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FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE IPCC

Lessons learned from TAR and SRES/SRTT Process

(Submitted by the Working III Co-chairs)

Lessons Learned from TAR and SRES/SRTT Process

This note contains some preliminary results of evaluating the experiences of the WG3 Bureau with preparation of the TAR and some Special Reports. It is not a set of recommendations but a series of suggestions that hopefully provide some useful input into the IPCC discussion on the future work Programme during the 17th IPCC Plenary Session.

1. Defining the substance and focus of IPCC reports

- The length of the TAR volumes has now increased to about 1000 pages for each volume. This happened even while attempts were made to shorten the text. This is not only limiting access to policy makers and policy analysts, it also seriously hampers integration of the material (cross-chapter and cross volume) and therefore the usefulness to the policy community. The cross-cutting issues effort was lost on many of the LA's because they were too busy with their respective chapters. Ways to address this serious problem could be:
 - the emphasis could be placed on (a) *starting with a focused Synthesis Report* (as the start rather than the closure of the process cycle) addressing new policy-relevant questions (and spending adequate time to define those questions), (b) *an update of the science* in those areas of the three Working Group where scientific progress has been significant (including new areas of research) rather than a full comprehensive report (like the model used for the IPCC 1994 report), and (c) *Special Reports on particular topics* requested by the UNFCCC/SBSTA or the IPCC Plenary; (a) would be initiated before (b) to allow for the detailed outline of (b) and the associated expertise (writing teams) to be in line with the requirements of the synthesis report.
 - multidisciplinary composition of teams that produce Synthesis assessments from scientific background reports or directly from the literature.
 - a renewed effort to create consistency across the report that would have a better chance because of the more limited workload of LAs.
 - starting with the SYR allows to identify critical knowledge requirements early in the process so that expert meetings can be organised to improve the assessment
- The level of detail provided by the approved "short" outlines appeared to be about the right level: less detail would allow the authors too much freedom, possibly leading to departure from the relevant policy-relevant issues; more detail would restrict the teams too much. Lead Authors would however be involved in spelling out in more detail the outline of their respective chapters/parts in order to improve consistency.

2. Selection of Lead Authors

- The LA/CLA selection process requires more attention, because
 - Nomination information submitted by governments did not receive due attention.
 - Net was not cast widely enough: many nominations emerged from lead authors.
 - Capabilities of CLAs to co-ordinate team and to work towards consensus documents not well enough known in advance.
 - Social sciences and development studies not well represented.
 - Quite a few selected LAs did not deliver.
 - Working Group Bureaus lack sufficient insight in available expertise in various fields.
- Aspects that deserve more attention in the selection process include:
 - Using external experts (such as senior IPCC veterans not participating) to propose writing team nominations from government nominations and other sources.
 - Composition of teams should be a multidisciplinary combination of experts with previous IPCC experience and new experts, not biased by those proposed by the former, to stimulate a broader set of expertise and perspectives.
 - Composition of teams should be a combination of senior well-respected experts (who are often overcommitted) and less senior but promising scientists who could be less committed and thus more productive.
 - Involvement of private sector expertise was actively pursued in WG3, but success is considered to be insufficient, primarily due to the reluctance of private sector experts to spend the amount of time required to fully engage in the IPCC process; especially in WG3 private sector expertise is increasingly needed to develop up-to-date assessment of new mitigation options in various sectors.
 - Co-ordinating Lead Authors should be selected applying selection criteria rigorously, including top scientific expertise in the relevant area, demonstrated management

capabilities, time availability throughout the process, and ability to work productively with experts from disparate regions and disciplines.

- The government nomination process could be streamlined by using short (1-2 pages) cvs and web-based submission.
- Flexibility is needed to bring in new LAs or CLAs during the process to fill gaps in knowledge or replace team members in case of poor performance.

3. Participation from developing countries and countries with economies in transition

- the participation of experts (authors as well as reviewers) from developing was less than what had been aimed for, although efforts have been made at the selection level and at the LA meetings to improve the situation compared to the SAR.
- a big obstacle for LA's and reviewers from developing countries seems to be the lack of funding to allow them to spend official working hours on the IPCC work, while colleagues from OECD countries in most cases do have opportunities provided by their home institution or through project funding to do IPCC tasks during regular working hours. Other problems are access to literature and/or internet. These problems need to be addressed seriously if stronger participation from scientists in developing countries and countries with economies in transition is to be realised. Solutions may include governments to guarantee that their nominees can indeed spend time on the work needed, and/or additional funding for such work.

4. Improving the review process

- During the review processes of TAR and the Special Reports a typical response rate (experts receiving the drafts actually submitting comments) was only about 25 %, notwithstanding active work by the TSU to involve as much experts as possible, and wide availability through internet. The vast majority of reviewers was from the OECD, in particular the United States.
- Participation of experts from developing regions in the review process should be enhanced in several ways: allowing them to gather in centres of excellence for a short period (1 week) where they have access to the literature and can communicate with other experts, by improving internet access of the draft texts (will be easier if these are short), or by making available limited funding from the Trust Fund.
- The acting of Review Editors resulted to be a very useful and effective addition to the IPCC activities. In general the involvement of senior external scientists worked very well, also in cases where no Bureau Members were available for the respective chapter. It is strongly recommended always to appoint two review editors in view of availability problems during the process

5. Information and communication

- During the TAR process, the information and communication activities of IPCC were considerably improved through increased use of internet/websites, and co-ordinated press releases of the three WG reports.
- Staggering of the WG TAR reports a month apart had advantages, such as giving governments more time for review, getting a longer span of attention in the media upon publication, and providing opportunities to improve the later WG reports on the basis of the reports approved earlier. The above proposal would make the question about the relevance of staggering irrelevant.