

REPORT OF THE 51st SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU
Geneva, Switzerland, 16-17 February 2016

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr Hoesung Lee, Chair of the IPCC, opened the Fifty-first Session of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and delivered a welcoming statement. He recalled that the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) provided a key input to the deliberations at the Twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that took place in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015.

The Chair of the IPCC stated that the task of the IPCC in a post-Paris world is to be even more relevant to policymakers by emphasizing the solutions to climate change as much as analyzing the problems; working more closely with all stakeholders; and improving the way the IPCC communicates. He also stated that timing IPCC products to meet policy needs will be essential, as well as maintaining their quality and the political neutrality.

The Chair of the IPCC highlighted that a number of important tasks lie ahead as the IPCC is initiating the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) cycle and that at its upcoming Forty-third Session from 11 to 13 April 2016 in Nairobi, the Panel will decide which special reports to produce from the list of proposals submitted to the Secretariat. He invited the Bureau to provide guidance on this and highlighted that a detailed and ambitious timeline will be considered and that budgetary and other implications should be taken into account while keeping in mind the importance of synchronizing the work of the IPCC with the rhythms of the UNFCCC process.

The Chair of IPCC recalled that an expert meeting on communications had taken place in Oslo, Norway, on 9 and 10 February 2016 hosted by the Norwegian Environment Agency and that some practical and actionable recommendations on how to improve communications of the AR6 would be provided to the Panel in Nairobi. He encouraged all members of the Bureau and Government representatives to support outreach efforts in the future.

The Chair of the IPCC invited Mr Petteri Talaas, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), to address the Bureau for the first time since he took over his position as Secretary-General of WMO on 1 January 2016.

Mr Talaas stated that WMO would continue providing strong support to the IPCC. He listed some of WMO's priorities coming out of COP21 and stated that many were highly relevant to the work of the IPCC including: maintaining and strengthening climate observations; monitoring emissions and concentrations of greenhouse gases; the role of climate change scenarios; climate services for adaptation and mitigation; better information for disaster risk prevention and using funding mechanisms for the development and application of climate knowledge.

Mr Talaas listed some of the priorities of work of the IPCC including finalizing the establishment of the Technical Support Units of the Working Groups, deciding which special reports to carry out in this cycle, and launching the scoping process for the special reports and the AR6. He also encouraged the IPCC to continue working on communication and outreach. With regard to the Special Report on 1.5°C, Mr Talaas pointed out that the existing and committed emissions already put the world beyond such an ambitious temperature target.

The Chair of the IPCC thanked the Secretary-General of WMO and invited the Representative of the UNFCCC, Mr Florin Vladu, to deliver his statement.

Mr Vladu indicated that COP21 was the most successful climate change conference so far and the Paris Agreement and its related decisions constitute a turning point in the global efforts to deal with the climate change. He highlighted that the IPCC participated in the conference effectively, recalling that the Chair of the IPCC addressed the COP and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). He also mentioned that a side event on communication took place. He noted that UNFCCC expert groups, in the context of the Science to Adaptation initiative, are working with developing countries' adaptation teams to help them advance their adaptation assessments and planning based on IPCC findings through a digital platform to ensure application of the best available science.

Mr Vladu also stated that the IPCC is at the beginning of the sixth assessment cycle and that AR6 is timed to be finalized shortly before the global stocktake planned for 2023. However, the next assessment cycle will not align well with the global stocktake planned for 2028, and it may be necessary to align the 5-year cycle of the global stocktake with the current 5-7-years assessment cycle of IPCC assessment reports. He also emphasized the need of future discussion on how IPCC products could inform the global stocktake.

Mr Vladu also stated that for this new AR6 cycle there will be an increased amount of inputs from science and Governments as well as an increased complexity due to new topics relevant for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. He recalled that the COP21 invited the IPCC to prepare a special report in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.

Mr Vladu also highlighted the need to be more explicit on long-term issues such as the fact that the physical impacts of climate change will continue to increase long after emissions plateau and decline. He expressed his confidence that the IPCC will find ways to build on its strengths and make its work even more policy relevant in future.

The Chair of the IPCC thanked Mr Vladu for his statement. The Chair of the IPCC informed the Bureau that the Representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Ms Merlyn Van Voore, expressed apologies for not being able to attend the session.

The Chair of the IPCC submitted the Provisional Agenda for the Fifty-First Session of the PCC Bureau as contained in document BUR-LI/Doc. 1 for adoption. The Agenda was adopted without changes and is attached as **Annex 1**. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 2**.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE 50TH SESSION

The document BUR-LI/Doc. 2, draft report of the 50th Session of the Bureau was approved without changes.

3. ADMISSION OF OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS

The Acting Secretary of the IPCC, Mr Mannava Sivakumar, introduced the document BUR-LI/Doc. 3 dealing with this topic. In accordance with Rules II.5 and 6 of the IPCC Policy and Process for Admitting Observer Organizations, the requests for IPCC observer status from Yale University (USA), University College London (UK) and Future Earth International were submitted to the IPCC Bureau for its review. The Bureau gave positive consideration to the requests and agreed that they would be presented to the Panel at its next session for acceptance. Some Bureau members expressed the wish to receive more information from the Secretariat on applicants requesting observer status, e.g. by providing web links to these organizations. The Acting Secretary informed about the pending status of the application from the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI).

4. PREPARATIONS FOR IPCC-43

The Chair of the IPCC proposed to take the three agenda sub-Items in reverse order. This was accepted by the floor.

4.1 Special Reports

The Deputy Secretary of the IPCC, Mr Carlos Martin-Novella, introduced the agenda item and associated documents BUR-LI/Doc. 5; BUR-LI/Doc. 5, Rev. 1; BUR-LI/INF. 2; BUR-LI/INF. 6; BUR-LI/INF. 7; BUR-LI/INF. 8.

The Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III introduced more in detail documents BUR-LI/INF. 6 and BUR-LI/INF. 8 which included respectively a commentary from the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III on each of the proposals for Special Reports contained in document BUR-LI/INF. 2 and a commentary from the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III on each cluster of proposals for Special Reports contained in document BUR-LI/INF. 2. Mr Priyadarshi Shukla and Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chairs of Working Group III reported on the process of producing the commentaries, Ms Valerie Masson-Delmotte and Mr Panmao Zhai, Co-Chairs of Working Group I reported on how the clusters were developed and addressed and Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner and Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chairs of Working Group II reported on the criteria used for evaluating the individual proposals and the clusters. The Bureau commended the excellent work done by the Co-Chairs.

During the consideration of this agenda item Ms Ko Barrett (Vice Chair of the IPCC), Ms Thelma Krug (Vice Chair of the IPCC, speaking on behalf of the 3 Vice-Chairs) and Mr Youba Sokona (Vice Chair of the IPCC) made statements from the floor. Additional statements were also heard from the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III, Ms Valerie Masson-Delmotte, Mr Jim Skea, Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Ms Debra Roberts (speaking on behalf of all the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III), and Mr Panmao Zhai. Statements were also made by the following members of the Bureau: Mr Edwin Aldrian, Ms Fatima Driouech, Mr Andreas Fischlin, Mr Gregory Flato, Mr Jan Fuglestedt, Mr Mark Howden, Mr Carlos Mendez, Ms Joy Pereira, Mr Ramon Pitch-Madruga, Mr Andy Reisinger, Mr Sergey Semenov, Ms Diana Urge-Vorsatz, Ms Carolina Vera and Mr Taha Zatari. Also the Government representatives from Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, France, Germany, Mali, Mexico, Norway, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States of America and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela took the floor.

There was broad convergence in supporting clusters A, B, F and I as priority themes. Some interventions supported that the Panel accepts the UNFCCC invitation to undertake the Special report on 1.5°C and to elaborate its contents through the scoping process. However, other interventions supported the opinion that there is so far only limited literature on the topic. Other interventions suggested that this request for a Special Report should be dealt with together with the other proposals for Special Reports. Interventions were also made in support of actively considering all of the topics contained in the Special Report proposals in the AR6 process through scoping, expert meetings, or other appropriate means. Some interventions mentioned the importance of the IPCC deciding whether or not to accept proposals for Special Reports based on IPCC's established selection criteria for Special Reports. Some interventions supported to include the proposal on a Special report on 1.5°C within cluster I, including also 2 degrees Celsius and linking it with sustainable development.

Finally the Chair of the IPCC concluded that an Information document to the 43rd Session of the Panel should be prepared by the Secretariat with inputs from the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs and that the input to the Panel should include:

- A recommendation to accept the invitation from the COP21 to prepare a Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways and that the scope of such Special Report would be addressed during the scoping process.

- A recommendation on the range of Special Reports that the Bureau gave support under 9 clusters.
- A roadmap to integrate proposals in AR6 scoping, what could be handled by Working Groups` contributions and what could be handled within the Special Report on 1.5°C.
- Options for addressing regional aspects.

4.2 Strategic Planning – Timeframes

The Deputy Secretary of the IPCC introduced document BUR-LI/INF. 3 which included a tentative schedule of strategic planning timeframes for the Sixth Assessment Report cycle.

The following Vice-Chairs of the IPCC took the floor: Ms Ko Barrett and Mr Youba Sokona. The following Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III also took the floor: Ms Valerie Masson-Delmotte, Mr Hans Pörtner, Mr Jim Skea. The following members of the Bureau also took the floor: Mr Edwin Aldrian, Mr Andreas Fischlin, Mr Gregory Flato, Mr Andy Reisinger, Mr Roberto Sanchez-Rodriguez, Mr Sergey Semenov, Ms Diana Urge-Vorsatz, Mr Taha Zatari. The Government representatives of the following countries also took the floor: Argentina, Brazil, Peoples Republic of China, Cuba, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Maldives, Mexico, Norway, Switzerland, Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States of America, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The main topics discussed were the overall length of the AR6 cycle, how many Special Reports could be feasible in procedural and logistics terms and how to address regional aspects during the assessment cycle.

The general feeling of the floor was that the maximum feasible number of reports (including Special Reports and a possible report on regional aspects) would be three although some interventions supported more and others less, and the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III expressed a preference for two Special Reports with a maximum of three, including a regionally-focused report. Some interventions questioned the desirability of having an independent volume on regional aspects arguing that the topic is too broad and that a stand-alone regional report would be a new product that might require new procedures, governance and Co-Chairs, while others supported it but there was convergence on the need for addressing regional aspects in an appropriate manner in the assessment cycle. Some interventions supported starting the scoping process of the main assessment report as soon as possible, adding a second scoping meeting and compressing the sequence of consultative periods in order to adopt the Synthesis Report in 2021 while others argued in favor of avoiding overlapping between such periods and other initiatives and pointed out the need for fresh information on new climate projections before Working Group I could finalize its work. There was general support to produce the contribution of Working Groups III before that of Working Group II and that, in line with decisions made at the 41st Session of the Panel, all parts of AR6 should be released within about one year but no more that eighteen months, with a staggering between the Working group reports allowing for information presented by one working Group to be adequately reflected by the other working Groups and the Synthesis Report. There was general consensus that IPCC should be responsive to the needs of the UNFCCC and should finalize AR6 in a timely manner in view of the 2023 deadline set by the UNFCCC regarding the Global Stocktake under Article 14 of the Paris Agreement. For similar reasons several interventions supported the need of aligning the IPCC assessment cycles with the UNFCCC Global Stocktake cycle after 2023.

The Chair of the IPCC concluded that the Acting Secretary should submit proposals, incorporating input from the Co-Chairs, to the 43rd Session of the Panel trying to reconcile all the opinions expressed from the floor.

4.3 Follow-up of COP-21

The Deputy Secretary of the IPCC, introduced the document BUR-LI/INF. 1 on this topic and the Chair of the IPCC noted that especially par. 21 of Decision 1 of the 21st Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC on the Adoption of the Paris Agreement and Art. 14, par. 2, of the Paris Agreement are particularly important for the IPCC. Par. 21 invites the Panel to provide a Special Report (SR) in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways. Art. 14, par. 2, of the Paris Agreement provides that the COP shall undertake its first global stocktake in 2023. The Co-Chair of the Task Force on Inventories, Mr Eduardo Calvo pointed out also the importance of Art. 13.7(a) regarding good practice methodologies accepted by the IPCC to be used in national inventory report of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases. The invitation from UNFCCC to the IPCC to prepare a Special Report (SR) received general support from the Bureau. However some Bureau members made the point that there is so far only limited literature on the topic, and that the IPCC should decide whether or not to accept a proposal for a Special Report on the basis of IPCC's established selection criteria for Special Reports. Others remarked that this request for a SR should be dealt with together with the other proposals for SRs. The representative from UNFCCC stressed the importance of IPCC involvement in the work of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). In concluding the IPCC Chair requested the Secretariat to revise the information note for submission to the Panel at its 43rd Session.

5. REPORTS

5.1 Communications and Outreach

The Senior Communications Manager of IPCC, Mr Jonathan Lynn, introduced this agenda item. Mr Lynn gave a brief overview of the activities that had taken place since the 50th Session of the Bureau. He highlighted the various bilateral meetings that the Chair of the IPCC and some Bureau members had undertaken since their election, including meetings in capitals with H.E. President François Hollande of France, H.E. Mr Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany, high level officials at the U.S. Administration and with Ms Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC. These meetings continued during the UNFCCC COP21 meeting in Paris, France, where among other dignitaries the Chair of the IPCC met UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

In addition to the various bilateral meetings that took place on the side-lines of COP21, the IPCC held two side events, one on communications on 30 November 2015 and another on the activities of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) on 4 December 2015. IPCC Bureau members, staff and authors also took part in various other events on behalf of the IPCC. The Chair of the IPCC made a statement during the opening of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) meetings on 1 December 2015 and at the High-Level segment of COP21 on 7 December 2015.

Mr Lynn also mentioned some of the outreach events that were held during this time, including one in partnership with the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science in Miami, USA, on 12-13 November 2015, and another one in partnership with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, France, on 7 December 2015.

5.2 Technical Support Units

The Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III and the Co-Chairs of the Task Force Bureau on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories provided brief oral reports on the state of play in the establishment of their respective Technical Support Units.

The Bureau took note of the reports.

5.3 Meetings/Workshops since BUR-L

Expert Meeting to collect EFDB and Software users' feedback 25 – 28 January 2016, Kobe, Japan

Mr Kiyoto Tanabe, Co-Chair of the Task Force Bureau on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories introduced the document BUR-LI/INF. 5 which includes a procedural report of the meeting and summarized its main conclusions and recommendations.

The Bureau took note of the report.

Expert Meeting on the Future of the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA), 26-27 January 2016, Geneva, Switzerland

Mr Timothy Carter, Co-Chair of the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA) introduced the document BUR-LI/INF. 4 Rev.1 which includes a procedural report of the meeting and summarized its main conclusions and recommendations.

The representative of the United States of America recalled that the Panel will need to decide on the future mandate of TGICA. He suggested that the Data Distribution Centre should continue with its archiving role while for the rest of the areas of suggested work for TGICA it would be desirable to undertake a mapping to identify what related initiatives are being undertaken around the world. The Government representative from Switzerland added that he would like all written submissions from Members States compiled in an information document to be submitted to the 43rd Session of the Panel. He also suggested that the Secretariat could organize an information session in the margins of the 43rd Session of the Panel. Mr Taha Zatari, Mr Sergey Semenov and the Government representatives from Germany and Argentina pointed out the importance of the matter of the future of TGICA and recommended that sufficient time is allocated for the 43rd Session of the Panel to consider this matter. The Government representative from Germany also suggested that the Secretariat could prepare an options paper to be submitted to the Panel.

The Bureau took note of the report and comments made from the floor.

Expert Meeting on Communication, 9-10 February 2016, Oslo, Norway

A procedural report on the Expert Meeting (BUR-LI/INF.9) summarizing its main conclusions and recommendations was submitted to the Bureau.

6. ROLE OF THE IPCC VICE-CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP BUREAUX

The Deputy Secretary of the IPCC introduced the document BUR-LI/Doc. 4 dealing with this topic. The Chair of the IPCC remarked that it is his intention that throughout the sixth assessment cycle the Chair and the IPCC Vice-Chairs will operate as a team. He informed that in this spirit the Vice-chairs will assume delegated responsibilities in different fields: Mr Youba Sokona at the Chair of the Conflict of Interest (COI) Committee, Ms Ko Barrett was elected Vice-Chair of the COI Committee; Ms Thelma Krug on Communication activities; and Ms Ko Barrett at the Chair of the Science Board of the Scholarship Programme. It was agreed to discuss the roles of the Vice-Chairs of the Working Group Bureaux at the next session.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other item was considered

8. TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

The Secretariat announced that the 52nd Session of the Bureau is scheduled for the month of July 2016 to be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

9. CLOSING OF THE SESSION

The session was closed at 13h30 on 17 February 2016.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

(Submitted by the Acting Secretary of the IPCC)

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**
- 2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE 50TH SESSION**
- 3. ADMISSION OF OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS**
- 4. PREPARATIONS FOR IPCC-43**
 - 4.1 Special Reports
 - 4.2 Strategic Planning – Timeframes
 - 4.3 Follow-up of COP-21
- 5. REPORTS**
 - 5.1 Communications and Outreach
 - 5.2 Technical Support Units
 - 5.3 Meetings/Workshops since BUR-L
- 6. ROLE OF THE IPCC VICE-CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP BUREAUX**
- 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 8. TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION**
- 9. CLOSING OF THE SESSION**

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