

LONDON -- David Stainforth is a brave man. His mission is to try to remove some of the confusion over the climate debate by explaining why uncertainty has to be a part of the computerized climate models that scientists use to forecast the expected impacts of climate change, including more violent storms as well as more flooding and droughts.

Stainforth, a climate modeler and senior research fellow at the London School of Economics, hopes that by coming clean on the degree of difficulty in making such predictions, he and his fellow climate scientists will find it easier to make -- and win -- the argument that prompt action now is not only necessary but the far cheaper alternative to inaction.

"Governments and people want certainty about what will happen with climate change, so scientists tend to turn to climate modeling. But the models are wrong in so many ways because there are so many uncertainties and unknowns built into them," Stainforth told *ClimateWire* here at the Royal Academy's recent annual Summer Science Exhibition.

"The reason is that they are just that, models, not reality. The bottom line is that they give a quite useful message from science to the adaptation community. But it is all relative and hedged about with qualifications. They give likelihoods not certainties, ranges of probabilities, not absolutes. That is where the discussion then must start, not end," he added.

It is a bold step to take at a time when the climate skeptics appear to be making the most of the continuing public confusion and denial over the issues shown in repeated polls in the United States and United Kingdom. Skeptics have taken advantage of the revelations of scientific infighting with the leaked emails from the United Kingdom's University of East Anglia in late 2009. They have also pointed to

He remains hopeful that the non-scientific public will un