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Reaction: ‘This is no surprise’, but we have a lot to learn

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As human-activities continue to put a pressure on the climate to warm, we will continue to see record global temperatures being periodically set under the current climate regime — especially when natural variability is acting to contribute a warming influence as well (as was the case in 2016). This is no surprise.

The question is not whether greenhouse gas emissions act to warm the climate, but rather, how large is their impact and in what manner is it manifest. It’s these latter questions, hand in hand with a better understanding of the complexities and intricacies of natural variability, that demand our scientific focus.

Observations from the last several decades indicate that we still have a lot to learn both in terms of our understanding of the observed history, as well as what changes can best be anticipated to lie ahead.

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