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IPCC to hold Expert Meeting on communication

GENEVA, Feb 4 – The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will hold an Expert Meeting on 9-10 February 2016 in Oslo, Norway, to help it strengthen its communications as it starts work on its next cycle of reports.

The Expert Meeting will develop recommendations to present to the Panel to help it make IPCC reports more readable, accessible and policy-relevant.

“IPCC assessments are recognized as the definitive source of scientific information on climate change; our challenge is to ensure that non-specialists can follow them and that policymakers and other users can find and use what is relevant to them,” said IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee.

The Expert Meeting will bring together about 50 experts from governments, civil society, the research community, media, business and faith groups, plus present and former members of the IPCC Bureau and Technical Support Units that worked on the last report, the Fifth Assessment Report, or will be working on the new Sixth Assessment Report.

The meeting, hosted by the Norwegian Environment Agency, was requested by the Panel at its 41st Session in Nairobi, Kenya, a year ago for experts and government and other IPCC representatives to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned from communication and outreach around the Fifth Assessment Report.

The IPCC completed its Fifth Assessment Report in November 2014.

The key findings of the Fifth Assessment Report are:

- Human influence on the climate system is clear;
- The more we disrupt our climate, the more we risk severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts; and
- We have the means to limit climate change and build a more prosperous, sustainable future.

The next Session of the IPCC will take place in Nairobi on 11-13 April, when the Panel will discuss which Special Reports to undertake in the coming years and start work on the Sixth Assessment Report.

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For more information on the Expert Meeting, go to:

http://www.ipcc.ch/meeting_documentation/meeting_documentation_ipcc_workshops_and_expert_meetings.shtml

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Notes for editors

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What is the IPCC?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the world body for assessing the science related to climate change. The IPCC was set up in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly, to provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

The IPCC assesses the thousands of scientific papers published each year to tell policymakers what we know and don't know about the risks related to climate change. The IPCC identifies where there is agreement in the scientific community, where there are differences of opinion, and where further research is needed. It does not do its own research, conduct climate measurements or produce its own climate models.

Thus the IPCC offers policymakers a snapshot of what the scientific community understands about climate change rather than promoting a particular view. IPCC reports are policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive. The IPCC may set out options for policymakers to choose from in pursuit of goals decided by policymakers, but it does not tell governments what to do.

To produce its reports, the IPCC mobilizes hundreds of scientists. These scientists and officials are drawn from diverse backgrounds. Only fourteen permanent staff work in the IPCC's Secretariat.

The members of the IPCC, comprising the Panel, are the 195 member states of the UN and WMO. They work by consensus to endorse the reports of the IPCC and set its procedures and budget in plenary meetings of the Panel. The word "Intergovernmental" in the organization's name reflects this.

IPCC reports are requested by the member governments and developed by authors drawn from the scientific community in an extensive process of repeated drafting and review. Scientists and other experts participate in this review process through a self-declaration of expertise. The Panel endorses these reports in a process of dialogue between the governments that request the reports and will work with them and the scientists that write them. In this discussion the scientists have the last word on any additions or changes, although the Panel may agree by consensus to delete something in the summaries for policymakers of the reports.

The IPCC produces comprehensive assessment reports on climate change every six years or so. Among its other products it also issues special reports on particular topics requested by its members, and methodology reports and software to help members report their greenhouse gas inventories (emissions minus removals).

The IPCC completed the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) with the release of the Synthesis Report on 2 November 2014. AR5 is the most comprehensive assessment of climate change ever undertaken. Over 830 scientists from over 80 countries were selected to form the author teams producing the report. They in turn drew on the work of over 1,000 contributing authors and over 1,000 expert reviewers. AR5 assessed over 30,000 scientific papers.

For more information, including links to the IPCC reports, go to www.ipcc.ch