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Salon duc Tape – Overview of the IPCC’s 6th Assessment Report on Climate Change – September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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### What’s new from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change?

At the salon on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, climate scientist **Scott Denning** will provide an overview of the IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report on Climate Change. This is the first salon following our two-month summer break. We will continue to meet virtually through the end of the year, unless all serious variants of COVID-19 are vanquished before then. Scott has provided the following introduction to his presentation:

“The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) doesn’t actually conduct research. Rather, they review and assess previously-published work every seven or eight years and publish gigantic tomes the size of 20th Century Manhattan phonebooks which are ridiculously dense and hard to read. The stilted language is intended to be read by bureaucrats in scores of national governments, but the reports have much less impact than they should because they need to be translated for lay audiences. The IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) is hot off the presses, updating AR5 which was published way back in 2013.

There are assessments by three major Working Groups (WGs) in AR6: WG1 reviews the natural science of climate change; WG2 reviews climate impacts; and WG3 considers policy responses. The IPCC is inherently conservative, and their conclusions tend to be a little weak. Changes in the science since AR5 are subtle, but the language has gotten remarkably more urgent. As before, the IPCC concludes that climate change is very serious and accelerating, that impacts are likely to be dire, that emissions must fall drastically to avert catastrophe, and that impacts will be felt far more severely in poor countries that are least able to manage them.

One of the most striking changes since AR5 is the emphasis on climate pathways under falling emissions. In particular, it’s critical to understand that total warming increases in direct proportion to the total amount of carbon ever burned. This result is counterintuitive and a little bit controversial, emerging from complicated feedback between climate and the natural carbon cycle. Three implications of this concept are that 1) all carbon burned anywhere at any time (past or future) contributes an identical amount of warming; 2) warming will stop when emissions stop (no warming “in the pipeline”); and 3) that warming is essentially permanent unless emissions become negative.”

Scott is the Monfort Professor of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University, where he studies pathways of carbon in the climate system. Over 30 years, he’s published well over 100 papers in the peer-reviewed climate literature, served on many national and international advisory boards, and mentored dozens of graduate students. Now on transitional retirement from CSU, he’s delighted to be teaching and speaking more and writing fewer proposals and reports. He’s a lively and entertaining presenter and apologizes in advance for his notoriously foul mouth.

Salon duc Tape, a public forum sponsored by the **Northern Colorado Alliance for a Livable Future**, meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month from 7:00 — 9:00 p.m. via Zoom. **You will need to register in advance for this salon [here](#).** After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information – including a new link – about joining the salon.