

## Biographical Sketch for David Letson

David Letson is Professor of Marine Affairs and Economics at the University of Miami, where he has worked since 1995. He currently serves as Chair of the Division of Marine Affairs. His research focuses on the economics of extreme weather and climate variations. He is interested in the value of predictions from the geosciences and in how those predictions are interpreted and used.

Living in Miami, on a barrier island no less, Letson is well acquainted with hurricanes and hurricane forecasts. He has developed an internet-based survey approach to estimate the economic value of hurricane forecast attributes. He has also helped create an electronic securities market to advance understanding of how hurricane track forecasts are interpreted and used.

Letson's other main interest is the economics of climate. He participates in a multi-disciplinary evaluation of climate forecasting for decision makers in the southeastern US and Argentina, as part of the Southeastern Climate Consortium, representing eight universities (Alabama-Huntsville, Auburn, Clemson, Florida, Florida State, Georgia, Miami and North Carolina State). Two targeted decision sectors are agriculture and fisheries.

### Affiliation

University of Miami/RSMAS/Marine Affairs and Policy, 4600 Rickenbacker CSWY, Miami, FL 33149-1098 USA. Phone: 305-421-4083; FAX: 305-421-4675; e-mail: [dletson@rsmas.miami.edu](mailto:dletson@rsmas.miami.edu)

### Professional Preparation

**B.S.** 1983 JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, Harrisonburg, VA. Magna Cum Laude with distinction. Majors in economics and English.

**Ph.D.** 1989 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN. Ph.D. in economics, with fields in natural resource economics, public finance and mathematical economics.

### Appointments

1995-Present PROFESSOR and CHAIR, Division of Marine Affairs, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami. Tenured, with a secondary appointment in the Economics Department. Fellow, Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, a joint research institute that brings together the research resources of the University with those of NOAA in order to develop a center of excellence in research that is relevant to understanding the Earth's oceans and atmosphere within the context of the NOAA's mission.

11/89-7/95 ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMIST, Natural Resources and the Environment Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### List of Relevant Publications

Kelly, D.; D. Letson and D. Solís Submitted. Evolution of Subjective Hurricane Risk Perceptions: A Bayesian Approach. *Economic Journal*.

Letson, D.; D. Sutter and J. Lazo. 2007. The Economic Value of Hurricane Forecasts. *Natural Hazards Review* 8(3): 78-86.

Letson, D., G.P. Podestá, C.D. Messina and R.A. Ferreyra. 2005. The Uncertain Value of Perfect ENSO Phase Forecasts. *Climatic Change* **69**: 163-96.

Carter, D. and D. Letson. In press. Recreational Fishing Effort, Harvest, Hurricanes and Climate: Red Snapper in the Gulf of Mexico. *Marine Resource Economics*.

Solís, D.; M. Thomas and D. Letson. In Press. An Econometric Evaluation of the Determinants of Household Hurricane Evacuation Choice: Evidence from the 2005 Season in Florida. *Natural Hazards Review*

### **List of Significant Publications**

Cabrera, V.E., Fraisse, C., Letson, D., Podestá, G., Novak, J. 2006. Impact of climate information in reducing farm risk by selecting crop insurance programs. *Transactions of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers* **49**(4):1223-33.

Letson, D.; I. Llovet, G. Podestá, F. Royce, V. Brescia, D. Lema and G. Parellada. 2001. "User Perspectives of Climate Forecasts" *Climate Research* **19**(1): 57-67.

Letson, D. and B.D. McCullough. 2001. "ENSO and Soybean Prices: Correlation without Causality" *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* **33**(3): 513-21.

Letson, D.; C.E. Lacio; F.E. Bert, X.I. Gonzalez G.P. Podestá; E.U. Weber; and R.W. Katz. In Press. Value of Perfect ENSO Phase Predictions for Agriculture: Conditioning Effects from Land Tenure and Cognitive Decision Processes. *Climatic Change*.

Letson, David. 2008. Oceans and Human Health: Human Dimensions. Ch. 5, pp. 91-98 in: *Oceans and Human Health: Risks and Remedies from the Sea*, P.J. Walsh, S.L. Smith, L.E. Fleming, H. Solo-Gabriele and W.H. Gerwick, eds. Elsevier.

### **Synergistic Activities**

I participate in a multi-disciplinary evaluation of climate forecasting for agricultural and water resources management in the southeastern US and Argentina, as part of the Southeastern Climate Consortium (<http://secc.coaps.fsu.edu/>), representing eight universities (Alabama-Huntsville, Auburn, Clemson, Georgia, Miami, Florida, Florida State and North Carolina State).

Member of NOAA's Hurricane Socioeconomic Working Group, an advisory panel that the National Weather Service and the Office of Atmospheric Research have convened to develop a hurricane social science research agenda.

I serve as a member of the NOAA Science Advisory Board's Oceans and Health Working Group, convened to evaluate NOAA's ocean health science efforts and their potential contributions to public safety and societal well being and to provide scientific advice regarding these efforts to NOAA.

Serve as the UM/RSMAS PI on the [Environmental Cooperative Science Center](#), sponsored by NOAA's Educational Partnership Programs with Minority Serving Institutions and intended to increase minority participation in environmental science.