

Failure to Share Natural Disaster Risk

Tuomas Tomunen

Boston College Carroll School of Management

April 2024

Risk sharing and intermediary asset pricing

- ▶ Capital markets enable risk sharing in the society
- ▶ Frictions in financial intermediation can disrupt this process (He & Krishnamurthy, 2013; Brunnermeier & Sannikov, 2014)
 - Asset prices reflect intermediaries' risk exposures rather than those of end-investors
- ▶ Testing this prediction is hard due to omitted risk-factor problem (Santos & Veronesi, 2022)

This paper tests theories of risk sharing in a unique setting

1. Studies the pricing of catastrophe bonds
 - ▶ Exposed only to natural disaster risk
2. Argues that the relevant intermediary is a specialist hedge fund manager
3. Finds that 71% of security-level variation in the expected returns can be explained by the marginal utility of these intermediaries
 - ▶ Inconsistent with omitted risk factor alternatives if natural disasters are independent of marginal value of aggregate wealth (identifying assumption)

Cat bond basics

- ▶ Trigger if qualifying natural disasters occur
- ▶ Intentionally structured to minimize interest rate and credit risk
→ historical returns virtually uncorrelated with other asset classes
- ▶ Issued by (re)insurance companies and government agencies
- ▶ Account for around 20% of total reinsurance capital

Deal Structure

Market Size

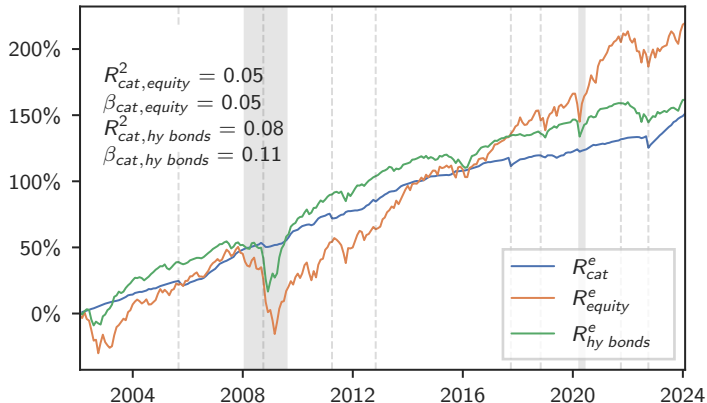
Correlations

Risk modeling

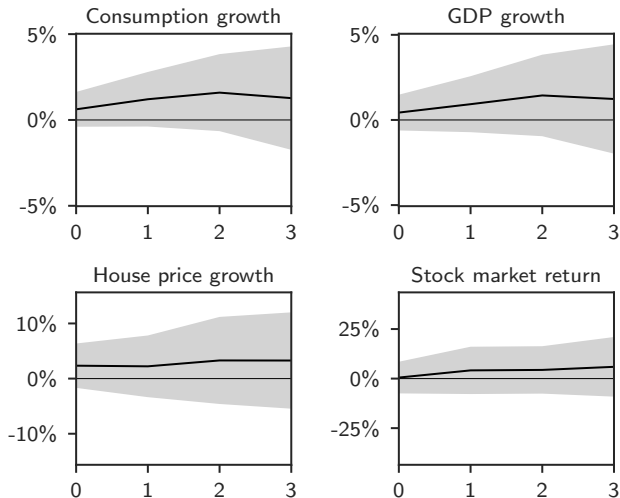
- ▶ Before issuance, sponsor hires a risk modeling company to assess actuarial risk of bond triggering
 - ▶ AIR, RMS, EQECAT

- ▶ Modelled loss summarized by three measures
 - ▶ Attachment probability
 - ▶ Expected loss (%)
 - ▶ Exhaustion probability

Fact 1: buying cat bonds has been extremely profitable despite low correlations with other asset classes

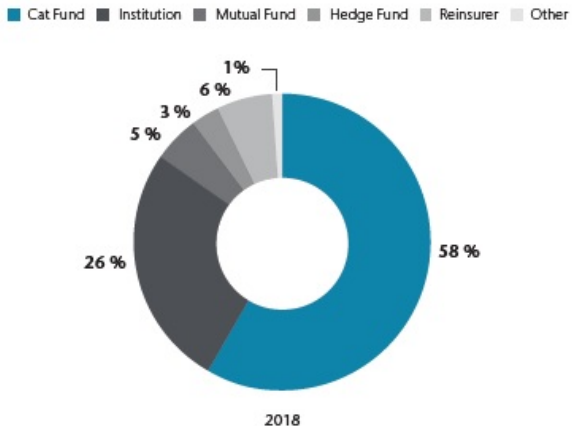


Fact 2: historical natural disasters haven't had significant macroeconomic consequences in developed countries



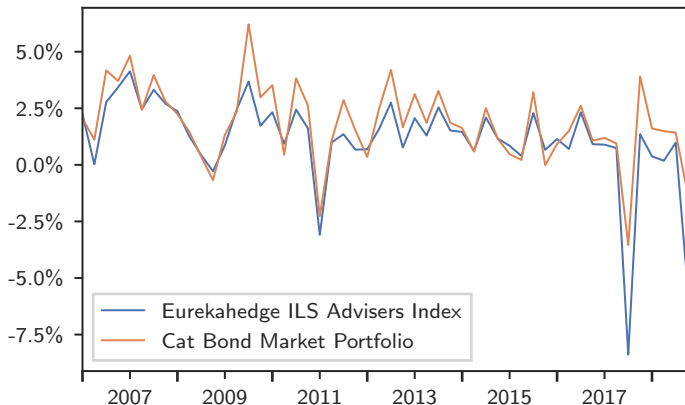
Specification

Fact 3: majority of cat bonds are held by specialist funds



Investor by Category (AON 2018)

Fact 3: majority of cat bonds are held by specialist funds



Data

Table: Summary Statistics

Panel A: Bond Characteristics (Primary Market)					
Variable	N	Mean	St Dev	Min	Max
Size (\$ Million)	675	130.8	119.6	1.8	1500.0
Time to Maturity (Months)	675	36.9	13.1	5.0	120.0
Spread (%)	658	7.3	5.1	0.7	49.2
Attachment Probability (%)	657	3.2	3.2	0.0	23.2
Expected Loss (%)	661	2.3	2.3	0.0	15.8
Exhaustion Probability (%)	656	1.8	1.8	0.0	12.0
Expected excess return (%)	645	5.2	3.8	0.6	43.0
Panel B: Secondary Market					
Variable	N	Mean	St Dev	Min	Max
Turnover (%)	5,969	35.8	79.1	0.0	2000.0
Discount margin _{sheet} (%)	6,538	6.6	4.8	0.0	39.5
Discount margin _{trace} (%)	3,994	6.7	4.6	-0.3	36.9

Model

- ▶ Simple general equilibrium asset pricing model with financial intermediation similar to Gabaix, Krishnamurthy, and Vigneron (2007)
 - ▶ Outside investors can access cat bond markets only through specialized cat funds
 - ▶ Intermediation friction: fund manager must have “skin in the game” by having large amount of her own wealth tied to the fund (alternatively, pay is tied to portfolio performance)
 - ▶ Key assumption: natural disasters are independent of marginal value of aggregate wealth

Model Predictions

- ▶ Cross-section:

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \beta_{i,t} E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e) \quad (1)$$

- ▶ $R_{cat,t+1}^e$ is excess return on "cat bond market portfolio"
- ▶ Time series:

$$E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e) = \hat{\rho} \text{Var}_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e) \frac{\text{Size}_t}{\text{AUM}_t} \quad (2)$$

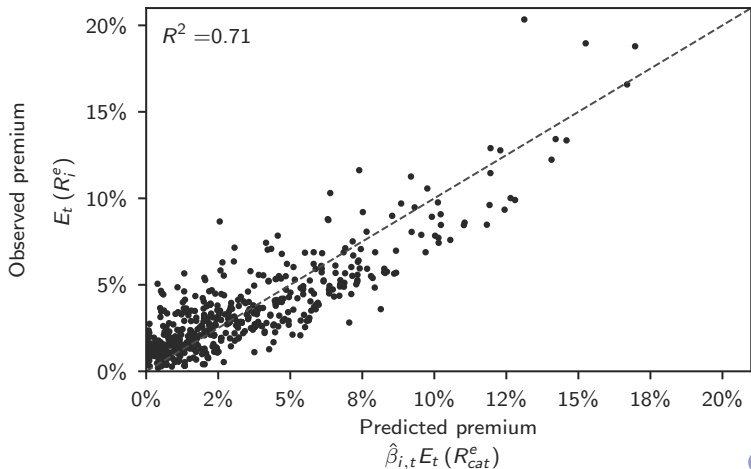
Empirical approach

- ▶ Prediction of a simple model with intermediation frictions:

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \beta_{i,t} E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e)$$

- ▶ $E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = s_{i,t} - el_i$
 - ▶ Key assumption: actuarial cat models' loss estimates are good proxy for investors' loss estimates
- ▶ $\beta_{i,t}$ cannot be feasibly estimated from historical data
 - ▶ Short sample, infrequent trading, highly skewed returns
 - ▶ Solution: use actuarial models to model bonds' return distributions and estimate $\beta_{i,t}$'s from simulated data
- ▶ Empirically, variation in simulated $\beta_{i,t}$ is mainly driven by:
 - ▶ Bond's expected loss
 - ▶ Relative size of bond's peril category

Cross-sectional results

 $\beta = 1$ $E(R_{cat}^e)$ R^2 decomposition

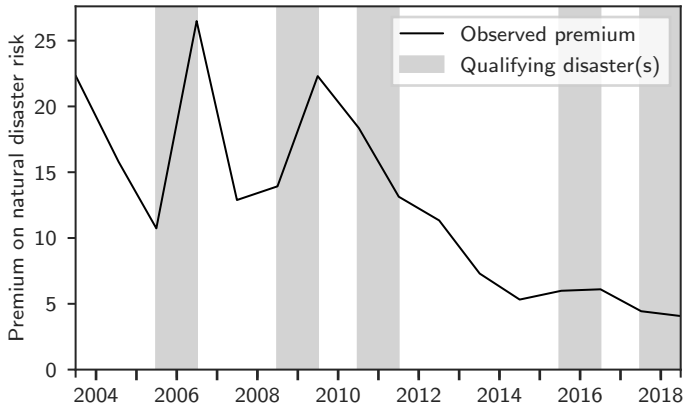
Cross-sectional results

Table: Pricing of Catastrophe Market Risk

t	$\lambda_{0,t}$	(t-stat)	$\lambda_{cat,t}$	(t-stat)	$\lambda_{cat,t} - E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e)$	(t-stat)	R^2	N	$N_{clusters}$
2003	1.47	16.98	2.14	17.42	-1.45	-11.78	0.73	30	12
2004	0.09	0.12	1.54	3.11	-0.31	-0.63	0.51	36	18
2005	0.84	6.56	1.09	12.08	-0.88	-9.72	0.42	34	16
2006	-2.51	-2.54	7.62	9.62	2.13	2.69	0.82	33	18
2007	1.49	3.10	3.78	5.01	-0.96	-1.27	0.71	40	28
2008	1.53	4.88	2.86	8.11	-1.18	-3.35	0.72	33	27
2009	3.29	5.10	4.03	5.14	-2.97	-3.79	0.71	22	17
2010	3.10	5.51	1.99	5.50	-2.86	-7.90	0.53	30	21
2011	1.07	1.25	2.62	2.54	-0.77	-0.75	0.42	22	15
2012	1.21	3.23	4.08	11.69	-1.58	-4.54	0.84	31	27
2013	0.79	3.75	2.17	8.52	-1.02	-4.02	0.76	42	35
2014	1.15	6.20	1.39	5.09	-1.22	-4.45	0.54	48	39
2015	1.09	7.04	1.23	6.85	-1.12	-6.22	0.60	50	39
2016	0.90	5.56	1.02	5.28	-0.70	-3.65	0.53	40	29
2017	0.53	2.38	1.21	3.64	-0.08	-0.25	0.31	46	32
2018	0.35	1.21	1.15	2.56	0.08	0.17	0.29	44	31
FM	1.23	9.41	2.06	11.67	-1.10	-9.02	0.49	63	

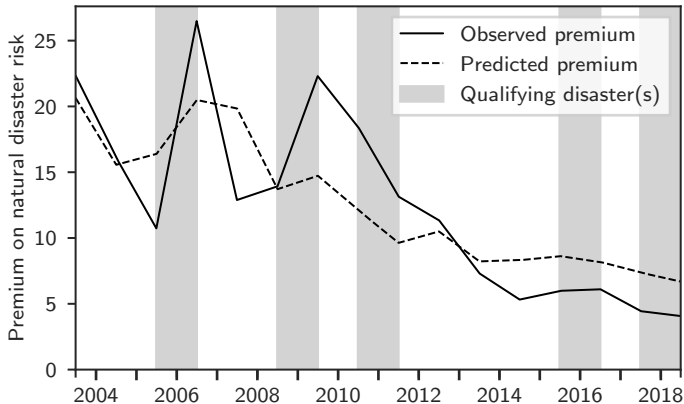
$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \lambda_{0,t} + \lambda_{cat,t} \hat{\beta}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t+1}$$

Time series results



$$\text{Observed premium} = \frac{E_t(R_{cat}^e)}{\text{Var}_t(R_{cat}^e)},$$

Time series results



$$\text{Observed premium} = \frac{E_t(R_{cat}^e)}{\text{Var}_t(R_{cat}^e)}, \quad \text{Predicted premium} = \hat{\rho} \frac{\text{Size}_t}{AUM_t}$$

Pooled results

- ▶ Model predicts:

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \beta_{i,t} \hat{\rho} \text{Var}_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e) \frac{Size_t}{AUM_t}$$

- ▶ I estimate this with:

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \delta \beta_{i,t} F_t + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

F_t	$\text{Var}_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e) \frac{Size_t}{AUM_t}$	$\frac{Size_t}{AUM_t}$	$E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e)$
	5.35 ^{***}	0.02 ^{***}	0.96 ^{***}
	(0.38)	(0.00)	(0.05)
R^2	0.78	0.77	0.87
N	581	581	581

Alternatives

- ▶ Froot (2001)
 1. Liquidity
 2. Moral hazard & adverse selection
 3. Inefficient risk transformation
 4. Market power

- ▶ Others
 1. Peso problem
 2. Probability weighting
 3. Rare disasters
 4. Climate change risk

Liquidity

Market Power

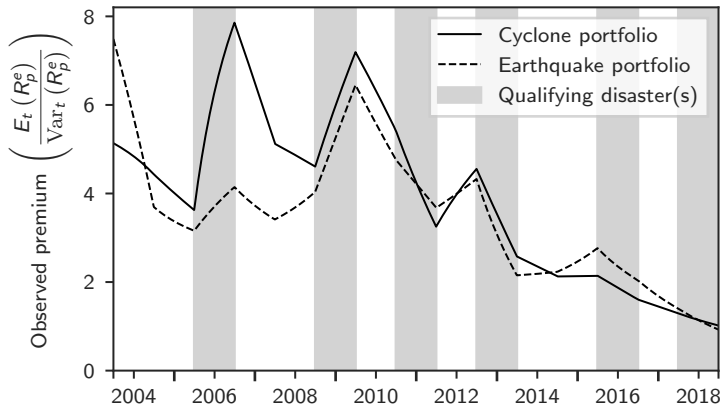
Subsamples

Past Returns

Peso Problem

Probability Weighting

Growing climate change concerns unlikely to explain prices



What next?

MARKETS

State Farm Halts Home-Insurance Sales in California

State Farm is the nation's biggest car and home insurer by premium volume. It said it "made this decision due to historic increases in construction costs outpacing inflation, rapidly growing catastrophe exposure, and a challenging reinsurance market." It posted the statement on its website and referred questions to trade groups.

Source: WSJ May 26, 2023

- ▶ Ge and Tomunen (Work-in-progress): to what extent fluctuations in reinsurance premium affect home insurance costs?

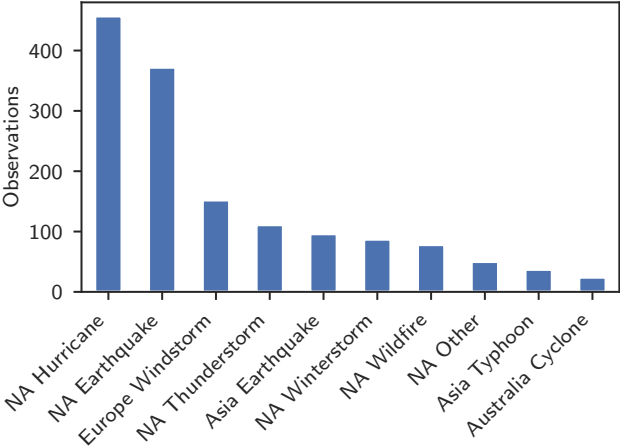
Conclusion

- ▶ A model with intermediation frictions can explain premium on natural disaster risk
 - ▶ Implies a failure in risk sharing

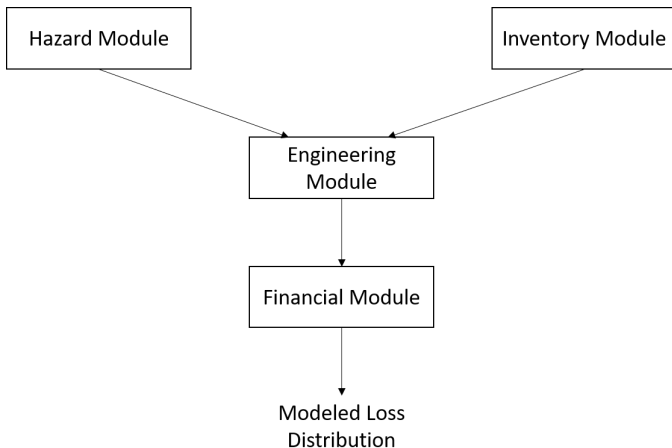
- ▶ Potential policy tools
 1. Increase the number of available peril categories
 2. Improve access to the market
 3. Educate investors

Thank you for your attention !

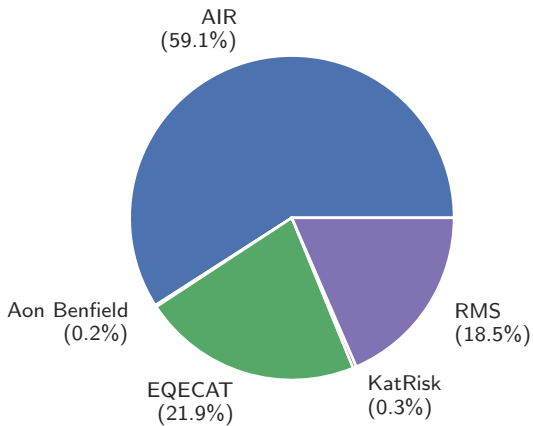
Top 10 Peril Categories



Risk Model



Market Share of Risk Modeling Companies



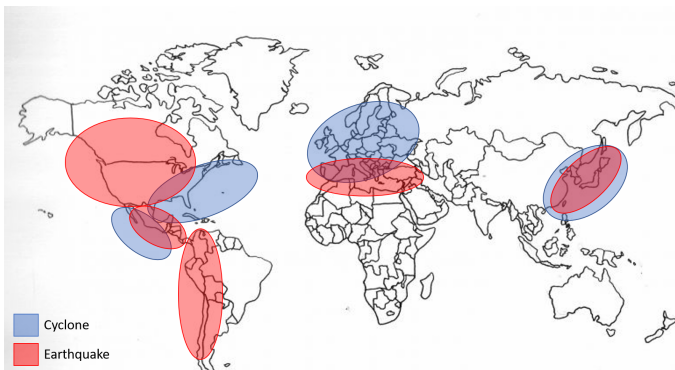
Macro effects of natural disasters

Estimate impulse response to natural disasters with Jordà (2005)
local projections:

$$\Delta_h y_{i,t+h} = \gamma_i + \gamma_t + b_1 \text{Small}_{i,t} + b_2 \text{Large}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

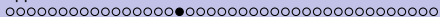
- ▶ 13 countries (i)
- ▶ Annual sample from 1950 to 2016 (t)
- ▶ $\text{Small}_{i,t} = 1$ if $\text{dmg}/\text{gdp}_{i,t-1} \in [0.2\%, 1\%]$ (8% of obs)
- ▶ $\text{Large}_{i,t} = 1$ if $\text{dmg}/\text{gdp}_{i,t-1} > 1\%$ (2% of obs)

Estimating betas



- ▶ Assumption: events are uncorrelated across peril categories and perfectly correlated within categories
- ▶ Only single-peril bonds are included in the sample

[◀ Back](#)[Details](#)



Estimating betas (cont'd)

Table: Summary of Simulation Results

Variable	N	Mean	St Dev	Min	25%	50%	75%	Max
β_{sheet}	2,158	1.04	0.71	0.01	0.42	0.92	1.54	3.28
β_{trace}	1,267	0.98	0.69	0.01	0.36	0.86	1.53	2.94
N_{trials}	500,000							
N_{perils}	9							

Estimating betas

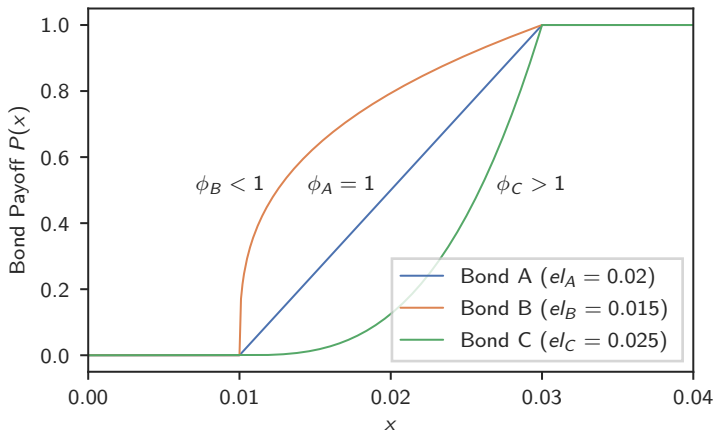
- ▶ Let $x_{i,t} \sim U(0, 1)$. Given Attachment probability (\bar{x}_i), Expected loss (el_i) and Exhaustion probability (\underline{x}_i), I assume the following payoff function for principal:

$$P_i(x_i) = \begin{cases} 1, & x_i \geq \bar{x}_i \\ \left(\frac{x_i - \underline{x}_i}{\bar{x}_i - \underline{x}_i}\right)^{\phi_i}, & \underline{x}_i < x_i < \bar{x}_i \\ 0, & x_i \leq \underline{x}_i \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

- ▶ where $\phi_i = \frac{\bar{x}_i - \underline{x}_i}{\bar{x}_i - el_i} - 1$
- ▶ Excess return in state x then is:

$$R_{i,t+1}^e(x) = (1 + r_t + s_{i,t})P_i(x) - r_t \quad (5)$$

Illustration of payoff function P



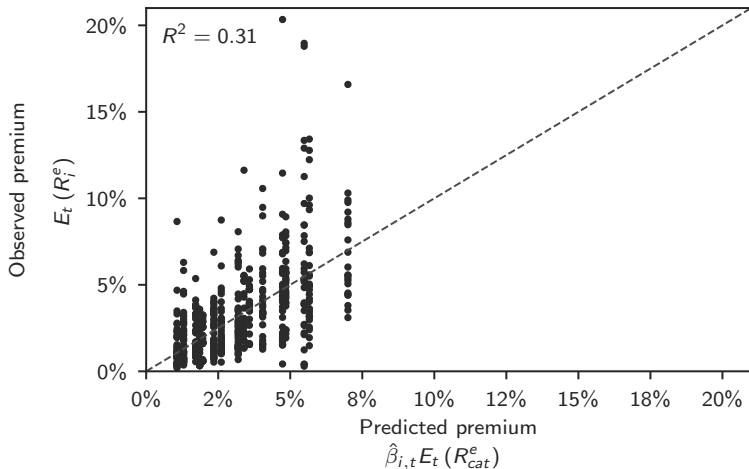
Results (TRACE prices)

Table: Pricing of Catastrophe Market Risk

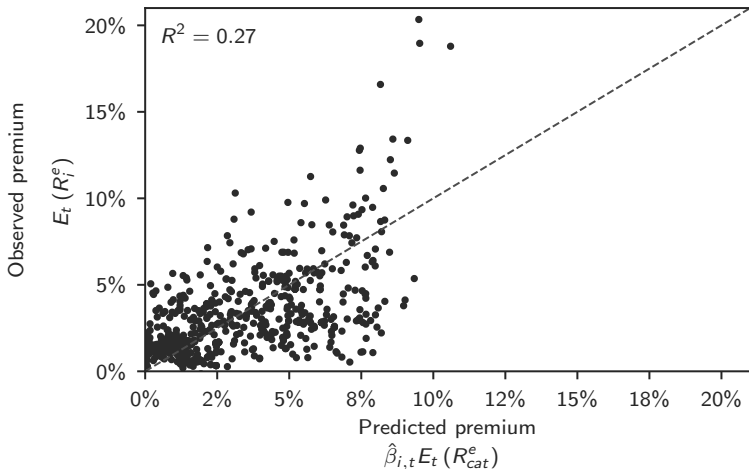
t	$\lambda_{0,t}$	(t-stat)	$\lambda_{cat,t}$	(t-stat)	$\lambda_{cat,t} - E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e)$	(t-stat)	R^2	N	$N_{clusters}$
2005	0.76	1.75	1.20	3.39	-0.80	-2.26	0.40	16	12
2006	-1.93	-2.56	7.57	11.71	1.99	3.08	0.87	29	15
2007	1.52	5.32	3.59	9.58	-1.32	-3.53	0.87	23	17
2008	1.82	1.94	2.41	3.38	-1.35	-1.89	0.53	18	15
2009	4.36	4.21	3.61	3.26	-3.60	-3.24	0.53	19	15
2010	3.47	7.52	1.40	3.79	-3.23	-8.72	0.38	26	19
2011	1.29	1.48	2.52	3.51	-1.44	-2.00	0.60	18	12
2012	1.97	5.17	4.14	11.72	-2.49	-7.05	0.86	22	20
2013	0.95	4.98	2.14	8.40	-1.26	-4.95	0.76	30	26
2014	1.36	9.88	0.96	5.08	-1.63	-8.64	0.47	34	28
2015	1.37	7.47	0.99	6.37	-1.41	-9.03	0.55	35	27
2016	0.98	6.34	0.91	4.46	-0.83	-4.04	0.55	29	23
2017	0.82	3.27	0.77	2.42	-0.41	-1.29	0.14	35	27
2018	0.72	3.30	0.46	2.44	-0.57	-3.02	0.17	31	22
FM	1.51	9.32	1.95	10.02	-1.40	-9.47	0.46	57	

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \lambda_{0,t} + \lambda_{cat,t} \hat{\beta}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t+1}$$

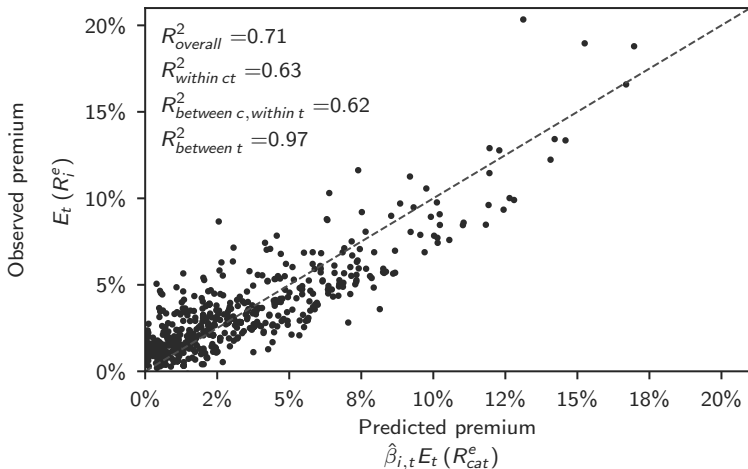
Main results



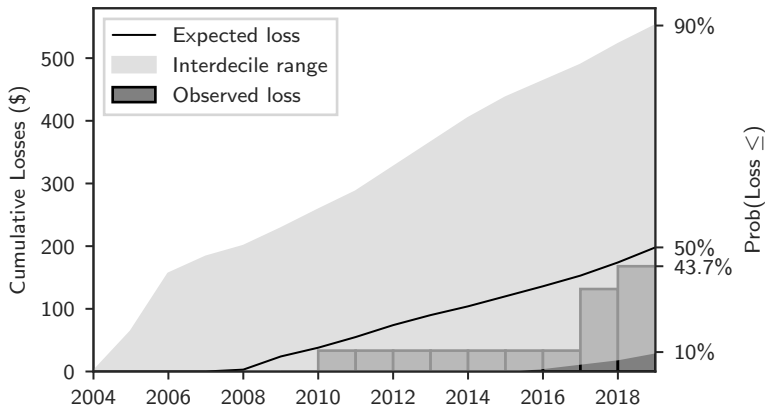
Main results



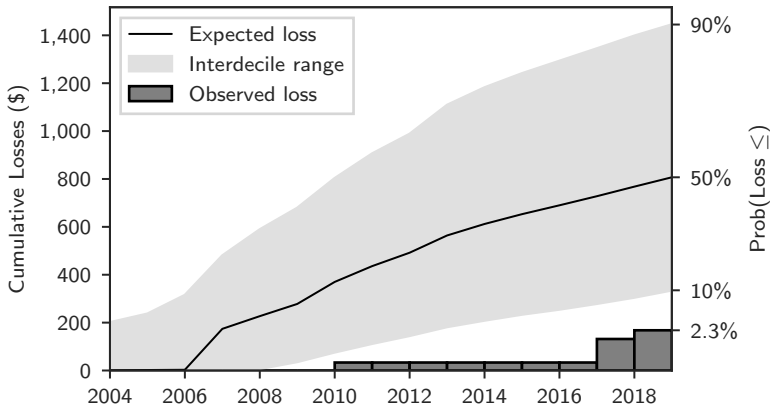
Main results



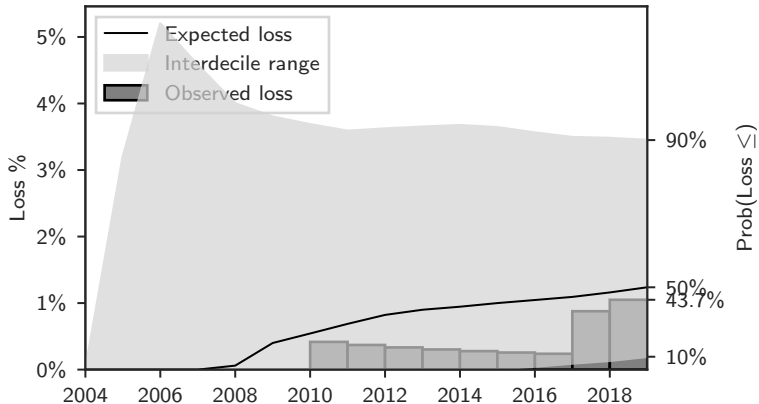
Realized losses highly consistent with the predictions of the actuarial models



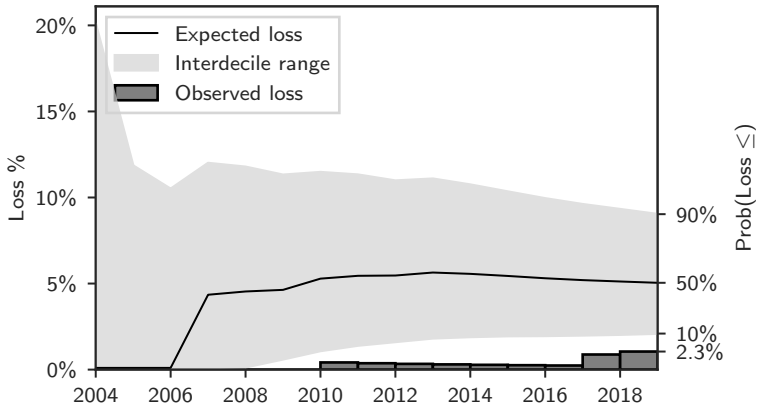
Alternative hypothesis that all premium is due to biased loss estimates inconsistent with the data



Modeled vs. actual losses



Modeled vs. actual losses (biased estimates)



Measuring Liquidity

I use all feasible measures from Friewald, Jankowitsch, and Subrahmanyam (2012):

- ▶ Trading activity variables
 - ▶ Turnover
 - ▶ Number of trades
 - ▶ Trading interval
- ▶ Bond characteristics
 - ▶ Amount issued
 - ▶ Age
 - ▶ Time to maturity

Measuring Liquidity (Cont'd)

Table: Correlation of Beta and Liquidity Measures

	$\hat{\beta}$	Turnover	N trades	Trading interval	Amount issued	Age	Maturity
$\hat{\beta}$	1.00	0.06	0.03	-0.04	-0.01	-0.15	-0.14
Turnover	0.06	1.00	0.65	-0.10	0.04	-0.10	0.13
N trades	0.03	0.65	1.00	-0.25	0.44	-0.11	0.15
Trading interval	-0.04	-0.10	-0.25	1.00	-0.21	0.31	-0.18
Amount issued	-0.01	0.04	0.44	-0.21	1.00	-0.04	0.12
Age	-0.15	-0.10	-0.11	0.31	-0.04	1.00	-0.57
Maturity	-0.14	0.13	0.15	-0.18	0.12	-0.57	1.00

Liquidity: Pricing Results

Table: Pricing of Catastrophe Market Risk (Liquidity)

	Liquidity measure (<i>LIQ</i>)					
	Turnover	N trades	Trading interval	Amount issued	Age	Maturity
λ_0	1.44	1.47	1.45	1.62	1.61	1.32
(t-stat)	(9.45)	(9.41)	(9.12)	(8.70)	(9.67)	(5.88)
λ_{cat}	2.03	2.06	1.81	2.08	1.99	2.00
(t-stat)	(10.07)	(10.51)	(10.35)	(10.49)	(10.07)	(10.26)
λ_{liq}	-0.27	-0.04	-0.00	-0.00	-0.17	0.03
(t-stat)	(-2.30)	(-3.69)	(-0.99)	(-3.98)	(-3.18)	(0.54)
<i>N</i>	57	57	57	57	57	57
<i>R</i> ²	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.55	0.54	0.54

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \lambda_{0,t} + \lambda_{cat,t} \hat{\beta}_{i,t} + \lambda_{liq,t} LIQ_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t+1}$$

Results (Subsamples)

Table: Pricing of Catastrophe Market Risk (Subsamples)

	Main	Noncallables	Earthquake	Parametric
$\lambda_{0,t}$	1.23	1.20	1.50	1.28
(t-stat)	(9.41)	(9.53)	(8.50)	(8.82)
$\lambda_{cat,t}$	2.06	2.11	1.98	1.94
(t-stat)	(11.67)	(11.56)	(6.52)	(7.62)
$\lambda_{cat,t} - E_t(R_{cat,t+1}^e)$	-1.10	-1.05	-1.18	-1.23
(t-stat)	(-9.02)	(-8.70)	(-3.94)	(-6.51)
N	63	63	63	63
R^2	0.49	0.51	0.43	0.49

$$E_t(R_{i,t+1}^e) = \lambda_{0,t} + \lambda_{cat,t} \hat{\beta}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t+1}$$

Past returns

