

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**Statement by Hoesung Lee at IPCC Side Event on Communications  
Paris, Monday 30 November 2015**

Thank you Jonathan.

Prime Minister, fellow panellists, friends

We often hear that IPCC reports are the gold standard of climate science. From my own interaction with hundreds of distinguished IPCC authors, I humbly acknowledge this assessment. IPCC reports are regularly cited in the scientific literature, and discussed in lecture halls and seminar rooms. But let me pose a brutal question: What use are IPCC reports if many of the intended users cannot understand them, do not know where to find what they need, or cannot use them in their own work?

Our intended users to date have been primarily policymakers. But we know that we have many more stakeholders – civil society, educators, business to name a few – who have difficulty working with our products. That is the point of Christiana's comments that Jonathan just referred to. But we increasingly understand that we are not even serving policymakers let alone these other stakeholders as well as we could. This year – as part of our efforts to communicate better – we have undertaken an unprecedented programme of outreach around our latest report, the Fifth Assessment. But we hear again and again from ministers, politicians and officials that they cannot easily use IPCC reports in their own educational and awareness-raising work.

Besides scaled-up outreach, we have already done some things to improve communications. Greater engagement with the media, distilling key findings into headline statements, scientifically rigorous yet accessible videos, a user-friendly website for the Synthesis Report that respects bandwidth constraints in some developing countries. The Panel has already asked us to do more – make greater use of digital technology to improve access and readability; draw on the help of experts from communications disciplines in developing our reports.

In February we will hold an expert meeting, hosted by Norway, to discuss these points and other lessons learnt from communicating the last report as we prepare to start work on the Sixth Assessment. Today's side event can provide useful input for that meeting.

My own vision for the IPCC is of a more inclusive organization – inclusive both in terms of an enhanced involvement of developing countries in our work, and greater responsiveness and relevance to the needs of all our stakeholders. It also involves greater emphasis on solutions to the problems of a changing climate as well as understanding climate change. All this involves communication.

If we are to enhance the role of scientists from LDCs in our work, we need to understand and speak to those countries' research priorities and concerns. When we look at solutions, we must understand the drivers, whether it's a city's adaptation strategy, or the challenges for the businesses that will help deliver those solutions. For example, how can we ensure that these diverse needs and requirements feed into our scoping process? The scoping process, for those who don't know, determines the shape and outline of the new report.

You may have seen the recent Nature Climate Change study that found that an IPCC Summary for Policymakers is harder to understand than a paper by Einstein. We want to examine how to make our products more readable, ourselves or working with third parties, but more than that we want to ensure that our products are more relevant. And it goes without saying that we must secure the scientific rigour on which that gold standard I mentioned is based. But communications is not just about simple writing and better graphics – although those are important. It is also about facilitating solutions.

Accessibility is of course about presentation – how you set out a report in print or digitally, so that users can find the material that is relevant to their needs. But it is also about actionability. To make our reports actionable, we must consider how we interact with our users after publication, through more sophisticated outreach. For us to communicate well with our users, we must understand and be prepared to speak to their needs.

In other words, communication works in both directions. In that spirit: tell us today what you want, what you need from us – we are listening.

Thank you.