

**REPORT TO THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

RAJENDRA K PACHAURI
CHAIRMAN OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC)
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Mr Chairman, Madame Executive Secretary,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am indeed honoured and pleased to be able to address this august body on behalf of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). For me, this is also of great personal significance, because this is the first official address that I am making on behalf of the IPCC. Let me at the outset emphasise the enormous value I place, as indeed do all the members of the IPCC, on working closely with the Parties of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), its secretariat, and in particular, its Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice. It would be a matter of great pride for the IPCC to function in a manner that is totally responsive to addressing your needs.

Last year the IPCC completed its Third Assessment Report (TAR). Under the leadership of the previous Chair of the IPCC, Dr Bob Watson, experts from around the world with a detailed knowledge of climate change issues came together to prepare this comprehensive Assessment of the science of climate change, impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, and mitigation measures. In the Synthesis Report on the TAR, the IPCC responded to a number of policy-relevant scientific and technical questions. The main findings have been presented before you on various occasions, and the reports and their summaries have been widely distributed.

The Conference of the Parties at its seventh session encouraged Parties to make full use of the information contained in the TAR. In April this year, a SBSTA workshop, with participation of IPCC experts, was held to explore the information contained in the TAR and how it can facilitate the work of the SBSTA and other Convention bodies. While you continue to debate the issue at this session, let me assure you that we value your feedback as input for the development of our future work programme. We believe that a dialogue between the expert community and the policy-making community is essential for enabling us to provide you with high-quality policy-relevant, but not policy-prescriptive, assessments and analysis.

The SBSTA at its 15th session recognised the need to widely disseminate the results of the TAR using a variety of means, and decided to consider this issue within the context of Art. 6 of the UNFCCC. We very much welcome the activities undertaken in this regard by the Climate Change Secretariat and other UN bodies. I would like to emphasise my own desire, which has the support of the full IPCC Plenary, to step up IPCC's outreach activities. I am sure you would agree that if knowledge and awareness on the science of climate change are to spread all over the globe, then it is not only necessary for the IPCC to produce assessments which embody a high-level scientific integrity and credibility, but also to ensure that these are disseminated most effectively using all the means available in this world of rapidly improving communications and information technology. We would of course work in full co-ordination with other UN bodies and agencies that support this mission.

At the most recent session of the IPCC, held in Geneva in April this year, a new Bureau was elected and I was elected to succeed Dr Watson as Chair of the IPCC. The new Bureau has excellent regional balance and a great depth of scientific expertise. I feel confident that this Bureau will be able to give me excellent support in guiding the IPCC as it deals with the opportunities and challenges it faces over the next six years or so. I am also happy to welcome the new Secretary of the IPCC, Dr. Geoffrey Love, who I look forward to working with in meeting the challenges ahead. In April the Panel took important decisions on its future work programme.

Let me briefly outline the most important elements of our future work programme.

Firstly, the IPCC will undertake its Fourth Assessment Report, commencing in 2003, with the aim of completion of the Working Group I Report in the first quarter of 2007, followed rapidly by the Working Group II and III Reports in mid-2007, and, if required, a Synthesis Report towards the end of 2007. This timing will allow for incorporation of further advances in the scientific knowledge and technology relevant to climate change and enable us to present updated scientific and technical information before the negotiations for the second commitment period under the UNFCCC are scheduled to start. Like the previous IPCC assessments, the Fourth Assessment Report will be comprehensive in nature, but more focused and possibly shorter, emphasizing recent information. We would mobilise the best experts from all around the world, ensuring proper geographical balance and comprehensive expertise. Subject to the approval of the Panel, I would like to ensure much greater emphasis on a regional focus covering the nature and extent of climate change, its impacts and related adaptation possibilities. I feel it is also necessary to extend our work much deeper into the socio-economic aspects of climate change. We would, of course, greatly value our interaction with SBSTA in defining our plans. In this spirit, I am looking forward greatly to the meeting of our Joint Working Group (JWG) scheduled for June 10, 2002. I hope that in future sessions of SBSTA also, we are able to schedule these meetings to promote regular consultation and interaction between our two organisations.

The IPCC will also need to be capable of rapidly, and flexibly, responding to new developments and to requests from the environmental convention processes. In this context I am pleased to inform you that the IPCC Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biodiversity, which has been prepared upon request by the Convention on Biological Diversity, has been finalised in April. Copies will be made available at this session.

Most significantly, the IPCC must be able to respond to issues raised before it by the UNFCCC and its subsidiary bodies. In this regard we will continue the important Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories work. Mr Taka Hiraishi, co-chairman of the Task Force on Inventories, will provide you with a progress report on the Good Practice Guidance Report on land use, land use change, and forestry and he will inform you about the work programme on other related topics.

The IPCC is also considering the preparation of other special reports and technical papers. However, it agreed to put in place a decision framework and set criteria for establishing priorities to ensure that the expert community is not over-loaded by the effort of preparing Special Reports and the like, and yet provide policy-relevant assessments for assisting the policy-making process.

In response to an invitation contained in the Marrakech Accords the IPCC decided to initiate preparatory work on Geological Carbon Storage Technologies and to hold a workshop in the fourth quarter of 2002 to consider issues associated with geological and oceanic carbon separation, capture, and storage. The outcome of the workshop would be a scoping paper, timetable, and detailed outline for a Special Report for decision by the Panel at its next Session.

The Panel further decided to hold an expert meeting on Climate Change and Development that will come up with proposals for the Panel outlining how it might further consider the issue. The IPCC also considers the possibility of preparing a Special Report on climate change and water, in close collaboration with the "Dialogue on Water and Climate". Like SBSTA, the IPCC is interested in effectively functioning and strengthened observational networks in the global climate observing system and notes the importance of continued progress in climate change detection. To this end we have been working closely with the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) community to improve the basic networks used for observing climate, and will co-sponsor a workshop, to be held in Boulder, USA, in August 2002, addressing the issue of filling the gaps in the observational network used to detect climate change.

Lastly, let me draw your attention to the IPCC expert workshop on extreme events which will take place next week in Beijing, China. There can be no doubt that there is a high level of interest in the IPCC's assessment of the relationship between the intensities and frequencies of some natural disasters and climate change. I expect that the IPCC will be able to provide a balanced assessment of the current state-of-the-science on this important topic.

Mr Chairman, Madame Executive Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, the IPCC, in a short period of 14 years, has established a tradition and reputation based on high scientific integrity and universal credibility. I must pay tribute to my predecessors for the leadership they have provided in attaining a reputation that all of us are proud of. In fact, may I state before you that it would be my own humble endeavour, and that of the IPCC as a whole, to enhance the scientific integrity and high standards already set by my distinguished predecessors, ensuring that our work remains policy-relevant, objective, and transparent with full participation of all its 192 members. Let me conclude by saying that it is my pleasure to work with you, Mr Chairman, and with this distinguished body, and that I am looking forward to a continued and fruitful co-operation between the IPCC and the Parties to the Convention.

Thank you.
