At War with the Weather

Managing Large-Scale Risks in a New Era of Catastrophes

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with Neil A. Doherty, Martin F. Grace, Robert W. Klein, and Mark V. Pauly

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The research team greatly appreciates the detailed data provided by leading insurers on their homeowners' policies, data from the offices of state insurance regulators, the analyses undertaken by Risk Management Solutions on potential and expected losses from hurricanes, and the special computer runs on insurance groups' premiums and catastrophe exposure undertaken by the rating agency A.M. Best. The state funds in Florida (Citizens Property Insurance Corporation, and the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund) and in Texas (the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association) also provided us with detailed information on their coverage and the nature of their operations. The Institute for Business and Home Safety provided us with data on the impact of mitigation measures and building code enforcement on the reduction in hurricane losses. The data from all these firms and organizations enabled us to undertake comprehensive quantitative analyses of supply of and demand for insurance and to measure the performance of current and proposed insurance and mitigation programs. In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency provided the research team with access to the entire portfolio of the National Flood Insurance Program in Florida so we could examine the performance of this program and the nature of coverage in place at a microlevel.

To our knowledge, this is the first time that these types of data have been collected simultaneously for several consecutive years, analyzed, and interpreted in the context of existing state insurance regulatory systems and the structure of the property insurance market in the United States.

During the past two years, the research team has had fruitful meetings and discussions with key individuals and organizations interested in developing better risk management

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strategies for dealing with natural hazards. These include climate scientists; insurers; reinsurers; brokers; banks; trade associations; rating agencies; modeling firms; homeowners and businesses affected by natural disasters; the real estate industry; representatives from Congress and the White House; federal, state, and local agencies; insurance regulators; public interest groups; international organizations; and experts from other universities and research institutions in the United States and abroad.

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