

ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE IPCC
Berlin, Germany, 7-12 April 2014

IPCC-XXXIX/INF. 1, Add.1
(11.III.2014)
Agenda Item: 6
ENGLISH ONLY

FUTURE WORK OF THE IPCC

Additional collated comments from Governments

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

IPCC Secretariat

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Introduction

At its 37th Session (Batumi, Georgia, 14-18 October 2013) the IPCC set up a Task Group on the future work of the IPCC. The objective of the Task Group is to help the IPCC to continue to improve its operations and products. The Task Group will develop options and recommendations for consideration by the Panel during the period leading to the 41st Session in 2015. The full text of the mandate and other relevant documentation can be found on a dedicated webpage on <http://www.ipcc.ch/apps/future/> .

As decided by the Panel, the Task Group will draw on multiple sources, including submissions from members of the IPCC. With her letter of 13 March 2013 the Secretary of the IPCC invited governments to provide their initial views on which topics and questions should be addressed with respect to the future of the IPCC. Governments in Batumi expressed the view that a second round of submissions by members of the IPCC will be desirable in providing inputs for consideration by the Task Group.

The following questions have been structured around the mandate of the Task Group agreed by the Panel. Explanatory notes and points for consideration are drawn from earlier submissions and the discussion at the 37th Session.

A. What should be the future products of the IPCC?

In responding to this question you may consider a range of aspects related to timing and type of reports, including the following:

- What would be the optimal overall length of an assessment period
- Whether emphasis should remain on comprehensive Assessment Reports (AR), supplemented with occasional Special Reports (SR) agreed according to the “Decision Framework for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers” (as agreed by the IPCC 20th Session and amended at the 29th Session)
- Whether a mix of assessment reports and/or focused thematic assessments/SRs may be planned at the beginning of an assessment period
- Which would be optimal timing of preparation of reports within an assessment period
- What would be the role, scope and timing of Synthesis Reports
- Whether additional fast track products are needed to respond to emerging science or policymakers needs or can these be accommodated through focused SRs prepared according to current procedures
- Whether the IPCC should continue to prepare Methodology Reports (MR) on national greenhouse gas inventories
- Whether the IPCC should prepare MRs on other topics

THE IPCC SHOULD CONTINUE TO PRODUCE ASSESSMENT REPORTS. THE OPTIMAL LENGTH OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT PRODUCTION IS 5-6 YEARS. THIS IS SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE SCIENCE TO ADVANCE AND ALLOWS FOR THE PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES OF THE IPCC TO BE CARRIED OUT IN AN APPROPRIATE MANNER.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT PROCESS NEEDS TO BE GUIDED BY THE SYNTHESIS REPORT WHICH SHOULD BE SCOPED OUT AT AN EARLY STAGE OF THE PROCESS. THIS SCOPE CAN BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND UPDATES AS THE WORK ON THE ASSESSMENT REPORT IS PROGRESSED.

THE ISSUE HOW IS THE SCOPE AND CONTENT OF SUCH REPORTS NEEDS TO BE DEFINED. FUTURE IPCC ASSESSMENT REPORTS NEED NOT FOLLOW THE SAME STRUCTURE AS CURRENTLY EXISTS .

E.G. THE AR5 WG1 HAS ADVANCED UNDERSTANDING OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCE BASIS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. THE FUTURE WORK OF WG1 MAY BE INTEGRATED INTO THE WORK OF THE OTHER WORKING GROUPS

THE IPCC SHOULD RETAIN THE OPTION TO PRODUCE SPECIAL REPORTS, METHODOLOGICAL REPORTS AND TECHNICAL PAPERS AS IT NOW DOES. ON THE GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES A PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING ISSUES AND CLARIFICATIONS IN RELATION TO THEIR APPLICATION NEEDS TO BE FURTHER DEVELOPED TO ASSIST PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC WHO ARE USING THESE.

THE IPCC SHOULD LOOK AT WAYS TO UPDATE FINDINGS ON A MORE FREQUENT BASIS E.G. ANALYSIS OF ECV'S AND ANALYSIS OF

EMISSIONS AND REMOVALS OF GHGS THE IPCC SHOULD EXPLORE PRODUCTION OF OTHER PRODUCTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE PERIODS BETWEEN ASSESSMENT REPORTS AS OUTLINED BELOW.

THE IPCC MAY ALSO CONSIDER OPTIONS TO PROVIDE BRIEFINGS ON TOPICS, EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE THAT ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO GOVERNMENTS AND THE IPCC.

IF SUCH PRODUCTS ARE IDENTIFIED THEN AGREEMENT IS NEEDED ON HOW FLEXIBLE THE IPCC CAN BE IN PRODUCING THESE AND HOW WOULD THEY INTERFACE WITH MORE STANDARD IPCC PRODUCTS.

THE NATURE OF SUCH MATERIAL AND STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES BY WHICH THEY WOULD BE PROVIDED SHOULD BE IN LINE WITH IPCC STANDARDS.

THE SYNTHESIS OF THE AR SHOULD BE THE MECHANISM BY WHICH CROSS CUTTING MATTERS ARE EXAMINED. THIS ROLE CAN BE DEVELOPED AND EXPANDED FOR AN AR6. THIS WOULD REQUIRE EARLIER COMMUNICATION ON THE CROSS CUTTING MATTERS

B. What would be the appropriate structure and modus operandi for the production of these IPCC products?

In responding to this question you may consider a range of aspects, including the following:

- Changes in the IPCC Working Group (WG) structure and/or adjustments to the mandates of the current Working Groups
- Means to enhance cooperation, consistency and integration among WGs
- Effective ways to cover cross-cutting matters
- Adjustments to the IPCC Bureau structure and terms of reference, including definition of more specific tasks for Bureau positions
- Adjustments to the IPCC Executive Committee composition, terms of reference and modus operandi
- Ways to address the challenge of dramatic increase in literature
- Further clarification of the respective roles and interrelations of the IPCC Secretariat and the Technical Support Units (TSU)
- Adjustments to the structure and support of TSUs
- Specific needs for revisions, and streamlining of the Principles Governing IPCC Work and its Appendices
- Other governance and administrative matters

THE STRUCTURE OF THE IPCC MAY CHANGE BUT SHOULD RETAIN THE SCIENTIFIC CAPACITY IN WHAT HAS BEEN ITS MAIN WORKING AREAS I.E. BASIC SCIENCE, IMPACTS AND ADAPTATION, AND MITIGATION. HOW THIS CAPACITY IS DEVELOPED AND USED IN THE FUTURE WORK OF THE IPCC NEED NOT NECESSARILYY FOLLOW THE SAME STUCTURES OF THE PAST AND SOME EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO BUILD ON WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE WORK OF THE IPCC TO THE AR5 AND BETTER ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE GOVERNMENTS THAT SUPPORT IT AND THE WORK OF THE UNFCCC.

A NUMBER OF MODELS OF HOW THIS MIGHT WORK SHOULD BE EXAMINED INCLUDING THE SUPPORT REQUIRED FROM TSUS OR A DEVELOPMENT OF TSUS INTO A MORE PERMANENT SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR THE IPCC IN DOING UPDATES AND RESPONSES TO ISSUES.

THERE IS A NEED TO ENHANCE THE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY OF THE IPCC AND RETAIN THE EXPERTISE AND COPERATE MEMORY THAT EXISTS WITHIN TSUS. THIS WILL ASSIST IN THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK.

COHERENCE AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TSUS NEEDS TO BE INCREASED AND CONSOLIDATED IN A MORE STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS THE ASSESSMENT AND WRITING AND REVIEW WORK AND ENABLES MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO ISSUES.

OPTIONS FOR THIS SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PANEL

C. Ways to ensure enhancement of the participation and contribution of developing countries in the future work of the IPCC

In responding to this question you may consider a range of aspects, including:

- Strengthened support for developing country Co-chairs (e.g. through Panel guidance on the establishment and governance of TSUs, co-hosting or hosting of TSUs in developing countries)
- Support for developing country Bureau members and authors (CLA,LA,RE)
- Ways and means to utilize and enhance involvement of Bureau Members and Co-Chairs from developing countries in their respective regions
- Which additional role can the IPCC Secretariat play
- Access to literature and facilitation of assessment of literature in languages other than English
- Other ways and means to facilitate engagement of developing country scientists and experts
- Other ways and means to enhance coverage of knowledge from developing countries, including both published and government reports, and in languages other than English
- Ways to support and expand access to knowledge to fill existing gaps in data
- Ways to enhance research in developing countries without jeopardizing IPCC objectivity
- Ways to contribute to capacity building and knowledge sharing in developing countries, including expansion of the IPCC Scholarship Programme

IT IS RECOGNISED THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SHOULD PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN THE WORK OF THE IPCC. HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE FOR THE IPCC ALONE IN THAT THE CURRENT LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IS REFLECTIVE OF LARGE DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY CHALLENGES

AS AN ASSESSMENT BODY THE IPCC DOES NOT HAVE A MAJOR ROLE IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SHOULD PERHAPS COMMUNICATE THIS TO BODIES AND GROUPS WORKING IN THIS AREA SO THAT A MORE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THIS IS ADVANCED

THE IPCC CANNOT ACT ITSELF TO FILL GAPS IN DATA. ITS MAIN ROLE NEEDS TO BE TO FLAG THESE TO BODIES AND GROUPS THAT ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACTIVITIES.

FURTHER WIDENING OF THE ROLE OF THE IPCC INTO AREAS WHICH ARE NOT MAINSTREAM IPCC ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE AVOIDED. HOWEVER, CREATIVE WAYS TO USE THE IPCC BRAND WITH BODIES AND GROUPS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THESE ISSUES AND WHOSE MANDATE IT IS TO DEVELOP COMPETENCIES AND CAPACITIES MAY BE EXPLORED. DECISIONS ON THIS WOULD REQUIRE ASSURANCE THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT BE SEEN TO BIAS OR UNDERMINE THE CORE WORK AND ROLE OF THE IPCC.

IT MAY BE USEFUL TO CONSIDER AN IPCC PLENERY MEETING TO CONSIDER THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW OF THE SOD PRIOR TO DRAFTING OF THE

FINAL REPORT FOR GOVERNMENT REVIEW, WHEREBY THE AUTHORS CAN
PRESENT THE MESSAGES EMERGING FROM THE ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL IN A
LESS TIME CONSTRAINED ATMOSPHERE

D. Other matters

You may also express your view on any other matters regarding future work of the IPCC such as:

- Cooperation with UN bodies and other relevant international organizations
- Matters related to communication
- Process to discuss future IPCC work, including input from wider user groups and feedback on value and use of IPCC reports
- Any other matters

COOPERATION WITH OTHER UN BODIES SUCH AS THE UNFCCC AND IN THE AREAS OF CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL. WAYS TO IMPROVE THIS NEED TO BE CONSTANTLY UNDER REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION. THIS WOULD INCLUDE INCREASING EASE OF ACCESS TO IPCC MATERIAL AND MORE USE OF THESE.

THE COMMUNICATION OF FACTS AND CHALLENGES ARISING FROM CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE OPTIONS TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED FURTHER THROUGH USE OF NEW MEDIA AND PROVISION OF AUTHORATIVE INFORMATION. OPTIONS FOR THIS SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PANEL IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPEMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS SUCH AS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED EARLIER.

FEEDBACK CHANNELS BETWEEN USERS AND THE IPCC CAN BE FURTHER DEVELOPED TO ENHANCE CLARITY OF MESSAGES AND INFORMATION INCLUDING IN RELATION TO GPG FOR INVENTORY DEVELOPMENT. OPTIONS TO DO THIS VIA AN ENHANCED TSU SYSTEM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

THE IPCC MAY NEED TO CONSIDER HOW IT CAN BETTER SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE UNFCCC IN THE POST 2020 PERIOD IN RELATION ASSESSMENT PROCESSES.

THE IPCC SHOULD BE CONGRATULATED FOR THE EXCELLENT WORK. HOWEVER, FUTURE TEMPLATE FOR PROVISION OF COMMENTS SHOULD NOT FOLLOW THIS FORMAT WHICH IS FAR TO DIFFICULT TO USE AND EDIT.

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Ref: MECA/MO/IC/ 17 /249 /2014

Date: 11/3/2014

Mr. Renate Christ

Secretary of the IPCC C/O World Meteorological Organization

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After compliments,

Subject: Views on the Future Work of IPCC.

Reference to your letter No: 5283-13/IPCC/GEN dated December, 9th, 2013 on which the governments are invited to submit their views on the future work of the IPCC using your questionnaire from, the government of the Sultanate of Oman would like to thank you for giving it this opportunity.

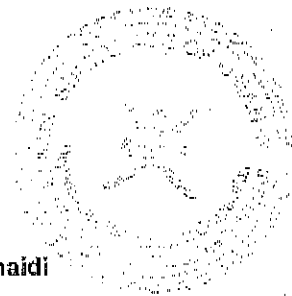
We discussed this issue within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs that actively participated in the IPCC processes as well as a concerned authorities on climate change aspects in the country. Find attached herewith our response to the questionnaire.

Though most of the queries are responded to as per the national conditions, however, we would like to bring to your kind notice that a lack of research in the developing countries is one of the key issues of concern for the IPCC. Therefore IPCC must come up with an action program that aims at promoting research activities particularly in developing countries:

Looking forward for a fruitful conclusion.

Best regards,

For/ **Mohamed Rashid AlSinaidi**
Managing Director of
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1. What would be the optimal overall length of an assessment report.

Response: The overall length of an assessment report at present 6 to 7 years is more due to rapid change in economic and political scenario of the state parties especially in fast developing countries.

The IPCC has demonstrated as it can produce special reports on single topics in just two years, involving members of all Working Groups in joint assessments (for example, SREX – the Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation). The IPCC is perfectly capable of producing comprehensive, but shorter and more focused assessment reports from two to four years. This would also help ensure the assessment includes the very latest science.

Further, the current Working Group structure means that scientists struggle to fully integrate physical science, impacts and mitigation assessments. Consequently, the review should ask whether separate working groups really make sense anymore, or whether they could be merged and streamlined to offer clearer messages, shorter processes and better collaboration. In that way comprehensive assessment reports could be generated in the interval of comparatively longer period along with special reports at sub-regional/regional level at each two to four years.

Another challenge relates to the simultaneous of the reports. Since the Group II and III are based largely on information from Group I, as all of three reports are performed at same time. This takes time and integration of all the groups creates confusion. This could be solved if the reports are held separately with a frequency of about three years between each other and taking into account time line requested at decision of the UNFCCC process.

2. Whether emphasis should remain on Comprehensive Assessment Reports (AR) supplemented with Occasional Special reports (SR) agreed according to the Decision Framework for Special reports, Methodology reports and Technical papers (as agreed by the IPCC 20th Session and amended at the 29th Session).

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Response: As stated above , IPCC could produce special reports on single topic in just two years. Therefore priority should be given to special reports compare to the comprehensive assessment reports. As informed above , the comprehensive assessment reports supported with the special reports could be generated at comparatively longer period of interval whereas special reports could be produced rapidly to address the issues at local, regional and sub-regional level according to the priorities of the state parties lies.

3. Whether a mix of assessment reports and /or focused thematic assessments LSRs may be planned at the beginning of an assessment period.

Response: The IPCC should try to prepare more focused thematic reports, in particular for the Working Group I. we see no automatic need to finalize again full Assessment Reports for WG I . It will be adequate to finalize some thematic reports when new science outcomes become available on a specific issue (e.g. climate sensitivity, new model developments, new kind of observations).

4. Which would be the optimal timings of preparation of reports within an assessment period.

Response: The optimal timings of the comprehensive assessment reports could be from 8 to 10 years. However, time interval between the production of reports from the each group should be 2 to 3 years to provide sufficient time to integrate the findings of one group to other group.

It would be important to note that special reports on important issues should be produced at each two to three years interval for all the sub-region and region on the issues prioritized by the concerned countries. The findings on the special reports should be integrated into comprehensive assessment report at the end.

5. What would be the role, scope and timing of Synthesis Reports.

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Response: As defined in the IPCC procedures, the Synthesis Report (SYR) synthesizes and integrates material contained within IPCC Assessment Reports and Special Reports. The SYR is based exclusively on material contained in the three Working Group Reports and Special Reports produced during the present or previous Assessment Cycles.

We do not propose any change in the role and scope of the synthesis report. However, design of the SYR must be planned at an early stage, that is well before the process of preparing working group (comprehensive) reports. IPCC should plan the broad subjects/issues to be dealt with in the SYR in light of the science and then filter these requirements, including requirements for integration, into the planning for each working group. SYR structure/ design, therefore, must be improved by taking care on the evolving needs of policy makers at the regional and local levels, i.e. not only at global level.

6. Whether additional fast track products are needed to respond to emerging science or policymakers needs or can these be accommodated though focused SRs prepared according to current procedures.

Response: The IPCC's fifth assessment will provide a comprehensive analysis of policy options and the scientific basis for the next round of climate negotiations, which are scheduled to come to a head in 2015. The IPCC has a crucial role in this process and must remain the central authority on global warming. It is not clear, however, that to immediately launch into yet another comprehensive assessment — which would consume immeasurable time and energy, and would probably come to the same bottom-line conclusions — represents the best use of our scientific resources.

Instead, climate scientists should focus on smaller and more rapid assessments of more pressing questions that have a particular political interest and for which science is evolving quickly. These reports could look more like the panel's recent special report on extreme weather; longer and more detailed assessments could be performed as needed,

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when there is sufficient interest from the governments that the IPCC serves.

With regards to regional issue to be covered in future, coverage of regional and local issues should be more details and comprehensive in the future IPCC products. Aspects that need to be handled better in future assessments include assessment of risks at regional and local levels, extensive evaluation and treatment of uncertainties at regional and local levels, as well as evaluation of the main findings from an economic point of view (economics of climate change) at these levels. The current weakness, which needs to be carefully addressed in the future IPCC products, is to ensure it caters to the evolving needs of policy makers at those regional and local levels, which are inadequate with the current state of IPCC outputs and products.

7. Whether the IPCC should continue to prepare Methodology Reports (MR) on national greenhouse gas inventories.

Response: The IPCC has generated a number of methodology reports on national greenhouse gas inventories with a view to providing internationally acceptable inventory methodologies. The IPCC accepts the responsibility to provide scientific and technical advice on specific questions related to those inventory methods and practices that are contained in these reports, or at the request of the UNFCCC in accordance with established IPCC procedures.

We support the continuation of the Methodology reports (MR) on national GHG inventories. The methodology reports provides common and valuable information in assessing, evaluating and preparing GHG inventories to the countries reporting under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol.

8. Whether the IPCC should prepare MRs on other topics

Response: We are in view of much of the necessity of guidelines such as inventory guidelines. The up gradation activities of these guidelines

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need to be continued considering the situation that the revision of guidelines would be required if new frameworks are established under UNFCCC. We shall keep on supporting the activities in such up gradation in the future.