Climate and Society Annual Report 2012 - 2013

> *The Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society aims to foster collaborative, interdisciplinary research on the human and social dimensions of global climate change. Our work explores how social, economic, political, cultural, and behavioral factors drive climate change, shape impacts and vulnerabilities, and condition response strategies.*

This overarching goal is advanced through pursuing objectives in three areas:

- promote cutting-edge **research** and build research capacity at Rutgers
- conduct **outreach** to communicate research findings to policymakers and the public
- support **education** of students in the area of climate and society

Fifty-six faculty and *fourteen* graduate students are now Climate and Society affiliates (http://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/menu-ii/affiliated-faculty).

I. Research

Projects:

1) Leichenko and McDermott. *Economic Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Hazards and Climate Change: Building Resilience in the Barnegat Bay Region.* Barnegat Bay Partnership, $25,000.

The work was completed and the final report presented in December 2012. Leichenko presented the results of the work at the MARCO workshop on Climate Change Adaptation in the Mid-Atlantic Region in Delaware in December 2012, at a Barnegat Bay Partnership Meeting in March 2013, and at a Garrison Foundation Meeting on Cities, Climate Change and Behavior in New York in March 2013.

The work was featured in two newspaper articles:
USA Today. May 22, 2013. "Prepare now or face flooding, report warns Jersey Shore"
http://www.usatoday.com/story/weather/2013/05/22/jersey-shore-climate-change-report/2350671/

Asbury Park Press and *Courier News* (Gannett News). May 22, 2013. "Prepare Now or Go Under: RU Report Warns Shore"
http://www.app.com/article/20130521/NJNEWS/305210109/Prepare-now-go-under-RU-report-warns-Shore

2) Leichenko, Lathrop, Auermuller, and McDermott. *Economic Vulnerability to Climate Change on the Jersey Shore: Promoting Adaptation, Resilience and Sustainability in Coastal New Jersey.* New Jersey Sea Grant, $120,000. (February 2012-April 2014).

This research was underway when Hurricane Sandy hit coastal New Jersey, providing an opportunity for the project to re-interview respondents to capture impacts and social learning. It also delayed case study work to allow recuperation time for communities. The NJFloodMapper was released in February 2013 and the Getting to Resilience tool in March. Both have been indicated as best practices for developing community resilience.

3) Mitchell, Lecker, McDermott, and O'Neill. *Post-Disaster Risk Redefinition In Small New Jersey Municipalities During The Initial Recovery Period Following Super Storm Sandy.* NSF Rapid Response, $25,000.

This project was approved and launched in January 2013. Research was completed in April and analysis continues. Mitchell presented results to FEMA in May and at an NSF-Rapid conference in June.

4) Leichenko. *Hurricane Sandy, Disaster Recovery and the Seeds of Urban Transformation*. NSF Rapid Response Proposal. ($50,000 - Recommended for funding). This project is expected to launch in July 2013.

Climate and Society Seminars:

From Client to Citizen: The Role of Technology in Changing Social Relations in Northeast Brazil. Don Nelson, Department of Anthropology, University of Georgia (September 14, co-sponsored as part of the Geography Speaker Series).

Rational Choice, Climate Risk Perception, and Poverty. Martin Bunzl, Department of Philosophy, Rutgers University (September 28*)*.

Climate Policy Failures: Running Out of Time. Howard Latin, Rutgers University Law School at Newark (October 12).

Payments for Ecosystem Services in Vietnam: Balancing Equity and Efficiency in Market Approaches to Forest Conservation. Pamela McElwee, Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers. (April 5, co-sponsored as part of the Geography Speaker Series).

Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and Extreme Hydrological Events in the Catskill Mountains and the Hudson River Valley. Allen Frei, Department of Geography, Hunter College – CUNY**.** (April 26, co-sponsored as part of the Geography Speaker Series).

Polar Speaker Series:

Climate and Society was the recipient of two awards from Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs/SAS for speaker events contributing to their 2012-2013 Biennial Theme – *Technologies Without Borders: Technologies Across Borders*. One award ($1,500) was to support a 'Polar series' of talks within our faculty seminar series. The other award was for our spring public lecture.

Arctic Urban Development and Climate Change: Past, Present, and Future of Urban Infrastructure in Permafrost Regions. Nikolay Shiklomanov, Department of Geography, George Washington University (October 19).

The New Maritime Arctic: Responding to Change at the Top of the World. Lawson Brigham, Distinguished Professor of Geography and Arctic Policy, University of Alaska Fairbanks (November 16).

Expedition Avannaa: Vanishing Ice and Culture in Northern Greenland. Galya Morrell, journalist, co-sponsored with Geography (December 7).

Polar Peoples: Population and Migration in the Arctic. Dr. Timothy Heleniak, Department of Geography, University of Maryland, and Director, American Geographical Society. Co-sponsored with Geography (March 29).

Stan Stenner: Director of Conservation Science at Ocean Conservancy. This was an opportunity for members of the polar working group and other interested people to meet Mr. Stenner over lunch and a brief informal presentation on his work (April 4).

Symposium:

Rutgers Climate Research Symposium, co-sponsored with the Climate and Environmental Change Institute (CECI). Dozens of faculty, staff, and graduate students presented posters on their climate-related research. Rutgers faculty presented a panel on Sandy, and researchers from other institutions addressed attendees. (November 9).

Faculty Working groups:

We are encouraging the formation of self-initiated clusters of faculty around research themes of mutual interest. Three such groups were launched in 2012-2013.

1) An *Arctic working group* has formed to bring together the growing number of faculty at Rutgers and nearby campuses who are engaged in the study of the social dynamics and policy implications of rapid climate-driven change in the Arctic region. This group has already received funds for a series of seminars (see 'Polar

Series' above.) Affiliate Hal Salzman and colleagues have submitted an NSF funding proposal, "The Triple Helix of Arctic Sustainability: The Challenges of Changing Climate, Environment, and Community" ($2 million).

2) *Land use transitions in the tropics* has been funded as an Interdisciplinary Working Group ($10,000) by the Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs/SAS to support guest speakers, reconnaissance trips by graduate students, and travel to international workshops and research centers. A discussion group will focus on tropical regrowth and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), explore possible joint grant proposals, and develop ways to bring these topics into the classroom. Climate and Society may provide supplemental funding if needed.

3) A *Caribbean working group* has formed to initiate comparative research on climate adaptation with partners in Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. The group received Interdisciplinary Working Group funding ($10,000) from Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs/SAS for the proposal "Promoting Community Adaptation and Resilience in the Insular Caribbean" to support a workshop and a MaGrann conference at Rutgers in Spring 2014.

New Funding proposals:

NSF Coastal Science, Engineering and Sustainability grant proposal - Richard Lathrop, Melanie McDermott, Lisa Auermuller, Daniel Barrone, and Edward Green. *The Jersey Shore in a Post-Sandy World: Examining the resilience of a coupled social-ecological system* ($600,000).

II. Community Building

A well-attended fall mixer was held in September 2012 in the Livingston Commons atrium to launch the year. Faculty, staff, graduate students and post-doctoral scholars were invited, and approximately 45 attended.

Following a very popular lunch for our second polar speaker, Dr. Lawson Brigham, and faculty, Bob Kopp, and other affiliates suggested we continue hosting themed lunches to allow affiliates interested in similar subjects a chance to meet informally and share ideas. As a result the Climate Buffet lunch series was formed (co-hosted with the Climate and Environmental Change Initiative). The series was held on a monthly basis, with the following themes:

- January: Sea level rise and coastal vulnerability
- February: United States climate policy
- March: Climate education for undergraduates at Rutgers
- April: Reducing Emissions through Deforestation and Degradation + (REDD+)

Each lunch had an attendance of twenty five to forty and introduced affiliates to each other and to new faculty and staff.

III. Education and outreach

Expanding Educational Opportunities:

We conducted background research and held discussions on a potential Climate and Society/Climate Change minor or certificate. We consulted with CECI and the Rutgers Energy Institute among others.

At the same time, we initiated collaboration on the development of a minor or certificate in 'sustainability.' An *ad hoc* committee has been formed and has met several times. It is exploring the possibility of linking a sustainability program with a 'climate change' option.

The initiative organized an internship opportunity (for credit) for Rutgers undergraduates with Climate Access (a climate communication organization launched in 2011 with the co-sponsorship of Climate and Society). Teresa Sikorski, the first intern, is a meteorology major at SEBS. Our partners at Climate Access told us, "We're very happy with Teresa's work! She's been a terrific addition to our team." Victoria Neilson, an environmental policy student, interned in the spring semester. She conducted literature reviews for a climate communication guide and wrote several pieces published in the Climate Access online campaign gallery.

The March climate buffet lunch was devoted to sharing classroom challenges and strategies for teaching undergraduates about climate change. Faculty from a variety of disciplines participated enthusiastically, and it is clear that more support and interaction around this topic would be beneficial to our members. As a result a climate pedagogy symposium has been planned for October 2013.

Special Public Events:

On February 4, 2013, Bill McKibben, prominent environmental author and founding director of climate change advocacy group 350.org, was featured in a series of events: a lunch with faculty, a writing workshop for undergraduates, a dinner with student leaders, and a major public address entitled *Do the Math: Why Climate Change Matters and What You Can Do About It*. A remarkable coalition of co-sponsors came together to fund and promote this event, which brought more than 750 student, faculty, staff, and members of the public to the public lecture, demonstrating the cross-disciplinary, multi-institutional interest on campus in climate change as an integrative and compelling social issue. (See our event page and attached articles).

The student organizing committee was crucial in generating mass publicity amongst undergraduates, and most committee members met with McKibben at the student leadership dinner. This group formed the nucleus of a student divestment campaign that is seeking to convince the Board of Governors that Rutgers should pull out its investments in the fossil fuel industry.

The undergraduate RU-TV/Weather Watchers club taped the lecture and the subsequent public debate. They expressed an interest in taping future climate-change-related events to bring them to a wider audience through RU-TV, and followed up by taping Timothy Heleniak and Mike Tidwell.

In conjunction with Bill McKibben's visit, the Rutgers University Debate Union held a public debate *Confronting Climate Change: What Should RU Do?* Co-sponsored by Climate and Society together with the Cook Campus Dean, Dean of Students and Project Civility, it brought an audience of at least 150 Rutgers affiliates and members of the public on February 6th.

The February 28 seminar by Dr. Arne Jacobson, Humboldt State University, on *The Pico Power Revolution: Off-Grid Energy Services for Low Income People in Africa, Asia, and Beyond* was notable among the full slate of spring seminars. This talk was co-sponsored by the Rutgers Energy Institute, and is co-funded by GAIA ($700) as part of the Technologies Without Borders Series.

Earth Day, April 22, presented an opportunity to co-sponsors several public events. Mike Tidwell presented a public lecture entitled *Extreme Weather and Extreme Energy*, with the support of Cook and College Avenue campus deans. Working for the first time with the undergraduate Students for Environmental Awareness and the Geology Club, along with other co-sponsors, we helped with the first Earth Day Environmental Film Festival. A panel of Rutgers faculty provided context for viewing two new films on climate science and energy development. Around 30 people attended the afternoon lecture and over 100 watched the films.

IV. Institutional

Our Internal Advisory Board met December 19th. We reviewed progress and plans, and had an extensive discussion regarding the proposed certificate/minor and future potential re-configurations of climate initiatives at Rutgers. The Internal Advisory Board was very supportive of the idea of merging Climate and Society with the Climate and Environmental Change Initiative (CECI) in order to form a single Rutgers climate initiative. The new initiative - The Rutgers Climate Institute - was announced by Dean Robert Goodman at a day-long conference held by the NJ Adaptation Alliance with support from CECI at the Cook Campus Center in May.

The merger of Climate and Society and CECI is currently underway, and the Rutgers Climate Institute is expected to launch on September 1, 2013.

Attachments:
Program from Rutgers Climate Change Symposium
Rutgers Today interview with Ken Miller
Flyer for Bill McKibben talk
Flyer for debate
SAS and Targum articles on McKibben talk
Flyer for Mike Tidwell
Flyer for Earth Day Environmental Film Festival

The Rutgers Climate Symposium

AGENDA

8:00-8:45 am Registration and Morning Poster Posting

8:45-9:00 am Welcome

9:00-10:00 am Morning Keynote Address

"Human Effects on Hurricanes: Observational Evidence and Projections for the Next Century"

KERRY EMANUEL
Cecil & Ida Green Professor of Atmospheric Science
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

10:15 am -11:45 am Morning Poster Session

11:45 am - 1:00 pm **Lunch and Hurricane Sandy Panel Discussion**

1:30-3:00 pm Afternoon Poster Session

3:15 - 4:15 pm Afternoon Keynote Address

"Climate Change and Global Inequality: Vulnerability,Responsibility, and Action"

J. TIMMONS ROBERTS
Ittelson Professor of Environmental Studies and Sociology
Brown University

4:30 pm Reception

RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

Media Relations

Q&A

CATEGORIES: Environment; Politics, Law and Public Policy

Hot Topic: In Sandy's Aftermath, It's Time to Take Extreme Weather and Climate Change Seriously

Rutgers Professor Kenneth G. Miller says there are tough choices ahead

November 07, 2012

By Ken Branson

Climate Change became an issue late in the election after Hurricane Sandy devastated the Jersey Shore, ravaged parts of New York and wreaked havoc up and down the East Coast. President Obama mentioned climate change in his acceptance speech on election night, declaring: "We want our kids to grow up in an America . . . that isn't threatened by the destructive power of a warming planet." The president's comments signal that the issue is likely to move to the forefront during his second term.

Although it's impossible to pin a single catastrophic storm on climate change, Kenneth G. Miller, professor of earth and planetary sciences in the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers who researches sea level rise, argues that in the aftermath of Sandy the tone of the conversation needs to change: It's time to stop debating the issue and take action.

Rutgers Today: There's been a lot of discussion about whether climate change is responsible for this hurricane – or, rather, for the confluence of three weather systems that turned it into a superstorm and drew it in our direction. Is there any way to relate this storm to climate change, or might it have happened without the warming of global air and water temperatures over the past several decades?

Miller: To paraphrase our own Tony Broccoli (a Rutgers professor of environmental sciences) Sandy cannot be attributed to global warming any more than any particular home run hit by Barry Bonds can be attributed to steroids. He would have hit many home runs without steroids and Sandy may have hit if temperatures had not risen globally by 1.5°F. But, this is the fourth 100-year storm we have weathered at the Jersey shore since 1991. Governor Cuomo said it best " . . . the frequency of extreme weather situations. . . is not political. . . There's only so long you can say, 'this is once in a lifetime and it's not going to happen again.'" The planet is warming and sea level is rising. It is time to stop debating these facts and move on to the discussion of intelligent planning and zoning. Warming temperatures are associated with increased evaporation and precipitation; this means extreme weather events are more likely. We are rolling loaded climate dice for more extreme weather events.

Rutgers Today: What, in your opinion, are the policy implications of Sandy for public officials in coastal areas?

Miller: First, we should raise the estimates for storm surge for the "100-year storm" that are used to determine where people can build. New Jersey already raised its standard above the federal level, but lobbyists tried to lower it back to the federal level. A one-foot increase might make a difference; my brother-in-law's decision to build to 11 ft (one foot above the required level) saved his house. Sea level will very likely rise by one foot by 2050, which means raising our estimates of storm surge is prudent if you want your bay front house to survive.

Second, we must reconsider how we use our barrier islands. Federal flood insurance allows people to rebuild in this hazardous zone. The government has guaranteed that we can rebuild these lost houses. We should re-examine this policy. Without federal flood insurance, houses on the barrier islands would be virtually uninsurable. Should houses in harm's way be allowed to be rebuilt again and again at taxpayer expense?

Rutgers Today: As a scientist, what do you expect to learn from Hurricane Sandy, particularly about our area?

Miller: This is the storm we all feared would come. Look at the front page of *The New York Times* showing that County Road 528 (Herbert Street) at the foot of the Mantoloking Bridge is now an inlet. There were at least transient breakthroughs on Long Beach Island and one down in Ocean City. To a geologist, this is not a surprise because inlets form and close; Henry Hudson reported inlets in Long Beach Island that have since closed. During the Ash Wednesday storm of 1962, an inlet formed in Harvey Cedars and then closed. I had hoped that I would not see the breaching of the barriers again, but here inlets have opened and would stay open if not for the herculean efforts of the engineers. Seaside piers were destroyed. There were gas fires in Mantaloking. Bayside flooding was extensive.

Rutgers Today: You give a talk from time to time, "Shall I sell my house at the Jersey Shore?" and you own a house in Waretown, Ocean County, on Barnegat Bay. How did you and your neighbors fare, and is there anything about Sandy that will change your talk?

Miller: I end my talk with, "Don't sell; insure." This is true for the mainland bayside town I live in, Waretown in Ocean County. But as we see, living on a barrier island is hazardous. I don't presume to tell people on the barrier islands what to do, but they should expect that major damage will occur again.

My house was *in* Barnegat Bay this time, and the mark on my sheet rock testifies that the surge was 19 inches above the 100-year mark. Three previous storms – in 1991, 1992 and 2005 – reached but did not exceed the 100-year mark. Neighbors of mine with single-story houses on the ground on the bay block are now homeless. People are frantically clearing storm drains in anticipation of the upcoming nor'easter. They are walking the streets, stunned, saying how lucky we have been – no lives were lost and neighbors are taking in homeless neighbors. But the calm demeanor underlies one fact: It is a war zone in Waretown, as we hear is the experience throughout the Jersey Shore.

Rutgers Today: Do you think there is a greater ability now for the president to address climate change? What kind of action do you think is necessary in his second term?

Miller: The increase in extreme weather events is partly attributable to climate change. A conference was held by the Rutgers Climate Initiative this year at Rutgers with this title and subtitle, "How can we address uncertainty". The conference highlighted the reality confirmed by Sandy that we must adapt to the coming changes. Smarter planning is needed.

How political and regulatory issues play out remains to be seen. Governor Christie has banned new coal power plants in New Jersey. Will the EPA's proposed regulations banning new conventional coal power plants follow suit? Will Congress enact the clean energy standard proposed by the president, which would require 80% of the nation's electricity to be produced from low carbon sources by 2035 and echoes state-level Renewable Portfolio Standards like New Jersey's? Whatever the answers to these questions, Sandy has reinvigorated discussions of how we must deal with a changing planet.

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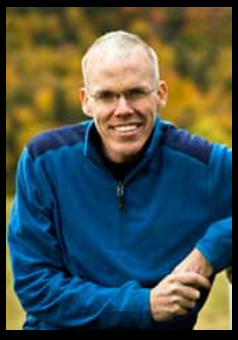
RUTGERS TODAY Your Source for University News

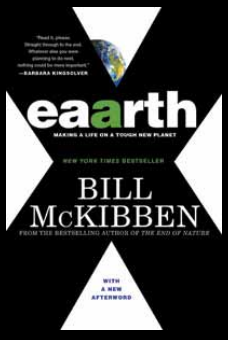
Do the Math: Why Climate Change Matters and What You Can Do About It

Monday, February 4, 2013

7:30 p.m.

Multipurpose Room, Rutgers Student Center





Sponsored by: Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers Campus Deans, Dean of Douglass Residential College, The Office of the Dean of Students, Office of Undergraduate Education, Rutgers University Student Assembly, SEBS Governing Council, Rutgers Business Governing Association, English Department, Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs, RU-TV Weather Watcher

http://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/
for more information and to register for the lecture

Science in the Public Interest

RUTGERS

CONFRONTING CLIMATE CHANGE:

WHAT SHOULD RU DO?

February 6, 2013 | 8:00 p.m.
Multipurpose Room,
Cook Campus Center

Hear the nationally-ranked Rutgers University Debate Union address whether or not the University should divest from its fossil fuel holdings to combat climate change. Professors David Hughes and Bruce Mizrach will join the debate!

This event follows the major public address by Bill McKibben on February 4, 2013: "Do the Math: Why Climate Change Matters and What You Can Do About It."

PIZZA WILL BE SERVED

Sponsored by: Rutgers University Debate Union, Rutgers Initiative for Climate and Society, Cook Campus Dean, The Office of the Dean of Students, Cook Dean of Students, Office for Undergraduate Education

Science in the Public Interest

RUTGERS

For more information, see http://climatesociety.rutgers.edu and http://rudebate.wordpress.com/public-debates/

Activist rallies community on climate change

By Alex Meier / Correspondent | Posted: Tuesday, February 5, 2013 12:00 am

Three-hundred-and-fifty-parts-per-million is the limit of carbon dioxide allowed in the atmosphere to sustain life. In New Jersey, the atmosphere has 395-parts-per-million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

This is the platform endorsed by the acclaimed journalist and activist, Bill McKibben, last night as a part of his nation-wide tour “Do the Math: Why Climate Change Matters and What You Can Do About It.”

The event, held at the Rutgers Student Center on the College Avenue campus, was co-sponsored by the Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society, the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, and other University organizations.

McKibben said solving the climate change crisis is a matter of urgency.

“Unless we understand the scale and the pace of the problem that we face then we can’t understand at what scale and at what pace we need to address it,” he said.

McKibben said last year the U.S. broke the annual temperature record by a full degree. This change has resulted in wildfires in Colorado and New Mexico, decreases in grain production in Idaho, summer temperatures in South Dakota’s winter and Superstorm Sandy on the East Coast.

“The image of the cold Atlantic pouring into the New York [City] subway system is as stark a reminder as one’s likely to get about the fragility of the civilization we had built at this point,” he said.

Climate change will cause a drastic shift in hydrology, or the movement of water, since warm air holds more water than cool air, McKibben said. Arctic ice sheets lost 25 percent of its volume in the past 40 years, he said.

“We had taken one of the largest physical features on Earth and we broke it,” he said.

But McKibben said reason and logic are not strong enough forces to fight against this global issue.

“There’s too much power on the other side,” he said. “The biggest, richest industry in the history of the planet is the fossil fuel industry and it has effectively, skillfully used that money in order to buy enough influence to make sure that nothing ever changes.”

To effectively stand against this power, McKibben said he, along with seven undergraduate students from Middlebury College, created 350.org, a global grassroots movement to solve the climate crisis.

He said the movement is named after the limit of carbon dioxide, 350 parts-per-million allowed in the atmosphere to sustain life.

McKibben said although he originally doubted that 350.org could organize globally, the first day of action in fall 2009 proved that people from all parts of the world want to solve the climate crisis.

He said CNN called that day the most widespread day of political activity in the planet's history.

"On one weekend we managed to coordinate 5,200 demonstrations in 181 countries," he said in an email. "I'll never forget watching the pictures roll in from around the world."

McKibben showed pictures of activists representing the movement with the number 350 from all over the world. One picture displayed organizers at the Dead Sea forming the number 350 with their bodies.

"There's too many military barriers in the way to make it easy, so the Jordanians said we'll make the big three on our beach, the Palestinians said we'll take care of the five on our shore. The Israelis said we'll do the zero close to home," he said. "It was actually quite beautiful."

McKibben said he and other activists played a significant role in interrupting the initiative to allow the Keystone XL pipeline to transport oil from tar sands in Canada to the United States.

But McKibben said the movement needs to figure out how to play the offense and take the power down to some degree.

He said American college campuses would be the power house for this offensive movement by encouraging their universities to divest their holdings from fossil fuel companies.

"Even though none of us can entirely avoid using fossil fuel at this point, we can sure as hell avoid profiting from it," he said. "It is wrong to wreck the climate and it is wrong to profit from that wreckage."

So far, 234 college campuses in the United States have active divestment campaigns. McKibben said divestment is the systemic reform needed to slow climate change.

"You should definitely change the light bulbs, but we're past the point where that will do the trick alone," he said in an email. "So here's a way for you to speak with one loud voice about the need for change."

Melanie McDermott, associate director of the University's Initiative on Climate and Society, said student divestment campaigns have successfully initiated social and political change, such as the anti-Apartheid movement in the early '90s.

"Student campuses, by urging their institutions to divest their holdings from South African … companies, put moral and political pressure on South Africa that Bishop Desmond Tutu and others have accredited with being an important part of the fall of Apartheid," she said.

Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society is a joint initiative of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences that fosters collaboration about climate change research on campus and researches the social science of climate change, she said.

The initiative also aims to educate University students and give outreach to the public, said McDermott,

an assistant research professor in the Department of Human Ecology.

McKibben said he advocates for student activism because global warming puts young people the highest at stake.

“I’ll be off this planet in another 20 or 25 years, you’ve got 60 or 70,” he said via email correspondence. “Which means you’re particularly well positioned to make the [most] case for action.”

Sam Berman, a student organizer for the event, said as a response to the urgency of this problem, a coalition of students and student groups formed to promote campus action for the issue.

Berman, a School of Arts and Sciences junior, said he hopes this event will initiate a campus-wide student movement to combat climate change.

“What would really make this event successful is if students don’t go home and forget about it. Students leave here fired up and ready to be a part of a movement and … take action,” he said.

Berman said McKibben’s concrete goal of mitigating the power of industries lobbying against climate change would allow student movements to effectively evoke change.

“It’s not just rallying in the streets with no goal,” he said. “There are specific things we can ask of specific people to help address this problem and once we have that I think we’ll be able to find enough motivated students to do something about it.”

Prominent Environmentalist Draws more than 700 to Student Center

Details Written By John Chadwick I SAS Senior Writer

Bill McKibben Photo Credit: Steve Liptay

Bill McKibben, one of the America's most prominent and provocative environmentalists drew a packed house and a standing ovation at his public lecture Monday evening.

McKibben's appearance at the Rutgers Student Center came on the heels of his much-talked-about "Do the Math Tour" last fall in which he spoke about the connections between extreme weather, climate change, and the fossil fuel industry.

An accomplished journalist and author, McKibben's article in Rolling Stone last year went viral as it broke down the issue of global warming into a simple yet terrifying set of numbers showing how existing oil and gas reserves would raise global temperatures far above what scientists say is safe.

"We want to raise the profile of these issues both on campus and in the community," said Melanie McDermott, associate director of the Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society, in the School of Arts and Sciences.

The Initiative promotes interdisciplinary research and education on climate change throughout the New Brunswick Campus and is the principal organizer and sponsor of the event.

McDermott, an assistant research professor in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, noted that students were involved with the McKibben visit at all levels. Student environmentlists met with McKibben and discussed proactive ways to continue working on the issue of climate change at Rutgers.

"We're not looking to form a new organization, but we are hoping there might be a coalition or some kind of ongoing student role," McDermott said.

In addition, about students in the Rutgers Writing Program of the Department of English attended a master writing class given by McKibben.

"Many of our teachers consistently assign readings from Bill McKibben's books or his latest articles," said Alessandra Sperling, senior administrative assistant at the writing program. "It's always helpful students can attach a face or an idea to a name they have read."

Meanwhile, professors in disciplines ranging from geography to philosophy are drawing connections between their course content and McKibben’s presentation.

Robin Leichenko, a profesor of geography, had students in her *Global and Regional Climate Change* class attend the lecture and then come up with five questions for discussion.

"This comes at a really nice time of the semester," said Leichenko, who also serves as the director of the Initiative on Climate and Society. "It gives us a segue to jump into the issue, whether or not we agree with his suggested remedies."

On Wednesday, the Rutgers University Debate Union followed up by examining on one of his signature issues – divestment from the fossil fuel industry. Members of the union and professors debated what steps Rutgers should take to combat global warming.

"It was a way of galvanizing more direct student involvement and engagement with McKibben's ideas," said Storey W. Clayton, coach of the debate union, which is ranked No. 4 in the nation.

Extreme Energy and Extreme Weather:

How the Canadian Tar Sands could create the next Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey and how divestment can help stop both.

Author and global warming activist Mike Tidwell will explain how extreme energy extraction methods, such as tar sands mining and shale fracking, are driving the extreme weather events now besieging America, from droughts to Hurricane Sandy. He will show how common sense energy development in the mid-Atlantic region can help provide climate solutions.










April 22nd, Earth Day 2013
Cook Campus Center
Multipurpose Room C
3:30 p.m.
Refreshments provided

Sponsored by:
Center for Climate and Society
Cook Campus Dean
College Avenue Campus Dean

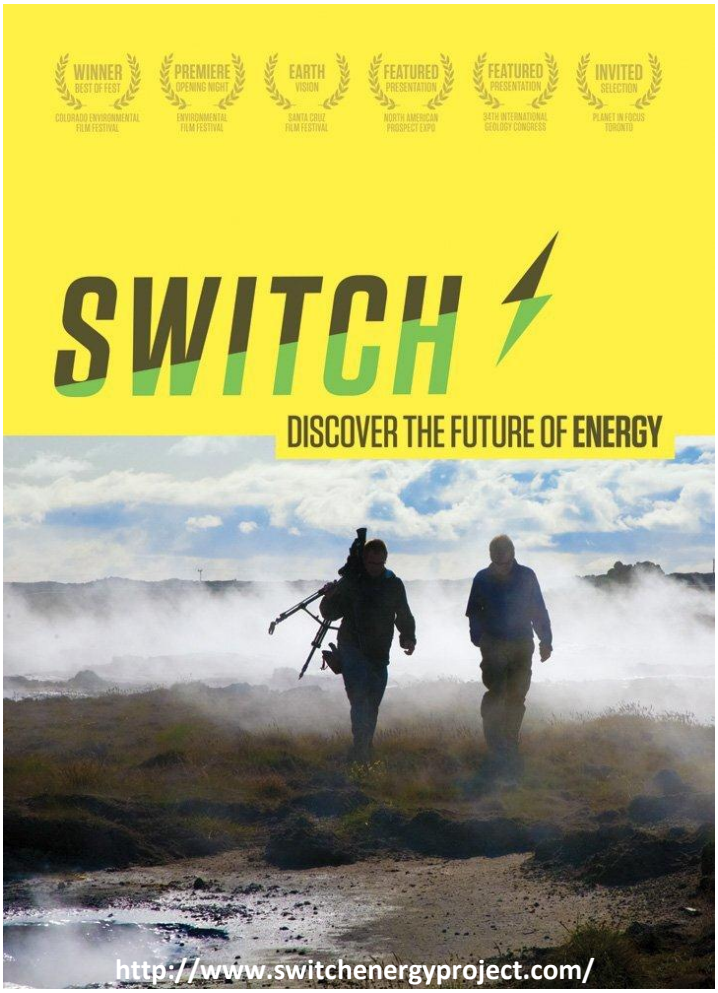
RUTGERS
NEW BRUNSWICK

EARTH DAY FILM FESTIVAL

Monday, April 22, 2013
Trayes Hall, Douglass Campus Center

David Sington/Simon Lamb Film
Co-producer Catherine Fitzgerald
Executive Producers Peter Barrett & Philip England

http://thiniceclimate.org/



Featuring a panel with Rutgers professors **Liz Sikes** (IMCS), **Tony Broccoli** (Environmental Science), **Asa Rennermalm** (Geography), and **Bob Kopp** (Earth and Planetary Sciences/Rutgers Energy Institute)

AND DINNER PROVIDED BY MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL!!

6 PM – *THIN ICE*
7:15 PM – DINNER & PANEL DISCUSSION
8 PM – *SWITCH*

Sponsored by Initiative on Climate & Society, S.E.A., Rutgers Geology Club, Climate & Environmental Change Initiative, and the Cook Campus Dean's Office

• FREE ADMISSION • FREE FOOD •