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## 20 North Dakota scientists join climate partnership

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More than 20 North Dakota scientists have signed on as advisers to an alliance called North Dakota Climate Solutions Partnership.

The advisory panel, including scientists from seven colleges and universities, agreed to a statement of principles concluding that the Earth's climate is warming.

"There is a strong scientific consensus that human activity is a significant factor in the current climate change," the statement of principles said. "The existing consensus on climate change has been affirmed by international scientific bodies and polls of scientists' opinions."

The scientific advisory group was announced Tuesday as global climate solutions talks begin in Copenhagen – and on the day that a United Nations panel announced that 2000-09 will likely be the warmest decade on record.

The advisory group includes scientists from seven North Dakota colleges and universities, including the University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University.

"We wanted the voice of North Dakota's scientific community," said Jason Schafer of the National Wildlife Federation, a member of the alliance of conservation, environmental and agricultural groups.

Andrei Kirilenko, a scientist at UND, said recent questions raised by embarrassing e-mail exchanges of some climate scientists do not undermine the independent findings that temperatures are rising and the burning of fossil fuels is a factor.

Still, he acknowledged that public opinion often conflicts with the consensus scientific position, and the e-mails erode public confidence in science.

"The evidence is there," said John Brauner, a biology professor at Jamestown College and a member of the advisory group.

Although the shift to wean the United States' economy from fossil fuels poses a challenge, renewable energy also will create economic opportunities, Brauner said.

"These are indeed very challenging situations to be facing," he said, adding that the country has dealt with difficult challenges in the past.

The advisory group's statement of principles on climate science and the list of scientific advisers is available at [www.ndclimatesolutions.org](http://www.ndclimatesolutions.org).

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