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**COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT (AR6)**

(Submitted by the Acting Secretary of the IPCC)

## COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT (AR6)

This document sets out proposals for communications around the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6). It draws on the experience of communications and outreach around the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), including the application of the Communications Strategy, and the recommendations of IPCC Expert Meeting on Communication held on 9-10 February 2016 (see IPCC-XLIII/INF. 6).

The proposals aim to enhance the impact of IPCC products by making reports and communications materials clearer and more accessible, and by engaging more closely in their production and outreach with policymakers at all levels and with stakeholders.

In considering improvements to IPCC communications, it is important to distinguish between what the IPCC can do, both in terms of its mandate<sup>1</sup> and its limited capacity, and what may be more appropriate for third parties such as governments, international organizations or civil society organizations to undertake.

IPCC communications should be limited, objective, professional and timely, while those by other actors can be more creative, interpretative and sector or regionally specific. At the same time, the IPCC should be aware of this broader activity, which can contribute significantly to understanding of the IPCC's findings and operations, and can draw on resources beyond the reach of the IPCC. The IPCC should therefore encourage and support it as appropriate, without formally endorsing it.

This document includes proposals for decision by the Panel at its 43<sup>rd</sup> Session, as they affect work at the start of the Sixth Assessment Report (scoping, setting up author teams). Further proposals would be implemented through an update to the Communications Strategy and its Implementation Plan. These would be developed by the Secretary, with the support of the Communications Action Team, and submitted to the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the Panel.

Annex 1 contains a draft decision by the Panel on the scoping process and communications skills in the author teams, and requesting the Secretary, with the support of the Communications Action Team, to update the Communications Strategy. Annex 2 lists topics that would be examined in updating the Communications Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> See IPCC Communication Strategy  
[http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session35/IAC\\_CommunicationStrategy.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session35/IAC_CommunicationStrategy.pdf)

**Draft Decision**

*Noting* the recommendations of the IPCC Expert Meeting on Communication, held on 9-10 February 2016 in Oslo, Norway;

*Recalling* Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, which states that “In selecting scoping meeting participants, consideration should be given to the following criteria: ... experts with a background from relevant stakeholder and user groups, including governments”;

*Recalling* its decision taken at the 35<sup>th</sup> Session to request the Executive Committee to update and develop the Implementation Plan of the Communications Strategy as circumstances require, and to report to the Panel on any updates;

*Recalling* its decision IPCC/XLI-4 on the Future Work of the IPCC that “To enhance the readability of IPCC products, advice from various specialists should be sought”;

*Recalling* its decision IPCC/XLI-4 on the Future Work of the IPCC “To request the IPCC Secretariat to facilitate and enhance further the consistent and coherent use of up-to-date digital technology for sharing and disseminating information”;

*The Panel decides:*

*To request* the respective Working Group Bureau, or in the case of the Synthesis Report, the IPCC Chair, in preparing a scoping meeting:

- to engage closely with policymakers at all levels, including the UNFCCC and the rest of the UN system, and with different stakeholders that may include businesses, cities, international organizations, civil society organizations, youth, educators, faith groups and the media, in order to draw on their expertise and understand their requirements and concerns;
- to consider different options to enable stakeholders to contribute to the scoping process, including the option of holding pre-scoping meetings;

*To request* the respective Working Group Co-Chairs, or in the case of the Synthesis Report, the IPCC Chair, in preparing a Summary for Policymakers:

- to focus on the most policy-relevant messages rather than a comprehensive summary of the full report, and to set page limits to keep its length manageable.
- to consult on the length, structure and content with stakeholders during the scoping process;
- to start the Summary for Policymakers with a highly accessible Executive Summary or storyline;

*To request* the Working Group Co-Chairs, or in the case of the Synthesis Report, the IPCC Chair, to involve appropriate communications specialists from a range of disciplines in the writing process from the outset of the development of the report, by including some authors with communications skills in their writing teams,

To request the Secretary to set up a team of communications specialists such as science writers, graphics designers or data visualists to support the Technical Support Units by contributing to the clarity and readability of the Summary for Policymakers, Frequently Asked Questions, and in other ways to the accessibility of the Report; and to provide funding from the IPCC Trust Fund towards the setting up of this team;

*To request* the Secretary to convene an Expert Meeting on the science of communicating climate change, which will bring together researchers from communications science and IPCC authors to better understand the psychological and technical questions and potential impacts of IPCC messages, paying special attention to questions of communicating risk and uncertainty, and to include 20 journeys for this meetings in the budget for 2016;

*To request* the Secretary to update the Communications Strategy and its Implementation Plan in the light of the experience of communication and outreach around the Fifth Assessment Report and the recommendations of the Expert Meeting on Communication, and submit these proposals to the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the Panel.

## Proposed topics for revision in the Communications Strategy and its Implementation Plan

### General

- Recognize the limits to the IPCC's communications capacity, the role of third parties and the scope for interaction with them by the IPCC.

### Clarity, readability, access

- Prioritization of policy-relevant questions in the Summary for Policymakers, including use of headline statements, executive summaries, etc, and use of FAQs in the report;
- Use of communications specialists;
- Treatment of graphics;
- Training authors in writing and presentation skills;
- Training authors in use of graphics;
- Use of graphics in SPM and communications material to be informed by communications science.

### Scoping

- Use search tags derived from the scoping process to enable users to navigate the report more easily;
- Involvement of stakeholders in the scoping process, including informal discussions at the pre-scoping stage.

### Outreach

- Opening Trust Fund and other funds to voluntary contributions from other stakeholders (paying regard to possible conflicts of interest);
- Defining audiences and communications objectives, ensuring information is available and accessible to them without harming integrity of approved text;
- Role of developing country scientists in outreach events;
- Events for local young scientists at outreach activities;
- Training on presentations for authors;
- Sharing IPCC reports at events organized by other organizations;
- Creating a communications network of networks, engaging range of institutions and sectors that have an interest in climate science, tapping into communications officers at research organizations and scientific societies;
- Evaluation of outreach;
- Listing authors willing to take questions from governments and NGOs.

### Derivative products

- Encourage production of derivative products by third parties, with clear no endorsement by IPCC;
- Informal support for such activities as appropriate and as time allows;
- Linking to appropriate third-party derivative products on the IPCC website.

### Transparency

- Publish formal drafts of report at the time of review, with appropriate disclaimer;
- Consider webstreaming and remote participation for some IPCC activities;
- Clear policy on transparency that explains why some things are not in;
- Archive graphics and underlying data for transparency and traceability.

**Press materials and media relations**

- Establishing early relationships with media to lay groundwork for understanding the process and eventual findings
- Scope of pre-release interactions with media by Chair/co-chairs or authors they designate
- Cooperation between Co-chairs and Secretariat/TSU communications teams as report develops
- Media training for authors
- Global and regional launches of reports
- Timing of press conferences, embargoes and related matters
- Preparation for press conferences

**Social media and other communications technology**

- Use of social media and new and evolving media and technologies
- Use of video and animation
- Enhancing and homogenizing websites