

Guidance document for IPCC Government Focal Points on the nomination of potential Lead Authors, Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors

At the IPCC's 31st Plenary held in Bali, Indonesia, 26-29 October 2009, the Panel highlighted the key role of national IPCC Focal Points in the nomination process, and a number of delegates requested guidance on how best to proceed for the national nomination of potential Lead Authors, Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors. This document aims to provide this guidance and provide an easy reference to relevant sections of the **Principles Governing IPCC Work** and **Appendix A - Procedures for the Preparation, Review, Acceptance, Adoption, Approval and Publication of IPCC Reports**. It also summarizes practices shared by some Focal Points with the IPCC Secretariat.

Structure of this document:

1. IPCC Principles and procedures
2. Roles of Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors
3. General remarks on the nomination process and the selection of experts
4. The role of an IPCC Focal Point

1. IPCC Principles and procedures

Comprehensiveness, objectivity, openness and transparency are the principles governing the work of the IPCC and are reflected in its mandate:

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 need to deal objectively with scientific, technical and socio-economic factors relevant to the application of particular policies. [Principle 2 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work]

Review is an essential part of the IPCC process. Since the IPCC is an intergovernmental body, review of IPCC documents should involve both peer review by experts and review by governments. [Principle 3 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work]

Expertise is drawn from a wide array of sources:

Experts from WMO/UNEP Member countries or international, intergovernmental or nongovernmental organizations may be invited in their own right to contribute to the work of the IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces. Governments should be informed in advance of invitations extended to experts from their countries and they may nominate additional experts. [Principle 9 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work]

The IPCC prepares three types of materials including **IPCC Reports** (Assessment Reports, Special Reports, and Methodology Reports, including their Synthesis Report, Summaries for Policymakers or overview chapters respectively), **Technical Papers**, and **Supporting Material** (reports and proceedings from workshops and expert meetings and other material commissioned by the IPCC).

All IPCC Reports are prepared by teams of authors and reviewed comprehensively by experts and governments in a multi-stage review process:

The review process generally takes place in three stages: expert review of IPCC Reports, government/expert review of IPCC Reports, government review of the Summaries for Policymakers, Overview Chapters and/or the Synthesis Report. Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-Chairs should aim to avoid (or at least minimise) the overlap of government review periods for different IPCC Reports and with Sessions of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change and its subsidiary bodies. Expert review should normally be eight weeks, but not less than six weeks, except to the extent decided by the Panel. Government and government/expert reviews should not be less than eight weeks, except to the extent decided by the Panel. 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. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.1]

In order to support the assessment process the IPCC holds workshops and expert meetings that have been agreed upon in advance by an IPCC Working Group, or by the Panel as useful or necessary for the completion of the work plan of a Working Group or a task of the IPCC. The experts invited to these meetings are either selected by the respective Working Group Bureau or Task Force Bureau, or by the scientific steering group of the meeting, often following a nomination process involving IPCC Member countries and observer organizations.

2. Role of Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, and Review Editors

For a complete description of the roles and responsibilities of Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors, as well as those of contributing authors and expert reviewers, please see Annex 1 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work. In summary, the Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors are responsible for drafting the chapters and revising them taking into account comments submitted by expert reviewers during the two IPCC-mandated reviews, namely the expert review and the second review by governments and experts. The process of revision and redrafting is overseen by the Review Editors. A representative cross-section of authors will also contribute to drafting, revising and finalising the Technical Summary and Summary for Policymakers (SPM).

Specifically, the role of Lead Authors (LAs) is:

To be responsible for the production of designated sections addressing items of the work programme on the basis of the best scientific, technical and socio-economic information available. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Annex 1, 1.]

The role of the Coordinating Lead Authors' (CLAs) is:

To take overall responsibility for coordinating major sections of a Report. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Annex 1, 2.]

The task of the Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors is a demanding one. During the period of preparation of the Reports the workload will be in the order of several months and can be particularly heavy during certain periods. It is expected that Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors would need to attend four Lead Authors meetings and possibly additional chapter meetings. In addition, the presence of Coordinating Lead Authors and selected Lead Authors may be requested at sessions of the IPCC and its Working Groups to assist in finalizing the Summary for Policymakers and/or Working Group contribution to the Report.

The role of Review Editors (REs) is to:

Assist the Working Group/Task Force Bureaux in identifying reviewers for the expert review process, ensure that all substantive expert and government review comments are afforded appropriate consideration, advise lead authors on how to handle contentious/controversial issues and ensure genuine controversies are reflected adequately in the text of the Report. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Annex 1, 5.]

3. The nomination process and the selection of experts by the IPCC

The IPCC aims to select the best available scientific experts representing a range of disciplines, views and geographical balance:

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, expertise and geographical representation (ensuring appropriate representation of experts from developing and developed countries and countries with economies in transition). There should be at least one and normally two or more from developing countries. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.2.2]

Scientific experts contributing to the IPCC process are proposed by the governments of IPCC Member countries and organizations, including UN and other international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The IPCC at its 25th Session has adopted an “**IPCC Policy and Process for Admitting Observer Organizations**”.

The Bureaux of Working Groups I, II and III guide this process and help identify experts for specific sections and chapters:

At the request of Working Group Bureau Co-Chairs through their respective Working Group Bureau, and the IPCC Secretariat, governments, and participating organisations and the Working Group Bureaux should identify appropriate experts for each area in the Report who can act as potential Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, Contributing Authors, expert reviewers or Review Editors. To facilitate the identification of experts and later review by governments, governments should also designate their respective Focal Points. IPCC Bureau Members and Members of the Task Force Bureau should contribute where necessary to identifying appropriate Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, Contributing Authors, expert reviewers, and Review Editors in cooperation with the Government Focal Points within their region to ensure an appropriate representation of experts from developing and developed countries and countries with economies in transition. These should be assembled into lists available to all IPCC Members and maintained by the IPCC Secretariat. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.2.1]

The Working Group Bureaux select as Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors experts cited in the nomination lists and other experts known through their scientific work. Contributing Authors are identified by the Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors as needed:

Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors are selected by the relevant Working Group Bureau, under general guidance and review provided by the Session of the Working Group (...) from those experts cited in the lists provided by governments and participating organisations, and other experts as appropriate, known through their publications and works. (...) The Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors selected by the Working Group Bureau may enlist other experts as Contributing Authors to assist with the work. At the earliest opportunity, the IPCC Secretariat should inform all governments and participating organisations who the Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors are for different chapters and indicate the general content area that the person will contribute to the chapter. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.2.2]

The Review Editors are also selected by the Working Group Bureaux:

To help ensure that Reports provide a balanced and complete assessment of current information, each Working Group Bureau should normally select two Review Editors per chapter (including the executive summaries) and per technical summary of each Report.

Review Editors should normally consist of a member of the Working Group Bureau, and an independent expert based on the lists provided by governments

and participating organisations. (...) In selecting Review Editors, the Bureaux should select from developed and developing countries and from countries with economies in transition, and should aim for a balanced representation of scientific, technical and socio-economic views. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.2.4]

The selection of expert reviewers should aim for a range of views, expertise and geographical representation.

The review circulation should include:

- *Experts who have significant expertise and/or publications in particular areas covered by the Report.*
- *Experts nominated by governments as Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, contributing authors or expert reviewers as included in lists maintained by the IPCC Secretariat.*
- *Expert reviewers nominated by appropriate organisations. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, 4.2.4.1]*

4. The role of an IPCC Focal Point

Many of the IPCC Member countries have a designated Focal Point who links the government with the national scientific community and the IPCC. If no Focal Point is designated, communication from the IPCC is sent to the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, through the respective Permanent Mission in Geneva, Switzerland, the host country of the IPCC Secretariat. As an intergovernmental organization, the IPCC sends copies of all communication to the Ministries for Foreign Affairs.

The location and staffing of the IPCC Focal Points differ depending on national circumstances. Some countries have established a staffed 'national coordination office' that supports the work of the Focal Point. In other countries, the IPCC Focal Point, together with representatives from national and regional governments and academic institutions, is a member of a 'national commission on climate change' or another national or regional coordination entity that deals with science and policy issues related to climate change. These commissions and networks can play a crucial role in identifying experts for the IPCC. In cases where such networks do not exist, Focal Points are encouraged to contact national research communities and institutions in order to identify relevant experts.

According to the Principles Governing IPCC Work the function of the Focal Point is:

To prepare and update the list of national experts as required to help implement the IPCC work programme, and to arrange the provision of integrated comments on the accuracy and completeness of the scientific and/or technical content and the overall scientific and/or technical balance of the drafts. [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Annex 1, 6.]

In most cases, the IPCC Focal Point coordinates the nomination process with the help of a 'national coordination office' when available, i.e. disseminates the IPCC call for nominations through the established networks and contacts, helps identify senior experts for specific sections and chapters of the Reports and, often after consultation with independent experts and internal review, provides a list of names and credentials to the IPCC Secretariat and Working Group Bureaux. Focal Points are also encouraged to consult with the Members of the IPCC Bureau from their region on how to identify scientific technical institutions and experts.

Networks and contacts

In order to facilitate information exchange between the national entities and the IPCC, it is recommended that governments, their IPCC Focal Points, or contacts responsible for IPCC-related matters establish networks and maintain lists of contacts of:

- national experts including their scientific expertise, publication record, and interest in getting involved in the work of IPCC;
- key persons within government, academic, non-governmental and private sector entities;
- national scientists who have been involved in the preparation of previous IPCC Reports;
- people who specifically asked to be informed of new IPCC calls for nominations.

Dissemination of the call for nominations

Governments and participating organizations are free to identify nominees in any manner. Some countries choose to consult broadly in identifying potential experts, soliciting recommendations from any interested government, academic, non-governmental, or private sector entities. Often, scientists involved in the preparation of previous IPCC Reports are consulted.

Depending on national procedures, a number of channels are used for disseminating the call for nominations:

- list-servers for electronic mailings generated from the above mentioned contact databases;
- other mailing lists used within government, academic, non-governmental and private sector entities;
- public advertisement through key web portals or appropriate print and e-products;
- announcements at relevant meetings, workshops, conferences.

National selection process for nominations

When responding to the call for nominations, self-nomination is the norm in many countries. However, the IPCC procedures encourage nomination through mechanisms established by the government, NGOs or International Organizations. The IPCC Focal Point should aim to pre-select a roster of candidates that reflects a wide range of views, disciplines and expertise.

Nominees may be requested by their national Focal Point to complete the nomination forms provided by the IPCC Secretariat. In this form, the candidate is asked to indicate the working group(s), chapter(s) and author role(s) for which he/she is being nominated. Together with a summary curriculum vita in English specifying the nominee's expertise and a list of relevant publications, the nominee returns the completed nomination form to the national IPCC Focal Point (or 'national coordination office' or 'national commission on climate change') for compilation and submission to the IPCC.

Within a country, a small committee of government experts may review and verify the credentials of the nominations collected by the Focal Point. Sometimes, independent experts from the scientific community or both the scientific and political communities are consulted during this review. Some countries convene expert panels for each Working Group, composed of representatives from independent national agencies that make recommendations to the government or the designated Focal Point. The approved list of nominees is then submitted to the IPCC Secretariat by the Focal Point.

Acknowledgement

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References

Principles Governing IPCC Work <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/ipcc-principles/ipcc-principles.pdf>

Appendix A of Principles Governing IPCC Work <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/ipcc-principles/ipcc-principles-appendix-a.pdf>