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William K. M. Lau is a senior research scientist at ESSIC, and adjunct professor of the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, University of Maryland. He received his B. Sc. (Mathematics and Physics) in 1972, and B. Sc. Special (Applied Mathematics), in 1973 from University of Hong Kong, both with 1st Class Honors. He received his PhD in Atmospheric Sciences, 1977, from the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA. He was assistant professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, 1978-1980, before joining the NASA Goddard Space Flight center in 1981. He served as the Head of the Climate and Radiation Branch, Chief, the Atmosphere Laboratory, and the Deputy Director for Science, Earth Science Division, NASA/GSFC. His research work spans more than 35 years covering a wide range of topics in climate dynamics, tropical and monsoon meteorology, ocean-atmosphere interaction, aerosol-water cycle interaction, climate variability and change. He frequently visits international research and academic institutions in China, India, Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, North and South America, and Europe to present invited lectures, and keynote speeches in scientific meetings to promote interests and awareness in regional impacts of climate change. He received many awards for his research and scientific leadership, including among others, the American Meteorological Society Meisinger Award for young scientist (1988), the NASA John Lindsay Award (1987), the Goddard Exceptional Achievement Medal (1991), the William Nordberg Award in Earth Science (1999). He is a Goddard Senior Fellow, a fellow of the American Meteorological Society, and the American Geophysical Union. He has served on numerous international science steering group and expert panels, including among others, the WMO Monsoon Climate Expert Panel, the GEWEX Science Steering Group, the ACPC (Aerosol-Cloud-Precipitation-Climate) Science Working Group, and Committee on Himalayan Glacier and Impacts on Downstream Population, U S National Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Lau published over 270 refereed publications in scientific journals, book chapters, and encyclopedia, on topics ranging from monsoon dynamics, air-sea interaction, aerosol and hydrologic interactions, seasonal-to-interannual variability, to climate change. He is the senior author of a very popular reference book "Intraseasonal Variability of the Tropical Ocean-Atmosphere System" by Praxis Springer publisher, 2006 (1st edition), 2012 (2nd edition). He was recognized by ISI Web of Science as top 0.01% of highly-cited researcher in all fields, with H-index=88, total citation=23820 (Google Scholar). Dr. Lau received the Distinguished Meteorologist award at the 120th Anniversary of the Hong Kong Observatory, 2004, the Distinguished Alumni Award of the Faculty of Science, Hong Kong University, 2010, and the Honorary Professorship award from the School of Energy and Environment, City U. of Hong Kong, 2011. He served as President-Elect (2013-2014), and as President (2015-2016) of the Atmospheric Sciences Division, American Geophysical Union.