

Your Excellency, Prof Veysal Eroglu, Minister for the Environment and Forestry
Chairman of the IPCC, Dr Pachauri
Representative of UNEP, Mr Peter Gilruth
Representative of UNFCCC, Mr Florin Vlado
Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of Michel Jarraud, the Secretary-General of the WMO it is a great pleasure to address this, the Thirtieth Session of the IPCC.

In preparing the notes for this address I found myself reflecting on the enormous impact of the work of the IPCC – and no – I am not going to detail the historic changes that have occurred as a result of the IPCC’s work, these changes are well documented in the speeches made at the IPCC’s historic 29th Plenary.

What I do wish to say are a few words about my understanding of the reason for the IPCC’s tremendous impact. As it turns out the IPCC’s Assessment Reports have been uniquely successful at shaping global attitudes toward a very complex scientific and environmental issue – that of climate change. Some critics attempt to dismiss the AR4, and some attempted to dismiss the TAR on the grounds that they were out-of-date when published.

But they miss the point.

The point is that the IPCC Assessment Reports represent a consensus of scientific thinking and that no amount of artificially generated uncertainty about what we don’t know will undermine a properly generated scientific consensus about what we do know. And this is the strength the policy makers see in the work of the IPCC – unlike “media release” science that is more up-to-date and more volatile,

IPCC science is robust in the long-term and governments can build policies on its work. This said, there will always be instances when the science moves quickly after an Assessment Report is issued and it is clear that the policy community can recognize these instances and adjust to them.

And of the IPCC Assessments Reports themselves – or “bricks” as one former WG Co-chair called them. These are subject-based, expert driven, highly detailed documents rarely read by anyone outside the scientific community.

These IPCC Reports, or “bricks”, are extremely valuable in that they document the scientific consensus as well as much the evidence that underlies that consensus, and, additionally, form the basis for the Synthesis Report that is widely read and acted upon by policy makers. I believe that it is not the “bricks” that have been key to the IPCC’s impact, but the process that generated them.

The process of bringing the World’s best climate scientists together, of managing the cultural and language difficulties such a diverse group experiences, and of adhering to a generally agreed set of rules of procedure enables the IPCC to have its extraordinary impact. That is to say, it is not even that we have a scientific consensus, it is that the scientific community and the community of governments has been fully engaged in the assessment process.

As a consequence, it is clear that a second, related, key to the IPCC’s success is that it is an intergovernmental one. Governments do not determine the scientific consensus but they do engage in the process to the point that they ensure that the IPCC works in the science domain in a policy relevant way, but nevertheless leave the policy discussion to our friends in the UN FCCC and ultimately decisions to the governments themselves.

I would now like to address two related issues that I believe concern both the IPCC and the WMO:

- (a) The relative lack of meteorological and hydrological observations from developing countries; and,
- (b) The relative lack of published papers from scientists in the developing world focusing on climate change as it affects their communities.

These should be considered related issues because it is impossible to understand the impacts of climate change on a regional scale, and to develop appropriate adaptation and mitigation strategies, if there are no data available to inform the necessary regional analyses.

Good science is informed by good data.

We in the WMO, and I very specifically include GCOS here, would like to encourage scientists in the developed world to support long-term monitoring programs in the data sparse developing world, and we would also like to encourage scientists in the developing world to become engaged in these programs. We expect that the data from these monitoring programs will prove essential for the IPCC in addressing its next major challenge, and that is to build a consensus around the extent, and impact, of climate change on a regional and national basis over the next century. The AR5 will not settle the regional impact issues, but will move them to the centre stage, and the accumulation of relevant, regional *in situ* observations from all regions, used to ground-truth the growing wealth of satellite data sets, will be important for settling regional issues.

We, the science community, have to chip away at the uncertainty associated with regional climate change, and, linking back to an earlier point, we will need data from all regions, not just the developed countries.

From the WMO's perspective we find the prospect of the Fifth Assessment cycle exciting not only because of the expectation of progress on identifying the impacts of climate change on a regional basis but also because of the prospect of work on the impact of climate change on the climatology of extreme weather events. The WMO's Executive Council supports strongly the development of a Special Report on Extreme Events and Disasters, and, as the Director charged with, *inter alia*, managing the WMO's Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, I hope to see a comprehensive report of the relevant science and, as a consequence, an increased focus by governments on initiatives that reduce the risk of disasters. Or, put simply, as a natural consequence of the proposed Special Report I look forward to seeing the application of good science directed towards the saving lives and the reduction of the unnecessary destruction of property.

This leads to the last issue I wish to raise.

The World Climate Conference Three.

This event is nearly upon us. It will be held in Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009.

It will bring together the science and policy communities to focus on a range of climate- and climate change-related issues. There will be science sessions, round tables, policy-related discussions, statements from Ministers and Heads of State and a conference Declaration.

While it is difficult to anticipate the outcomes of meetings – some with grandiose ambitions produce little while some with low ambitions have extraordinarily powerful results – and vice versa. In addition to this some conferences have completely unexpected, beneficial outcomes. The WMO expects that the WCCC-3 will produce one highly beneficial outcome; that is, the WMO is aiming to sow the seeds that will lead to the growth of a global climate services network. This would be a network that would see everyone who needs climate information for their decision making having access to high quality climate services delivered that supports the climate-related decisions they have to make. And of course, inevitably, a key component of any climate information service would be outcomes from the IPCC process, past, present and future. We hope to see a strong representation at the WCCC-3 from the scientists and government representatives participating in this Panel Session.

Before closing I would like to thank the Government of Turkey for their hospitality, and for the excellent conference facilities.

Finally, the WMO wishes the IPCC well in the work of this session and for the AR5 cycle.

Thank you.