



**Twelfth Session of IPCC Working Group I
Stockholm, 23 September 2013**

**Opening statement on behalf of the UN Climate Change Secretariat
Halldór Thorgeirsson, Director for Implementation Strategy**

Minister Lena Ek, distinguished participants,

I am honored to address you on behalf of the UN Climate Change Secretariat at this important moment.

To the scientists in the audience: please accept our heartfelt thanks for the service you are providing to your fellow citizens and the international community. I know you have burned the midnight oil to construct a coherent picture of what we now know of the inner workings of the climate system and of how we humans are disrupting it.

To the delegates of the member Governments: I know that you will draw on your wisdom and best judgment as you exercise your important responsibility to approve the Summary for Policy Makers. The assessment you have before you is without parallel in terms of the depth of the science and its specificity and resolution in space and time.

The contribution of this Working Group to the AR5 goes further towards meeting the needs of the Convention and its Parties than earlier assessments could attempt.

At the same time, greater focus of the international climate change policy response has facilitated the effort to make this report policy relevant. One manifestation of this greater focus is the internationally agreed upper limit of acceptable warming, currently set at 2°C. The adequacy of that limit and progress in limiting warming is now under intergovernmental review to be concluded in 2015.

Your efforts to align the presentation of your findings to the 2°C limit are greatly appreciated.

The relevant findings of the WGI will be presented to a Structured Expert Dialogue, set up in the context of the Review, during its upcoming session in Warsaw in November. We are working with the WGI TSU to make this science-policy

exchange as effective as possible. The Chair of the IPCC will also address the opening of the Warsaw Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We know that the sum total of on-going efforts to limit warming will not add up to what is needed to bend the curve and mankind is not on track to limit warming to 2°C. For that reason, Parties agreed in Durban in 2011 to develop a new legal agreement under the Convention applicable to all Parties to be adopted in Paris towards the end of 2015.

The core challenge for Paris is to achieve the requisite scale, speed and strategic focus of the global response.

- Scale is needed because of the magnitude of the required transition.
- Speed is needed because of the inherent inertia in the climate system and the time needed for policies to deliver the desired impact.
- Strategic focus is needed because of the long-term nature of the problem.

In other words, the Paris agreement needs to be anchored in current reality but at the same time be capable of transforming that reality.

It needs to chart a viable global pathway out of the danger zone mankind finds itself in at the moment. The effort to craft a meaningful agreement in Paris will gain momentum from the full picture of the science – both on the problem and on the solutions – as the full AR5 unfolds.

The contribution of WGI to the AR5 provides a firm foundation for that global pathway. In that context, the attempt to relate global mean temperature increase to cumulative total global CO₂ emissions is particularly helpful; providing scientific underpinnings for collective management of the remaining available emission budget.

Dear friends,

Let me conclude by turning to what, when all is said and done, will determine the true impact of this assessment: effective and timely communication of the findings in simple language in the spirit of Einstein's appeal: "Make things as simple as possible, but not simpler."

The effort of applying knowledge to decision making can't be seen as the responsibility of scientists alone. This takes partnership and should be seen as a collective responsibility of the scientific and the climate policy communities at domestic, regional and international levels.
