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FUTURE WORK OF THE IPCC

(Submitted by the Co-Chairs of the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support
for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA))

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Dear colleagues,

In our capacities as Co-Chairs of TGICA (the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis), we would like to raise some issues concerning TGICA's potential role in the future work of the IPCC. We are doing so in the context of some of the ideas raised in the "Draft Options Paper" prepared by the Co-Chairs of the Task Group on the Future Work of the IPCC (TGF-II/Doc. 3, 4.IX.2014). We apologise for submitting these observations at such a late stage, and trust that the Task Group will consider them in their continued deliberations.

As you will be aware, TGICA offers one of the few opportunities in IPCC for cross-disciplinary and cross-Working Group exchange, with its members drawn from experts across the three IPCC Working Groups. TGICA has also benefited from relative continuity in its operation across assessment cycles. Since it was established in 1996, TGICA has provided continuous background support for IPCC, offering three distinct roles within the IPCC organisation:

1. It oversees the quality control, documentation and long-term archiving of IPCC data and information at the IPCC Data Distribution Centre, with generous support from the governments of the United Kingdom, Germany and USA.
2. In consultation with the Working Group Co-Chairs, it supports the work of the IPCC by identifying information needs, facilitating research on climate impacts, adaptation, and mitigation, making recommendations on cross-cutting issues and soliciting feedback from user communities.
3. It contributes to capacity building in the use of data and scenarios for climate-related research in developing and transition-economy regions and countries, through the preparation of guidance material and by convening Expert Meetings, as required.

We would like to endorse the recommendation of the Working Group II Technical Support Unit in commenting on the Draft Options Paper on the future work of the IPCC, that "the role of TGICA should be reconsidered". Indeed, we believe that TGICA may already fulfil some of the functions proposed in the Draft Options Paper. To illustrate:

- TGICA has organised or contributed to several Expert Meetings on data and scenarios that span the interests of the three Working Groups
- Guidance documents on scenario development and application prepared by TGICA members as IPCC Supporting Material are among the most popular items accessed from the IPCC Data Distribution Centre (DDC)
- The DDC maintains a reference archive facility for data and scenario information dating back to the IPCC First Assessment Report
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- The DDC is in the process of quality checking and publishing (with doi numbers) the CMIP5 data assessed in the AR5
- Currently other data and information underpinning the IPCC AR5 are being archived or linked to using criteria and protocols developed by TGICA
- There are encouraging signs that users in developing countries are increasingly accessing the DDC. During the period August 2013 to July 2014 interest in the site has been maintained at a high level (over 86,000 unique users accessing at around 2,000 sessions per week), the top six countries being: USA (26%), United Kingdom (9%), India (6%), Germany (5%), Canada: (4%) and China (4%).

We hope that these examples provide some food for thought about TGICA's current activities in the IPCC and its potential future role in the coming years. Please note, in addition, that TGICA is currently reviewing its activities and developing a vision document (to be finalised at TGICA-21 in November 2014). In light of how the IAV agenda and regional concerns are increasingly shaping assessment needs, we can already suggest that there are important roles that TGICA is favourably positioned to address (given suitable resourcing), and which would require cross-disciplinary exchanges and cross-Working Group facilitation.

Yours respectfully,

Timothy Carter and Bruce Hewitson

Co-Chairs

IPCC Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA)