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REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Proposal by the Task Group on Procedures

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat on behalf of the Task Group Co-chairs)

Governments are invited to submit comments on the draft recommendations prepared by the Task Group by 5 May 2011 to ipcc-review@wmo.int

REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

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1. Introduction

History

The Task Group on Procedures was established at the 32nd Session of the IPCC, held 10-14 October 2010 in Busan, Republic of Korea* (see Appendix 1 for its mandate). The Task Group on Procedures relates to Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, adoption, approval and publication of IPCC Reports) and its Annexes, hereafter called 'Procedures'.

The Task Group on Procedures convened with the other Task Groups (Governance and Management, Communication Strategy, Conflict of Interest Policies) on 1-4 February 2011 at WMO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. It developed a first draft with proposals for responding to a number of recommendations of the InterAcademy Council (IAC) in their 'Review of the processes and procedures of the IPCC', 30 August 2010¹, taking into account the relevant decisions taken at the 32nd session of the IPCC. This first draft is called hereafter the 'Geneva document'.

The Task Group on Procedures also further discussed the IAC recommendations in the context of increasing transparency and further improving the quality of the assessment reports. This has led to an 'Addendum' in the Geneva document, containing proposals that were not the result of a consensus within the Task Group, but were believed to be relevant for further consideration by the Panel.

The proposals of the Task Group on Procedures including its addendum were reviewed by governments (see IPCC-XXXIII/INF.1) and by the IPCC chair, IPCC co-chairs, vice-chairs, and the Secretariat. Based on these comments, the Task Group on Procedures developed this document for consideration by the 33rd session of the IPCC in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 10-13 May 2011.

This document

The document presented here follows the IAC recommendations as presented in their report chapter 2, 'Evaluation of IPCC's assessment process'. Each IAC recommendation is first quoted, and then followed by the decision of IPCC-32. Subsequently the considerations by the Task Group are given, followed by a proposed decision for IPCC-33 in a text box.

References are made to the other Task Groups in case of crosscutting issues.

The Task Group on Procedures has dealt with two categories of proposed decisions:

- I. Direct responses to IAC recommendations,
- II. Indirect responses as a result of the IAC recommendations following the above mentioned 'addendum'.

At each decision box it is indicated whether this is a category I or category II proposal.

Sections 1 -9 deal with both categories I and II. The category –II proposals appear in sections marked '3bis', '6bis', and '7bis'.

* Technical correction

¹ http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/IAC_report/IAC%20Report.pdf

Section 10 deals with the phenomenon of Guidance material that has become increasingly important to the IPCC assessment as a part of the implementation of the IAC recommendations. Formal steps are recommended to properly anchor these materials in the IPCC procedures.

Section 11 refers to next steps in the near future. Decisions taken at IPCC-33 should enter into force as soon as taken. However, Insertion of new text and changes in the existing Procedures will require: consistency checks, editing, re-ordering sections and paragraphs, adjusting numbering and the table of contents, and legal checks and balances. In addition, resource implications should be identified. The Task Group could not accomplish these tasks in the time available. Therefore, the Task Group believes that intersessional work will be needed between IPCC-33 and IPCC-34, and that this work should be carried out in consultation with the Secretariat. This should lead to a revised Procedures text, taking account of the decisions taken at IPCC-33, with a view to finalizing the revised Procedures at IPCC-34.

Section 12 contains 'other issues' that were raised by the governments comments to the Geneva document but were outside the mandate of the Task Group. They were considered to be relevant to the Panel but were not further discussed.

General comments from governments

Several governments and IPCC office holders have delivered general comments to the Task Group Proposals that do not fit into one of the sections 1-10 mentioned above. These are addressed here.

- As far as possible, concrete amendment texts to Procedures are presented (request from Belgium, Secr, UK)
- Continuity of mandate may be needed (NL, Sp, Bel, Can, Ger), see also remarks of several countries in the section 'General comments for all task groups'. If needed the Task Group will recommend to the Panel to decide to extend its mandate to IPCC-34. In that case, at IPCC-34, time will be needed to deal with unfinished business of the Task Groups – this may take an extra meeting day that is yet not included in the planning.
- Resource issues are part of the mandate of the Task Group but appeared not to be possible to address these appropriately. The Task Group will request the Secretariat to address these.
- The comments from the WG I co-chair on confidentiality will be dealt with in section 6 (report review).
- The request from Germany for review of procedures after each assessment cycle is addressed up in the Principles art. 16 – Although it only mentions the 5 year period.
- The comment on the Netherlands amending art. 2 of the IPCC principles will be dealt with under Other Issues (section 12)
- Many governments commented on or asked for consideration of the issues mentioned in the Addendum (report of 9 February 2011) They have been taken up in the relevant sections 1-10
- There are requests of Secretariat and NL to repair shortcomings in the procedures that are not related to the IAC recommendations; the Panel may wish to consider this for further work after IPCC-33..
- There is a request from UK to take up the outcomes of the Task Group on Governance and Management (TGM) as part of the procedures. The Task Group on Procedures suggests taking the decisions of the TGM as a separate Appendix to the Principles of IPCC, not as an appendix to the Procedures, because the Task Group on Procedures primarily addresses the rules of the IPCC assessment process, not the management of the IPCC organization as a whole.

2. Selection of participants to scoping meetings

2.1 IAC recommendation

'The IPCC should make the process and criteria for selecting participants for scoping meetings more transparent'.

2.2 Decision by IPCC-32

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. Implementation plan to be determined by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to make a decision at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII).

2.3 Task Group considerations

The TASK GROUP noted that the current procedures do not describe scoping meetings to produce draft outlines for new IPCC reports. Therefore two amendments should be made:

(1) The list at the end of section 4.1 of Annex A to the Procedures should be extended with a first item reflecting the fact that the start of any new report of the IPCC requires a clear decision of the panel with a mandate for a scoping meeting. The objective of such a scoping meeting is to produce a draft outline for the report, and additional guidance material as appropriate, for consideration by the Panel.

(2) The Procedures should contain a new paragraph preceding paragraph 4.2.1 describing the scoping process for an Assessment or Special Report, including the selection of its participants and the mandate of a scoping meeting for all IPCC reports, including the Synthesis report.

The Task Group considered the comments received from governments and IPCC officials including:

- Indicate more precisely who will decide on the composition of the scoping meeting participants.
- The outcome of the process for selection of participants to be reported to the Panel
- Inform Focal Points on participants from their country.
- Criteria: scientific expertise is the most important; address awareness of government needs.

2.4 Proposed Decisions on IAC recommendation 2.1 (category I)

Add to the list under the chapeau 'To ensure proper preparation and review, the following steps should be taken' above current par 4.2.1, as a first item:

1. Convening a scoping meeting to prepare an outline of the Report for decision by the Panel.

Insert a new paragraph preceding current para 4.2.1:

Each IPCC assessment report, including Special Reports, Technical papers, and the Synthesis report, should be preceded by a scoping meeting that develops its draft outline (and explanatory notes as appropriate). Nominations for participation will be solicited from government Focal Points, relevant participating organizations (*i.e.* observers to the Panel), and Bureau members. Participants should be selected by the relevant respective Working Group Bureaux/TFI and, in case of the Synthesis report, by the Executive Committee². The criteria for selection should be: scientific, technical and socio-economic expertise, including the range of views; geographical representation; a mixture of experts with and without previous experience in IPCC; gender balance; experts with a background from relevant stakeholder and user groups, including governments. The WG Bureau/TFI will report to the Panel on the selection process including a description of how the selection criteria for participation and any other considerations have been applied, and including a list of participants. [The Executive Committee will oversee the selection process.]

3. Selection of Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors

3.1.1 IAC recommendation on criteria for selection

'The IPCC should establish a formal set of criteria and processes for selecting Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors'.

3.1.2 IPCC-32 decision

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. Formal criteria are included in the existing procedures. Enhanced implementation and transparency as well as potential additional criteria and procedures to be considered by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to make a decision at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII) for future work.

3.1.3 Task Group consideration

Para 4.2.2 should be amended by including the notion that gender balance, and a balance in the mixture of scientific experts with and without experience in the IPCC process should be taken into account. Procedures shall be amended to require a report on the selection process.

3.2.1 IAC Recommendation on regional expertise

'The IPCC should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment'.

² Pending the decisions on the Governance and Management

3.2.2. IPCC-32 decision:

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. This is already implemented for AR5. Further implementation to be considered by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to make a decision at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII) for future work.

3.2.3. Task Group consideration:

The TASK GROUP notes that the current composition of the regional writing teams of the Working Group II report has already taken this recommendation into account. The IAC recommendation should be reflected in paragraph 4.2.2.

3.1.4 Proposed decision combined for the IAC recommendations 3.1.1 and 3.2.1 (category I)

The bold text is the decision text, inserted in the existing text of para 4.2.2 of Appendix A: selection of Lead Authors

Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors are selected by the relevant Working Group/Task Force Bureau, under general guidance and review provided by the Session of the Working Group or, in case of reports prepared by the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, the Panel, from those experts cited in the lists provided by governments and participating organizations, and other experts as appropriate, known through their publications and works. The composition of the group of Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors for a section or chapter of a Report shall reflect the need to aim for a range of views, **scientific, technical and socio-economic** expertise, and geographical representation (ensuring appropriate representation of experts from developing and developed countries and countries with economies in transition); **a mixture of experts with and without previous experience in IPCC; and gender balance.** There should be at least one and normally two or more from developing countries. **The WG Bureau/TFI will report to the Panel on the selection process including a description of how the selection criteria for participation and any other considerations have been applied. [The Executive Committee will oversee the selection process.]**

The IPCC should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of chapters addressing specific regions, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment.

The Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors selected by the Working Group/Task Force Bureau may enlist other experts as Contributing Authors to assist with the work.

3 bis Selection of participants to IPCC workshops and expert meetings (category II)

This issue was raised in the 'addendum' in the Geneva document (see IPCC-XXXIII/INF.1) and addressed by some government comments.

3 bis.1 Task Group considerations

The Task Group noted that the IAC recommendations about transparency in the process and criteria for selecting participants for scoping meetings and the recommendation about criteria and processes for selecting Authors also is relevant to the selection of participants for IPCC workshops and expert meetings.

3 bis.2 Proposed decision (category. II)

Nominations for Expert Meetings may take place through the relevant Bureau(x)/TFI and/ or through governmental focal points and, as appropriate, participating organizations and stakeholders. Nominations for Workshops will take place through national focal points and, as appropriate, participating organizations and stakeholders. Participants to IPCC workshops and expert meetings should be selected by the IPCC Bureau or the respective Working Group Bureau/Task Force, taking into account scientific, technical and socio-economic expertise, geographical representation, the range of scientific views, and a balanced representation of experts from stakeholder groups as appropriate. The IPCC Bureau or the respective Working Group Bureau/Task Force may install a Scientific Steering Committee to assist them in organizing these meetings, taking into account the criteria mentioned above.

4. Sources of Data and Literature

4.1. IAC recommendation

The IPCC should strengthen and enforce its procedure for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature, including providing more specific guidance on how to evaluate such information, adding guidelines on what types of literature are unacceptable, and ensuring that unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature is appropriately flagged in the report

4.2. Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. The Panel decided to strengthen the application of its procedures on the use of unpublished and non-peer reviewed literature. It decided to implement this recommendation and further key elements through its procedures and guidance notes. The Panel noted the General Guidance on the Use of Literature in IPCC Reports (contained in IPCC-XXXII/INF.4) as revised in General Guidance on the Use of Literature in IPCC Reports (Appendix 1 of the decision of IPCC-32) which addresses the related aspects in the IAC recommendations and decided to endorse them as a Guidance Note. The Panel urges the Co-Chairs of Working Group I, II, III and TFI to take any necessary steps to ensure that this guidance note is applied in the development of IPCC reports

4.3. Task Group considerations

The Task Group notes that changes to the procedures are warranted to respond to this IAC recommendation.

The Task Group, after consulting the WG /TFI TSUs, found that the implementation of the part of this IAC recommendation regarding the appropriate flagging of unpublished and non-peer reviewed scientific literature would not be practical, because the distinction between 'peer reviewed' and 'non-peer reviewed' is not always clear. There are scientific reports of authoritative international institutes that have been thoroughly reviewed, and there are peer reviewed scientific publications that may be of less quality than the former. Flagging of thousands of titles would have resource implications and bring the risks of misjudgments.

4.4. Proposed decision

Replace the current Annex 2 of the Procedures ('Procedure for using non-published/non-peer-reviewed sources in IPCC reports') by a new Annex 2 as described below (category I):

ANNEX 2: PROCEDURE ON THE USE OF NON-SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL BASED LITERATURE IN IPCC REPORTS

This annex is provided to ensure that the IPCC process for the use of literature is open and transparent. In the assessment process, priority should be given to referring to peer – reviewed articles in the scientific literature, but it is recognized that non-scientific journal-based sources can provide crucial information for an IPCC Report, including information about experience and practice with mitigation and adaptation activities (e.g. reports from governments, industry, and other organisations, reports or working papers of research institutions and international organizations, workshop proceedings). Emphasis is to be placed on assurance of quality of the non-peer-reviewed literature. In principle, newspapers and magazines are not valid sources of scientific knowledge. Blogs, social networking sites, and broadcast media are not acceptable sources of information for IPCC Reports.

For the above mentioned sources the following additional procedures are needed.

1. Responsibilities of Coordinating, Lead and Contributing Authors

Authors are requested to critically assess any information they would like to include from a non-scientific journal-based source. Each chapter team should review the quality and validity of each non-scientific journal based source before incorporating information from the source into an IPCC Report.

Authors who wish to include information from a non-scientific journal based source that is not publicly commercially available are requested to send the full reference and a copy, preferably electronically, to the Technical Support Units of the relevant Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-Chairs.

For any sources written in a language other than English, an executive summary or abstract in English is required.

These procedures also apply to those papers undergoing the publication process in peer-reviewed journals at the time of the review.

All sources will be integrated into a reference section of an IPCC Report.

2. Responsibilities of the Review Editors

The Review Editors will ensure that these sources are selected and used consistently with the procedures in this Annex.

3. Responsibilities of the Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-Chairs

The Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-Chairs coordinating the Report will (a) collect these non-scientific journal based sources received from authors, as well as the accompanying information about each source and (b) make these sources available to reviewers and readers of the reports through the web.

4. Responsibilities of the IPCC Secretariat

The IPCC Secretariat will (a) collect these sources for each IPCC Report not prepared by a Working Group/the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and (b) make these sources available to reviewers who request them during the review process and c) will store these source after publication of an IPCC-report and make them available on request."

5. Handling the full range of views

5.1 IAC recommendation

'Lead Authors should explicitly document that a range of scientific viewpoints has been considered, and Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors should satisfy themselves that due consideration was given to properly documented alternative views'

5.2 Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. The Panel emphasizes that handling the full range of scientific views is a core principle of the IPCC. Its procedures clearly require the representation of differing scientific viewpoints and encourages rigorous adherence by the CLAs, LAs, and REs. The Panel urges the IPCC Chair, the Co-Chairs of the Working Groups and TFI to take any necessary steps to ensure that this principle continues to be applied in the development of IPCC reports. Further implementation to be considered by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to make a decision at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII).

5.3 Task Group considerations

The Task Group noted that documentation of the range of scientific views is an essential part of the IPCC assessment reports and should be reflected in the assessment process and products. The Task Group believes that the above decision taken by the Panel adequately reflects IAC recommendation for documenting the range of views including possible differences in opinion. However, the Task Group feels that the current language concerning the range of views in the procedures should be more precise. Instead of 'aiming for a range of views', the authors and experts should make every effort to seriously take in to account, or represent, the full range of views available in scientific literature, even if these views are contradicting. The Task Group on Procedures feels that the wording 'consider *the* range of views' would be adequate to cover this intention.

5.4 Proposed decisions (cat I)

Replace 'to aim for a range of views' by 'to consider the range of scientific views' in 4.2.2 Selection of Lead Authors, 4.2.4.1 First Review (by Experts). Annex I of the Procedures should also be reviewed to be consistent with this recommendation

4.2.2: Selection of lead authors

....The composition of the group of Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors for a section or chapter of a Report shall reflect the need to **consider the range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views**, expertise and geographical representation...

4.2.4.1 First review by Experts

... First draft Reports should be circulated by Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-Chairs for review by experts selected by the Working Group/Task Force Bureaux and, in addition, those on the lists provided by governments and participating organisations, noting the need to **consider the range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views**, expertise, and geographical representation....

Annex I section I, paragraph 3 (tasks and responsibilities of lead authors):

Lead Authors are required to **consider the range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views and document** in the report views which cannot be reconciled with a consensus view but are nonetheless scientifically or technically valid

6. Report review

6.1.1. IAC recommendation

The IPCC should adopt a more targeted and effective process for responding to reviewer comments. In such a process, Review Editors would prepare a written summary of the most significant issues raised by reviewers shortly after review comments have been received.

Authors would be required to provide detailed written responses to the most significant review issues identified by the Review Editors, abbreviated responses to all non-editorial comments, and no written responses to editorial comments.

6.2.1 Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel agreed with this recommendation in principle. Implementation options to be considered by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to make a decision at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII).

6.1.2. IAC recommendation

The IPCC should encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority to ensure that reviewers' comments are adequately considered by the authors and that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the report.

6.2.2. Decision by IPCC-32

The Panel agreed with this recommendation. The Panel decided to strengthen its application of procedures, and amend them where necessary, to enable Review Editors to fully exercise their role. The Panel noted the new Guidance Note on the Role of Review Editors (Appendix 2 of the decision of IPCC-32³) which addresses the related aspects in the IAC recommendations. The Panel urges the Co-Chairs of Working Group I, II, III and TFI to take steps to ensure that this guidance note is implemented in the development of its work.

6.3. Task Group considerations

The Task Group found that a staged response to Recommendations 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 is needed, first through the development of additional guidance, and then through subsequent consideration of the relevant section of the Procedures (Section 4.2.4). The guidance document would address all major actions under the review process and consider the various roles of and responsibilities of the actors. To that end, the IPCC WG Bureaux/TFI should develop material on the current review process in order to ensure the process is targeted and effective, and that consistent practices are adopted across the Working Groups/TFI.

³ http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session32/ipcc_IACreview_decisions.pdf

6.4. Proposed decision (cat I)

The Panel requests the Bureaux of Working Group I, II, III and TFI to develop an additional guidance document that fully responds to the recommendations 6.1.1 and 6.12 of this report by XX 2011 (date). The Working Group Bureaux /TFI should use, as an initial basis, the guidance document “Role of Review Editors” that was tabled at IPCC 32, noting the Panel urged “the Co-Chairs of WGs I, II and III and TFI to take steps to ensure that this guidance note is implemented in the development of its work.

The Panel may subsequently revise the current section 4.2.4 and take decisions by IPCC-34.

6bis Additional proposed decisions on the assessment and review process (cat. II)

These issues were raised in the ‘Addendum’ of the Geneva document and addressed by government comments.

6bis 1. Availability of review comments and responses

6bis 1.1. Task Group consideration

In section 4.1 it is noted that ‘*all written expert and government review comments will be made available to reviewers on request during the review process and will be retained in an open archive in a location determined by the IPCC Secretariat on completion of the Report for a period of at least five years.*’ The authors prepare expert review comment response files in preparation of their next draft at their lead author meetings. The current procedures do not require the responses to be archived but in AR4 it became the practice to provide these as well in the archive after completion of the report. The transparency of the review process could be improved by making these review comments, including the responses by authors files pro-actively available to the reviewers as soon as possible after their completion, during the assessment process. This will enable expert and government reviewers to keep track of what happened with their comments – but it should not be interpreted as an invitation to reviewers to overburden authors with correspondence on their review comment responses.

This increased transparency could be achieved by modifying the quoted line from section 4.1 and referring to the web instead of the ‘open archive’.

6bis 1.2. Proposed decision (cat II)

Modification of sentence in section 4.1, third line:

All written expert and government review comments **including the responses by authors** will be made available to reviewers during the review process **on a closed website** and will be retained **at the open IPCC website** on completion of the Report for a period of at least five years.

6bis 2 Further assuring quality of the review

6bis 2.1 Task Group consideration

During the AR4, some parts of the WG II reports have not been sufficiently reviewed by experts. The review process should be organized in a way to ensure complete coverage of the report. The expert reviews should also include cross checking by lead authors of other Working groups where relevant (for instance glaciologists of WG I reviewing relevant parts dealing with glaciers in WG II). This would help prevent errors like the Himalaya glacier error made in AR4

6bis.2.2 Proposed decision (cat II)

The Working group/TFI co-chairs should arrange the expert and government reviews in such a way that complete coverage of all texts, graphics, tables, and boxes by reviewers is ensured in each expert and government review. Those parts of a Working Group report that are crosscutting with other Working Group reports should be crosschecked by the relevant lead authors of that other Working Group.

6bis 3 Anonymous expert review

It has been suggested that the expert review process could be made anonymous. The rationale would be an attempt to make the review process more objective by filtering out possible biases by authors and review editors with regard to the expert reviewers. One viewpoint is that only the content of an expert review comment should matter to the authors, not the person who wrote it. WG III and TFI had experiences with this practice. Other views express that there would be serious drawbacks to such an approach. NB: the anonymity only refers to the expert review, not the government review

This issue was flagged in the 'addendum' of the Geneva document as a matter for further discussion. The Task Group noted that several members of the IPCC and IPCC Bureau registered a range of views on a potential anonymous expert review process in their comments on the Geneva document. The Task Group decided that this issue merits further consideration by the Panel. Task Group co-chairs and rapporteur prepared a note explaining the issue, describing past experiences in WG III with the IPCC Special report on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage, and listing pro's and con's. This note can be found in Appendix 3 to this document.

6.3.2 Proposed decision (cat II)

The Panel may wish to consider this issue with a view to a decision at IPCC-34.

6bis 4 Confidentiality of draft reports

This issue was raised by the WG I co-chairs. Given the upcoming finalization of two Special Reports The Task Group deemed this issue important for consideration.

6bis 4.1 Task Group consideration

The Task Group noted that clear guidance is needed on what the rules are for the confidentiality of draft reports and other documentation during drafting and review. On one hand, there is a need for transparency and openness of the assessment process. On the other hand, publicizing drafts have serious drawbacks. There is a risk that drafts contain errors or statements that are still unbalanced and that have to be corrected at a later stage. These could prematurely circulate in the public domain, creating confusion, and that would be a bad service of IPCC to society. Therefore, the Task Group believes that drafts should be kept confidential until acceptance of the full report

6bis 4.2 Proposed decision (cat II)

All drafts of IPCC assessment reports (including the final draft) will be considered to be confidential material, not for public distribution quotation, or citation until acceptance by the Panel of the final IPCC report. The first order draft, second order draft and the final draft, the expert and government review comments, and the author responses to those comments on both drafts will be made available on the IPCC open website on a clearly visible place, within xx weeks after the acceptance of the report by the Panel.

7. Summary for Policy Makers

7.1. IAC recommendation

'The IPCC should revise its process for the approval of the Summary for Policymakers so that governments provide written comments prior to the Plenary'.

7.2 Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel acknowledges the importance of both written comments and inputs from the floor, which are current practice. No revision to the process is required.

7.3 Task Group considerations

The Panel noted and the Task Group reaffirms that current IPCC practice already allows for governments to provide written comments on the Summary for Policymakers prior to the Plenary. The Panel indicated no revision to the process was required. However, the Task Group suggests the procedures (section 4.3 of the Procedures) be amended to clarify the current practice of submitting written comments prior to the SPM approval session.

7.4. Proposed decision (cat.I)

The existing Procedures should be amended to clarify the current practices related to submitting written comments prior to the approval session,

7bis 1. Role of CLAs at SPM approval session

Task Group considerations

The Task Group suggests that the procedures be further amended to reflect the role of Coordinating Lead Authors at the SPM approval session. The existing Procedures state that '*Coordinating lead authors may be asked to provide technical assistance in ensuring that consistency has been achieved*'. In practice, the CLAs play a stronger and important role: generally changes in the SPM text are adopted only if the relevant CLAs can ensure that these changes are consistent with the scientific findings in the underlying report. It should be considered to reflect the common practice in the procedures.

The existing Procedures should be amended to clarify the current practices related to the role of the Coordinating Lead Authors during the approval session. The existing text: **‘Coordinating lead authors may be asked to provide technical assistance in ensuring that consistency has been achieved’**.(section 4.3, second paragraph) should be replaced by : **‘Coordinating lead authors should be consulted in order to ensure that the Summary for Policymakers is fully consistent with the scientific findings in the main report’** .

8. Procedure for handling potential errors identified after approval of IPCC reports

8.1 IAC recommendation

IAC discussion and suggestion in the Box analyzing the Himalayan glacier error (IAC Report page 22) and Discussion of time required for a response on Himalayan glacier error (IAC Report page 54).

8.2 Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel agreed on the need to establish a process for evaluating, addressing and correcting, if necessary, potential errors and further developing errata as appropriate. The Panel noted the “Proposed IPCC Protocol for Addressing Errors in Previous Assessment Reports” (Appendix 3) which describes a clear decision tree, based on the nature of the material and the steps necessary to avoid bias, so that potential errors could be addressed as rapidly as practical. The Panel urges the IPCC Chair, the IPCC Vice-Chairs, the Co-Chairs of Working Group I, II, III and TFI to take any necessary steps to ensure that this protocol is finalized and then used for evaluation of potential errors and developing errata as appropriate. Further analysis to be considered by the Task Group on Procedures with the view to submit a proposal for a decision at the next Session (IPCC-XXXIII).

8.3 Task Group considerations

The Task Group felt that once the proposed Protocol for Addressing Errors in Previous Assessment Reports has been completed, it should be further analyzed by the Task Group with a view to adopt this Protocol. At 11 April 2011 the finalized Protocol text was not yet available. It will be made available as Addendum to this document.

8.4. Proposed decisions

- The procedures should be updated with mention of the protocol to address potential errors and develop errata as appropriate. Once finalized and endorsed by the Task Group on Procedures, the protocol should be adopted as an Annex to the Procedures .
- In publishing a report, the IPCC should prominently display the procedure for submitting potential errors by the public at its website.
- [The IPCC Chair, vice chairs and Co-Chairs][The Executive Committee] will oversee the implementation of the procedures for submission of potential]⁴

⁴ The responsible body for handling potential errors will be addressed in the recommendations of the Task Group on Governance and Management

9. IPCC's Evaluation of Evidence and Treatment of Uncertainty

9.1. IAC recommendations

1. All Working Groups should use the qualitative level-of-understanding scale in their Summary for Policymakers and Technical Summary, as suggested in IPCC's uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate.
2. Chapter Lead Authors should provide a traceable account of how they arrived at their ratings for level of scientific understanding and likelihood that an outcome will occur.
3. Quantitative probabilities (as in the likelihood scale) should be used to describe the probability of well-defined outcomes only when there is sufficient evidence. Authors should indicate the basis for assigning a probability to an outcome or event (e.g. based on measurement, expert judgment, and/or model runs).
4. The confidence scale should not be used to assign subjective probabilities to ill-defined outcomes. The likelihood scale should be stated in terms of probabilities (numbers) in addition to words to improve understanding of uncertainty.
5. Where practical, formal expert elicitation procedures should be used to obtain subjective probabilities for key results.

9.2. Decision by IPCC –32

The Panel decided to improve the IPCC guidance on evaluation of evidence and treatment of uncertainty. It is implementing the six recommendations in the IAC Review as part of a broader package of updates to procedures and guidance notes. The Panel noted with appreciation the Draft Guidance Note for Lead Authors of the Fifth Assessment Report on Consistent Treatment of Uncertainties (Appendix 4 of the decision of IPCC-32) and requested the Co-Chairs of Working Group I, II and III to present the final document to the Panel at its next Session. The final document should provide more detail on traceable accounts, the evolution of the guidance since AR4 and explain how each of the six recommendations in the IAC review is addressed. The Panel urges the Co-Chairs to take any necessary steps to ensure that the guidance note is implemented in the development of its work.

9.3. Task Group considerations

The Task Group noted that these recommendations have been addressed by the 32nd Session in a draft guidance note by WG Co-chairs, see Appendix 4 to the 32nd Panel decisions. The final guidance paper is available as a pdf on the IPCC website⁵ and should be considered as an Addendum to this document. The Task Group notes that the guidance paper may be updated in future.

⁵ https://www.ipcc-wg1.unibe.ch/guidancepaper/ar5_uncertainty-guidance-note.pdf ;

<https://www.ipcc-wg1.unibe.ch/guidancepaper/ar5-uncertainty-guidance-note-annexes.pdf>

9.4. Proposed decisions

There should be a common approach to the treatment of uncertainty in the WGs as described in the Guidance paper on uncertainties of July 2010. The guidance applies to assessment reports, special reports, and technical papers. The guidance on uncertainties may be developed further by the Bureau/WG Bureaux/TFI for future assessment periods of the IPCC as new insights over time may arise.

10. IPCC guidance material

10.1 Task Group considerations

The Task Group noted that some IPCC guidance material now played a significant role in the processes of IPCC and that there is a need for transparency related to the development of such material. The IAC Review has elevated the importance of such guidance.

The Task Group noted that some of this material has until this point not been classed or has been classed as supporting material.

10.2 Proposed decisions

This group of guidance materials needs to be further considered with the aim of developing appropriate procedures. All relevant IPCC guidance material should be published together with the IPCC Principles and Procedures at the IPCC website. Guidance material needs to be anchored in the procedures and needs to be used consistently in the three working groups. The Panel will decide about the appropriate connection between the guidance material and the Procedures at a next session.

11. Next steps

11.1 Task Group consideration

Insertion of new text in the Procedures and changing existing text will require internal consistency checks, editing, renumbering of sections and paragraphs, and adjusting the table of contents.

The Task Group proposes the Panel; to decide to mandate to the Secretariat to prepare a proposal for an amended Procedure text based on the IPCC-33 decisions, ensuring internal consistency. The opportunity should be taken to repair some technical errors in the current procedures (for instance limiting the number of review editors to two per chapter).

However, Insertion of new text and changes in the existing Annex A will require consistency checks, editing, re-ordering sections and paragraphs, adjusting numbering and the table of contents, legal checks and balances, and identify resource implications. The Task Group could not accomplish these tasks in the time available. Therefore, the Task Group believes that intersessional work will be needed between IPCC-33 and IPCC-34, and that this work should be carried out in consultation with the Secretariat. This should lead to a revised text of the Procedures, taking account of the decisions taken at IPCC-33, with a view to finalizing the revised Procedures at IPCC-34.

11.2 Proposed decision

A fully revised Procedures text should be developed following the decisions on the Procedures taken at IPCC-33, taking into account internal consistency, editorial improvement, and legal checks and balances, for consideration by IPCC-34. This work should be carried out by an intersessional Task Group in consultation with the IPCC Secretariat, and should include an estimation of the potential resource implications of Procedure revisions. Simultaneously, proposals may be developed to repair small shortcomings and inconsistencies in the current Procedures.

12. Other issues

The Task Group noted two other issues that were raised by the governments' comments to the Geneva document but were outside the mandate of the Task Group. They were considered to be relevant to the Panel but were not further discussed:

12.1. The Panel may request the Bureau to develop a guidance note for nomination and selection of authors for the next assessment period.

12.2. A text suggestion has been submitted for change of art. 2 of the IPCC principles. The current text is:

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

The proposed amendment is:

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 climate change, including human-induced influence**, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation

Rationale: this amendment better reflects the assessment practice of the IPCC since it considers natural variability, natural external forcings and human induced forcings. The risks to society are not solely that of the human induced part.

Proposed decision:

These suggestions may be considered at a future session of the Panel.

Terms of Reference of the Task Group on Procedures

The Panel welcomed and acknowledged the recommendations and suggestions by the IAC on the IPCC's assessment process (Chapters 2 and 3 of the IAC Report) and decided to establish an inter-sessional Task Group on Procedures to develop proposals on further implementation of the recommendations. The Task Group is specifically requested to address, inter alia, the issues listed in Annex I to this decision and propose amendments, including Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC work and relevant Guidance Documents, if necessary, by *31 January 2011*. Governments will then be invited to provide comments on the proposals by *28 February 2011* to allow preparation of a revised draft for consideration and decisions by the Panel at its next Session (IPCC-XXXIII).

The Task Group on Procedures is open to participation by the members of the IPCC and consists of Armenia, Australia, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Maldives, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Swaziland, Switzerland, Thailand, UK and USA. The Task Group will elect Co-Chairs to coordinate its work.

The Task Group will seek the advice of the IPCC Chair, the IPCC Vice-Chairs, Working Group and TFI Co-Chairs and the Secretary. The duration of the Task Group is until the IPCC's 33rd Session unless decided otherwise.

The Task Group should address the issues listed below as mentioned in the IAC recommendations (Chapters 2 and 3), IPCC responses at its 32nd Session and IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 22. For each of the issues the Task Group should establish a timetable for action, consider resource implications and identify responsibilities for implementation. It should propose amendments to the Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work and relevant guidance documents if needed taking into account decisions made at IPCC-XXXII.

IAC recommendations

Scoping

1. Recommendation: The IPCC should make the process and criteria for selecting participants for scoping meetings more transparent.

Author Selection

2. Recommendation: The IPCC should establish a formal set of criteria and processes for selecting Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors.

3. Recommendation: The IPCC should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment.

Sources of Data and Literature

4. Recommendation: The IPCC should strengthen and enforce its procedure for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature, including providing more specific guidance on how to evaluate such information, adding guidelines on what types of literature are unacceptable, and ensuring that unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature is appropriately flagged in the report.

Handling the Full Range of Views

5. Recommendation: Lead Authors should explicitly document that a range of scientific viewpoints has been considered, and Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors should satisfy themselves that due consideration was given to properly documented alternative views.

Report Review

6. Recommendation: The IPCC should adopt a more targeted and effective process for responding to reviewer comments. In such a process, Review Editors would prepare a written summary of the most significant issues raised by reviewers shortly after review comments have been received. Authors would be required to provide detailed written responses to the most significant review issues identified by the Review Editors, abbreviated responses to all non-editorial comments, and no written responses to editorial comments.

7. Recommendation: The IPCC should encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority to ensure that reviewers' comments are adequately considered by the authors and that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the report.

Summary for Policymakers

8. Recommendation: The IPCC should revise its process for the approval of the Summary for Policymakers so that governments provide written comments prior to the Plenary.

Procedure for the handling of potential errors identified after approval of IPCC reports

IAC discussion and suggestion: Box analyzing of Himalayan glacier error (IAC Report page 22).
Discussion of time required for a response on Himalayan glacier error (IAC Report page 54).

IPCC's Evaluation of Evidence and Treatment of Uncertainty

9. Recommendation: All Working Groups should use the qualitative level-of-understanding scale in their Summary for Policymakers and Technical Summary, as suggested in IPCC's uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate.

10. Recommendation: Chapter Lead Authors should provide a traceable account of how they arrived at their ratings for level of scientific understanding and likelihood that an outcome will occur.

11. Recommendation: Quantitative probabilities (as in the likelihood scale) should be used to describe the probability of well-defined outcomes only when there is sufficient evidence. Authors should indicate the basis for assigning a probability to an outcome or event (e.g. based on measurement, expert judgment, and/or model runs).

12. Recommendation: The confidence scale should not be used to assign subjective probabilities to ill-defined outcomes.

13. Recommendation: The likelihood scale should be stated in terms of probabilities (numbers) in addition to words to improve understanding of uncertainty.

14. Recommendation: Where practical, formal expert elicitation procedures should be used to obtain subjective probabilities for key results.

List of members of the Task Group on Procedures

Countries
Armenia
Australia
Bolivia
Botswana
Brazil
Canada
Chile
Denmark
Germany
India
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Japan
Maldives
Netherlands (The) **
New Zealand
Niger
Norway *
Peru *
Saudi Arabia
South Africa
Swaziland
Switzerland
Thailand
UK
USA

* *Co-chair*

** *Rapporteur*

Anonymous Expert review
(Note by Task Group Co-chairs and rapporteur)

Explanation

It has been suggested that the expert review process of the IPCC report may be made anonymous, in an attempt to make the review process more objective by filtering out possible biases by authors and review editors with regard to the expert reviewers.

One viewpoint is that is that only the content of an expert review comment should matter to the authors, not the person who wrote it. WG III and TFI had positive experiences with this practice. Other viewpoints are that that there would be serious drawbacks to such an approach. NB: the anonymity only refers to the expert review, not the government review.

It should be noted that the massive review of an assessment report cannot be compared with the peer-review of a single scientific article – in the latter case the anonymity is needed for other reasons (sometimes for both authors and reviewers) as there are often connected through working relations with regard to the specific topic of that article.

During the AR4, it was discussed at the Bureau whether or not to implement this practice for the three main assessment reports. Since there was no consensus among the Bureau members it was decided not to implement anonymous review but revisit the issue for the AR5.

Past experiences

The expert review of the IPCC Special report on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage of WG III (2005) was anonymous. It was organized as follows:

The TSU prepared a list of review comments with numbers. The TSU had a conversion table linking the numbers to the reviewer's names. During the treatment at the lead author meetings and the formulation of the author's responses the authors only saw the numbers. The authors knew that in case they would need to consult an expert reviewer for getting some clarifications about his comments, the anonymity could be lifted and the coordinates of the expert reviewer would have been made available to the authors. In practice it turned out they did not need to use this provision. The anonymity was continued until finalization of the final draft report. The reviewers and authors have been informed beforehand about this procedure. The number of comments was normal compared to other special reports. No reviewer used improper or inappropriate language. The WG III co chairs and TSU held an enquiry among the authors and review editors. They considered the anonymity an improvement, because it made them concentrate fully on the content of the matter, disregarding the persons and their background, which was more time efficient.

Pro's of IPCC anonymous expert review

- Concentrate on the content of the matter , excluding (subconscious) biases.
- positive experience in WG III AR4 – also the TFI has practiced anonymous reviews with a positive judgment of the authors and review editors.
- Authors cannot be criticized anymore of ignoring comments of specific individuals or representatives of scientific schools or interest groups, as has happened in the past.

Con's

- risk that reviewers could take advantage of their anonymity by burdening authors with unprofessional or inappropriate comments.
- measures against biases are already taken by having a group of authors considering review comments instead of and by having Review Editors.
- one could argue that there would be an imbalance when authors are known by name and reviewers are not.