



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability  
Faculty of Science

## Daniel Steel

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### Climate Change and the Collapse of Civilization: How Serious is the Risk?



**Bio:** Dr. Steel is Associate Professor in the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics in the UBC School of Population and Public Health. His research focuses on values and science in the context of environmental and public health issues. Dr. Steel is also the author of *Philosophy and the Precautionary Principle: Science, Evidence and Environmental Policy* (2015 Cambridge University Press). Current research includes SSHRC funded projects on concepts of diversity their relevance to science and public engagement with health policy decisions.

**Abstract:** In the 24th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2018, Sir David Attenborough warned, “If we don’t take action, the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon.” Climate scientist Kevin Anderson writes, “there is a widespread view that a 4 C future is incompatible with any reasonable characterisation of an organised, equitable and civilised global community.” Yet surprisingly little attention has been devoted to how seriously one should take such warnings. In this lecture, Dr. Steel examines conceptual, epistemic, and moral issues relevant to assessing the risk that climate change might lead to civilization collapse.

**Thurs Sept 19, 2019 | 12:30pm-1:30pm | AERL 120**

**IRES Seminar Series – *Faculty Lecture***