

Abstract - Katie McShane

Toward a more complete assessment of climate impacts.

Climate change poses a great threat to welfare of animals, but the literature on climate impacts almost entirely ignores animal welfare. Using the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report as a case study, I consider what the assessments of climate impacts do contain: careful studies of the projected effects of climate change on economies, ecosystem services, biodiversity, and human welfare. None of these, however, is a good proxy for animal welfare. Whereas discussions of climate impacts on human welfare detail the various ways that quality of life for humans will be affected, in the case of animals all that is considered is whether they will exist, in what numbers, and with what degree of diversity. I argue that there is no justification for ignoring impacts on the quality of life for animals in this way.

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