .