

Abstract

Since the establishment of the intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) in 1988, the potential impacts of global climate change have captured the attention of the scientific research community and made it to the top of many international policy making agendas. As the Human causes and consequences of climate change have become increasingly apparent, social scientists have found themselves called on to contribute to the role of humans in global climate change. Sociologists have been slow to engage vigorously in the topic of global climate change in their research and have often missed out in the international climate change table. This is despite the fact that reports of several governmental and intergovernmental agencies in the world cite human activity as one of, if not the primary driver of global climate change. This paper notes that the impacts of global climate change are unequally distributed across socio- economic groups and geographic space and further responds to the arising question: What can sociologists bring to the study of climate change? Sociological research offers a lens for analyzing these multifacets of factors particularly those of disaggregation including race, gender and economic class and environmental justice. This paper poses key questions which when answered underpin the context and role of sociology in the climate change discourse and contributions to mitigation.