

Joe Romm has posted a mildly interesting post on the [damage from natural disasters](#). A couple of thoughts.

1. Ignoring the last year of the data, the reported Figure 15 shows that in the average year that North America suffers roughly 15 billion dollars worth of damage from natural disasters. I have two evil points to make. First, given that unemployment is high such damage actually creates a demand to rebuild (so Mother Nature is a Keynesian stimulus). Second, total GDP in the US and Canada is roughly \$16 trillion dollars. So, when I take $15/16000$ I get a small number of .0009 as natural disaster's annual damage share expressed in terms of North American GDP.
2. For those looking for data on deaths from natural disasters, go to [this website](#). At a point in time, rich nations suffer fewer deaths from natural disasters than poorer nations and as nations grow richer, their death toll from natural disasters declines. Take a look at [my 2005 paper](#).

Adaptation to natural disasters will grow as a research topic. We need to zone for multifamily density in safe parts of cities and encourage the insurance industry to price the new risks that climate change has posed. This is the "small ball" of adaptation.