

THE ROYAL PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF GLASGOW

SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (SCIO) CHARITY NO. SC015557



217th Lecture Series 7.30pm - 14th November

Professor Tim Palmer

Predicting Earth's weather and climate: how certain can we be?



ABSTRACT

30 years ago, a weather forecaster like Michael Fish would base his prediction for the next few days on a single run of a weather forecast model. Often the forecast would be right, sometimes it would be wrong and occasionally it would be disastrously wrong! Today, a weather forecast is made using an ensemble of runs of a weather forecast model where both the initial conditions and the underpinning equations differ from one ensemble member to another. The resulting probability forecasts are transforming the way we use weather forecasts to prepare for extreme weather, as the increasingly familiar “cones of uncertainty” associated with hurricane tracks illustrate. Not only that, such forecast methods provide the scientific means to address one of the most important questions of our age: Is climate change a catastrophe in waiting, a hoax, or just a luke-warm perturbation of no great importance for humanity?

BIOGRAPHY

Tim Palmer is a Royal Society Research Professor at the University of Oxford. He pioneered the development of “ensemble prediction” techniques at the Met Office and at the European Centre for Medium-range Weather Forecasts.

LINKS

<https://royalsociety.org/people/tim-palmer-12036/>

<https://www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/people/professor-tim-palmer>

**All lectures take place in Lecture Theatre K3.25, John Anderson Building,
University of Strathclyde, Rottenrow East, Glasgow G4 0NG.**

Non-members welcome

The John Anderson Building is in the pedestrianised area between Rottenrow and Rottenrow East. Free car parking is available behind the building. From High Street enter Rottenrow East at the Barony.

Refreshments will be served at 9.00pm.