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IPCC STATEMENT

IPCC asks Greenhouse Gas Inventories Task Force to develop guidelines

Experts at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are to draw up new guidance to enable countries to measure the impact on greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, forestry and changes in land use more accurately.

The IPCC asked its Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) to review and update its guidance on greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), which includes the impact of forestry, deforestation, agriculture, and the management of wetlands and peat lands, by October 2013.

The decision, taken at a meeting of the IPCC's governing body, the Panel, in Geneva on 6-9 June, was in response to an invitation by Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In this invitation, the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol asked the IPCC to review and if necessary revise its Good Practice Guidance on LULUCF issued in 2003 that may require changes to ensure consistency with decisions agreed by the UNFCCC in Durban at the end of 2011.

All Parties to the UNFCCC are required to prepare their national inventory of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and removals – emissions and removals due to human activity – including those arising from LULUCF, according to guidelines developed by the IPCC.

Climate policy and global climate negotiations rely on a robust scientific foundation to produce sound results. The IPCC provides policy-makers with regular assessments of climate science and its potential impacts, as well as assessments of the possibilities for mitigating climate change. The estimation of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases is one important basis for climate mitigation. The IPCC provides de facto international standards for such estimation, though highly technical work, while offering flexibility to take different national circumstances and capacities into account.

"For this purpose the IPCC has developed methodologies, which must benefit from assessments using the most recent scientific literature available today on subjects including forest management, harvested wood products and wetland draining and rewetting. The required update of IPCC methodologies will provide policy-makers with the most valid guidance and practices available to report on their LULUCF emissions appropriately and as required under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol," said Dr Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the IPCC.

The decision by the Panel follows the launch in May by the Task Force of new software to enable countries to report national greenhouse gas inventories more accurately and comprehensively, in line with the latest IPCC greenhouse gas inventory guidelines updated in 2006.

The UNFCCC had earlier invited the IPCC to produce supplementary guidance on wetlands, which will also be completed by October 2013.

At this week's meeting the IPCC is also reviewing its communications strategy and assessing progress towards its Fifth Assessment Report, due to be released in 2013 and 2014.

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