

ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

**FORTIETH SESSION OF THE IPCC
Copenhagen, Denmark, 27-31 October 2014**

IPCC-XL/Doc.13, Add.1
(30.X.2014)
Agenda Item: 6
ENGLISH ONLY

FUTURE WORK OF THE IPCC

Further refined Options Paper resulting from the discussions at the Third meeting of the Task Group on the Future Work of the IPCC (Copenhagen, Denmark, 26 October 2014)

(Submitted by the Co-Chairs of the Task Group on the Future Work of the IPCC)

IPCC Secretariat

c/o WMO • 7bis, Avenue de la Paix • C.P. 2300 • 1211 Geneva 2 • Switzerland
telephone : +41 (0) 22 730 8208 / 54 / 84 • fax : +41 (0) 22 730 8025 / 13 • email : IPCC-Sec@wmo.int • www.ipcc.ch



FUTURE WORK OF THE IPCC

Further refined Options Paper resulting from the discussions at the Third meeting of the Task Group on the Future Work of the IPCC
(Copenhagen, Denmark, 26 October 2014)

This report is to inform the Panel about the outcome of the discussions held at the Third meeting of the Task Group (TG) on the Future Work of the IPCC where the refined Options Paper was discussed as submitted by the Co-Chairs of the TG (document TFG-III/Doc.2). Further areas of convergence were identified and options defined with respect to future products of the IPCC, the appropriate structure for the production of these products and the enhancement of the participation and contribution of developing countries. This document should assist the Panel in providing guidance for the development of the Recommendations Paper that will be submitted by the Co-Chairs of the TG to the 41st Session of the Panel (February 2015). At the 41st Session the Panel will have to agree on – among other things - the size, structure and composition of the next Bureau which will be elected at the 42nd Session (last quarter of 2015).

Background

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the international body for assessing the science related to climate change. It was set up in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 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 embodies a unique opportunity to provide rigorous and balanced scientific information to policymakers because of its scientific and intergovernmental nature. Participation in the IPCC is open to all governments of the United Nations and WMO. It currently has 195 members. The Panel is made up of representatives of the member countries and meets in Plenary Sessions to take major decisions. The IPCC Bureau, elected by member governments, provides guidance to the Panel on the scientific and technical aspects of the Panel's work. Rule 7 of Appendix C to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, the 'Election Rules', requires that the *'size, structure and composition of the IPCC Bureau and any Task Force Bureau will be reviewed and amended, as necessary, by the Panel at least one Session prior to the Session at which the IPCC Bureau and/or any Task Force Bureau are elected'*.

In the past the IPCC has carried out a discussion about the future of the IPCC at the end of every assessment cycle, addressing questions such as the mandate of the IPCC Working Groups, the structure and scope of future products and scheduling of IPCC products. In undertaking this kind of review the IPCC has invited comments and input from inter alia member governments, contributing scientists and the broader climate change community.

At its 37th Session (Batumi, Georgia, 14-18 October 2013) the Panel decided to set up a Task Group (TG) on the Future Work of the IPCC. The mandate of this TG is to develop options and recommendations for consideration by the Panel on:

- Future products of the IPCC;
- Appropriate structure and modus operandi for the production of these IPCC products;
- Ways to enhance the participation and contribution of developing countries in the future work of the IPCC.

In undertaking this work the TG has held three meetings. The first meeting took place back-to-back with the 39th Panel Session (Berlin, Germany, 6 April 2014) and the second meeting was held from 16 to 17 September 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. The third meeting was held

back-to-back with the 40th Panel Session (Copenhagen, Denmark, 26 October 2014). In accordance with its terms of reference (TOR) the TG drew from multiple sources and sought the perspectives of member governments, scientists involved in the preparation of IPCC reports, IPCC observer organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including the Technical Support Units (TSUs) and the Secretariat.

The Co-Chairs of the TG (New Zealand and Saudi Arabia) submitted their first progress report to the 39th IPCC Session (IPCC-XXXIX/Doc.15) in which they committed to draft an Options Paper (document IPCC-XL/INF.3) for discussion at the second TG meeting. In their second progress report to the 40th IPCC Session (IPCC-XL/Doc.13) the Co-Chairs indicated that they would prepare a refined Options Paper. This refined Options Paper (document TGF-III/Doc.2) was discussed by the members of the TG at their third meeting on 26 October 2014 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

It should be noted that the different options for the IPCC should be in accordance with its role as described in paragraph 2 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work, stating that: *'The role of the IPCC is to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation. IPCC reports should be neutral with respect to policy, although they may deal objectively with scientific, technical and socio-economic factors relevant to the application of particular policies.'*

Future work of the IPCC should continue to realize this role. The different options might represent different ways of implementing the role of the IPCC. Furthermore, **the given options address issues in different ways and are not mutually exclusive**. Some options have a bigger impact than others on the current procedures of the IPCC but might offer more structural solutions, too. All options should be considered in relation to their impact on the IPCC structure, the IPCC budget, and on the scientific community. Options put forward in the original Options Paper (document TFG-II/Doc.3) that did not receive support at the 3rd meeting of the TG have been eliminated. What is presented below represents a slightly more refined version of the refined options paper (document TGF-III/Doc.2).

1. Products, their timing and their usability

Current situation

Since its establishment in 1988 the IPCC has produced five comprehensive Assessment Reports (ARs), containing a large amount of knowledge, which, in varying combinations, represent valuable assets for different countries, sectors, private enterprises, research communities, the media and the public. The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) consists of the approved Summary for Policymakers (SPM), the Technical Summary (TS) and reports from each of the three IPCC Working Groups (WGs) and a Synthesis Report (SYR). Each WG report represents several years of work with the final products approved/accepted by the Panel over a period of about twelve months. In addition to the ARs, the IPCC produces Special Reports (SRs) on emerging issues, Methodology Reports (MRs) and Technical Papers (TPs). Most governments observed that there is great value in IPCC reports, including Special Reports and Methodology Reports. In addition, most governments commented that the mandate of the IPCC to produce comprehensive, high quality, policy relevant and policy neutral scientific assessments on climate change remains important and appropriate. The unique value of the IPCC assessment is its comprehensiveness, thoroughness and credibility. However the challenge is that the amount of literature to be assessed and data to be analysed has grown exponentially since the first assessment was published in 1990. As the information available has increased, so has the scope of the report.

A. Options for product types and their timing

The following options address product types and their timing:

- 1) Maintain the current 5-7 years assessment cycle of comprehensive ARs together with the three-stage review process, supplemented by SRs and MRs.
- 2) Both Summaries for Policymakers (SPMs) of the reports and the Synthesis Report (SYR) are the main products of the IPCC, for which the scoping on cross-cutting issues should start at an early stage and could be revisited by the Panel at a later stage.
- 3) Produce MRs or good practice guidance reports which would enable and assist countries and regions in preparing regional and/or national scientific assessments.

Most governments saw the need to be sympathetic to the UNFCCC time schedule, for example as related to reviewing the UNFCCC global goal, as an important element to consider, noting that full alignment between the two processes would be difficult to achieve. Governments broadly agreed that the IPCC continue preparing MRs for national GHG Inventories.

B. Options for cross-Working Group collaboration

Governments showed broad support for more effective cross-WG cooperation. Several options were proposed to improve the cohesion and collaboration between the WGs:

- 1) Enhance cooperation between WGs such as joint meetings, joint workshops, cross-WG collaborations at various levels of engagement i.e. between authors, and between Co-Chairs on various topics. Change the timing of the WG reports, to allow a longer gap between WG I and the other WG reports (especially WG II, which relies on model output from the WG I community) to provide the other WGs enough time to incorporate the newest WG I findings into their reports.
- 2) Produce more SRs and TPs on cross-cutting issues.

C. Other issues raised:

Options to increase the readability and usability of Assessment Reports

Most governments felt that the SPMs in future ARs should be more readable than the current SPMs and that there are different ways to achieve this, for example with the assistance of a writing or communication specialist(s). The Panel would need to decide when in the process it would be most useful to incorporate such guidance/input.

Options for digitalization

The digital era allows new ways of sharing information and could make IPCC reports and the underlying data more readily accessible and user friendly. During the past and current cycles, information technology (IT) has been used increasingly to facilitate access to the information contained in IPCC reports and to facilitate the preparation of reports. To further enhance the use of up-to-date IT technology the IPCC Secretariat has submitted a concept paper as input to the TG considerations (see document IPCC-XL/INF.2 (Annex 1)).

II. Organization of the IPCC

Current situation

The IPCC is currently organized in three WGs and a Task Force (TF). They are assisted by TSUs, which are hosted and financially supported by the government of the developed country Co-Chair of that WG/TF. Developing Country Co-Chairs receive annually 50,000 CHF each for administrative and other support. The IPCC as a whole is supported by a Secretariat, which is hosted by WMO. Secretariat staff and other expenditures are funded by the IPCC Trust Fund, within the annual budget approved by the IPCC. WMO and UNEP provide one senior position each for the IPCC Secretariat. The Secretariat prepares documentation and organizes Sessions of the IPCC and its institutions (e.g. Bureau, ExCom). It manages the IPCC Trust Fund, and provides information management, outreach, and communication with IPCC members. The TSUs provide scientific, technical and organizational support to their respective IPCC WGs and support their Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Broad terms of reference (TOR) for the Secretariat and the TSUs were agreed by the Panel at its 35th Session (Geneva, Switzerland, 6-9 June 2012).

Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs) and Lead Authors (LAs) for IPCC reports are selected by the relevant WG or TF Bureau, under general guidance provided by the Session of the WG, from experts nominated by governments and participating organizations, and other experts known from their publications. None of the authors receive payment from the IPCC.

Depending on the outcome of the discussions on the future products of the IPCC, most governments understand that the assessment cycle, structure, and organization of the IPCC will need to be aligned with those outcomes and adapted accordingly. While many governments felt such structural issues could be looked at after considering future products, several governments mentioned that the current Bureau structure, size and modus operandi were generally suitable.

No specific options were given to change the Bureau structure, other than changes that might lead to increased representation from developing countries (DCs). This issue is discussed later in the paper. Several countries suggested increasing the number of positions on the Bureau for Asia by two.

A. Options for IPCC Structure

- 1) Retain the current IPCC structure of the three WGs and the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI).
- 2) Retain three WGs and the TFI but expand the mandate of WG I to include observed and projected impacts.

The first option received universal support, and option two should be read as a variation of option one. Regardless of which option is chosen for the IPCC structure, it was seen as important to continue and further enhance cooperation with other UN bodies, especially UNFCCC, and assessment processes such as IPBES, through the IPCC Secretariat.

B. Options for the IPCC Secretariat and TSUs

These options should be read in conjunction with the section on involvement of DCs. In general governments supported a more coherent structure with a clear division of responsibilities, which would enhance cooperation among TSUs and with the IPCC Secretariat and reduce redundancies and overlap, while allowing for an appropriate degree of flexibility in the working relationship. Lessons learnt during the AR5 should be collected

and used to further improve operations and cooperation in the next cycle. The following options to achieve this were discussed:

- 1) Further clarify the roles of the IPCC Secretariat and the TSU's at the beginning of an assessment cycle regarding, for example, administrative, operational and general coordination matters.
- 2) International recruitment of professional TSU staff – selection, performance appraisal and contract extension by both Co-Chairs of a WG/TF, with involvement of the IPCC Chair and Secretary of the IPCC.
- 3) A TSU could be comprised of both developing and developed country institutes and managed by the two Co-Chairs of a WG/TF. Financing could be sourced from several countries and be managed and coordinated by the IPCC Secretariat or the institutions involved.
- 4) In order to divide the workload, SRs could have a designated TSU working in collaboration with the WGs/TFI TSUs.

With respect to the first option it was noted that in order to facilitate operations throughout an assessment cycle the respective roles and responsibilities, as well as reporting lines, between the IPCC Secretariat and the TSUs should be clarified in order to facilitate operations throughout the cycle and enhance the cooperation and reduce redundancies. Details may be elaborated in Guidelines agreed by the Panel at the beginning of the assessment cycle or Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the Secretariat and the TSUs or their host organizations, allowing for an appropriate degree of flexibility in the relationship. In general, the Secretariat should be responsible for overall coordination, budget, meeting logistics, IT, administrative and communications/outreach tasks, while the TSUs should support the scientists in preparing their reports and support the WGs Bureau and authors.

C. Options for the selection of and support to CLAs and LAs and improving the writing and review process

It is widely acknowledged that IPCC assessments are quite demanding on CLAs and LAs.

Options concerning the support to CLAs and LA's include:

- 1) Exploring ways to enhance collaboration with other relevant international organizations and assessment bodies (UNEP, WMO, IPBES, etc.) in producing SRs, MRs or TPs in partnership with those bodies.
- 2) Expand cooperation with regional institutes and universities from DCs in particular.
- 3) Assist the LAs in their tasks with IT, for instance with reference management.
- 4) Appoint research assistants to support the work of the TSUs and/or the CLAs.
- 5) Further enhance the use of chapter scientists to support the writing and review process. Assist the LAs in their tasks with IT, for instance with reference management.
- 6) Initiate an open (online) process to identify experts (in addition to the current government-led practice of nominations by IPCC) to increase inclusiveness in the selection of experts.

These options are not mutually exclusive, but they all have varying degrees of budgetary implications. The results from the survey on how countries carry out the nomination and review process that will be carried out by the IPCC Secretariat at the request of the Task Group should be taken into consideration in this respect as well as in the context of involvement of developing county experts.

If the IPCC decides to produce more products, the demands on the scientific community will grow. The above-mentioned options could help manage the time demands on CLAs and LAs. The selection of authors and management of the review process was extensively discussed and the Secretariat was requested to write a letter to the FPs with a questionnaire requesting them to identify the biggest challenges, as well as best practices in identifying experts and managing the review process. The point was also made that developed countries had many potential experts, but they were often too busy to offer their time to the IPCC. On the other hand, the potential experts in developing countries could not afford volunteering as they lacked financial, human and technical resources.

III. Involvement of developing countries

Current situation

For a range of reasons there is still relatively less input (including involvement of scientists and the use of non-English language literature) from developing countries (DCs) into the IPCC process, despite measures that have already been implemented including Trust Fund support for travel of developing country experts and the Co-Chairing arrangements for the WGs and TF. Additionally, the IPCC Scholarship Programme supports young scientists from DCs in their doctoral studies.

A range of suggestions has been made to improve the involvement of DCs in the future work of the IPCC, most of which could be combined with many other suggestions. These options do not exclude the importance of a dialogue with DCs in order to identify and analyze their key challenges and needs that should be addressed in order to seek attainable solutions for the next IPCC assessment cycle. This includes options for the training and support for scientists, accessing non-English language literature and stronger involvement in the Bureau and TSUs.

A. Options to improve support for DC Co-Chairs, participation in the Bureau and TSUs

Governments and other stakeholders have made a number of suggestions that could help improve the involvement of DCs in the Bureau and the TSUs. Some of the options presented under IPCC structure, in particular with respect to the organization of TSUs and recruitment of TSU staff, are very relevant in this context. Some of these options and measures are further elaborated below:

- 1) Employ more experts from DCs in the TSUs through international recruitment of staff. Capacity building for scientists from DCs could happen by way of secondments to the TSUs.
- 2) Give stronger support to Co-Chairs from DCs, including the possibility of hosting a TSU in one of their countries or locating the TSU for a WG/TF in more than one country, while exploring alternative funding arrangements e.g. by a consortium of countries. [Note this option also appears under the heading of options for the IPCC Secretariat and TSUs].
- 3) Revise if necessary the TOR for the Bureau to ensure more active participation of Bureau members from DCs to address their regional role on outreach.
- 4) Give more responsibility to Co-Chairs and other Bureau members to engage DCs in TSUs, author teams and as reviewers.

With regards to DC hosting of TSUs, a main topic seems to be how to ensure a stable financial situation. Therefore, the discussion should focus on this relationship and on ways to be flexible and innovative on this topic, while ensuring clarity by the time nominations and offers for TSU support are made.

B. Options to increase developing country participation:

Governments and other stakeholders have made a number of suggestions that could help improve the involvement of experts from DCs in the production of IPCC reports as well as in their involvement in the review process and other aspects of IPCC work, such as:

- 1) Ensure a mixture of experts and provide them with adequate training.
- 2) Increase the number of Expert Meetings and Workshops in DCs to enhance the visibility of the IPCC.
- 3) Explore further ways to broaden the nomination of authors and expert involvement in the review processes.

On many occasions the role of the FPs from DCs was highlighted in engaging experts from DCs, not only for the TSUs or the Bureau, but also when it comes to author nominations. Some countries emphasized that DCs should try to be more active at IPCC Sessions and other meetings, i.e. not only increase the number (quantity) of DC participants, but also provide a more substantive contribution to the work of the IPCC (quality support). The survey by the Secretariat, mentioned above may provide further insights on suitable options.

The representative of France presented a proposal under which it might be possible to provide some limited amount of financial support for authors from DCs for the next assessment cycle. This would involve accessing funding through the Green Climate Fund. Given that the Green Climate Fund is still in its infancy the Task Group was not in a position to know if such an approach would be possible. The representative of France was asked to prepare a short paper to give more details about his proposal.

C. Options for accessing non-English language literature

Governments and other stakeholders have suggested the following options to enhance the inclusion of non-English language literature in IPCC ARs and other products:

- 1) Establish (or use existing) regional committees or networks to improve access to non-English language literature.
- 2) Approach authors of such literature to provide expert opinion or specific inputs on particular topics.
- 3) Identify, in consultation with governments and international agencies, relevant government reports and literature published in languages other than English, in particular from DCs. A UN-based language service could assist in translating such documents and authors of such literature could be approached to provide expert opinion or specific inputs on relevant topics.

For these options, the IPCC would need to discuss what falls within its mandate and with which organizations it could cooperate to deliver better coverage of non-English literature.

D. Options for support and training of (young) scientists

Balanced author teams are a desirable element for producing a balanced assessment. To improve the participation of authors from DCs, the following options were mentioned:

- 1) Provide more funding to young scientists in DCs to participate in IPCC work.
- 2) Increase the number of young scientists from DCs in the staff of TSUs.
- 3) Provide support to DC scientists and experts to enhance and share regional research and knowledge as part of IPCC outreach activities. The support could include holding conferences, workshops and meetings to share knowledge and enhance capacity building, and partnering with academic institutions in DCs to provide training in

climate assessment (using WGs reports as learning and teaching resources in universities for example).

- 4) Develop a training programme or summer school for younger skilled researchers from DCs to participate as junior scientific staff at each TSU. (See paragraph below).

One of the main questions that need to be answered is if educating young scientists and investing in scientific capacity and infrastructure are within the mandate of the IPCC and if the IPCC is the appropriate organization for this task. Governments have suggested that there are other organizations better suited and more experienced in this area, such as UNFCCC, WMO, UNEP, UNESCO, the Future Earth Secretariat, and existing regional cooperation mechanisms such as the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI), the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN), Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START) and academic institutions. These organizations (and others) could be an essential part of practical implementation of these options, as they are already engaged in this area of work.