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ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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## PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Chairman's overview

(Submitted by the Chairman)

The Panel is invited to consider this briefing document. The document outlines, as background, decisions made by previous Sessions of the Panel that relate to the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) and describes main elements of the scoping process which include:

- Scoping meetings and expert meetings
- development of a mechanism through which cross-cutting themes would be addressed in AR 4; and,
- consultations with the user community.

## **PLANNING FOR THE FOURTH ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This document outlines the suggested approach for scoping the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). It describes a series of steps and events, which would lead to the approval of the outline of and workplan for the AR4. It also introduces tools for better managing cross cutting issues.

1.2 The Panel is invited to consider and agree on the general approach for the scoping of the AR4, and on a timetable and workprogramme.

### **2. Panel decisions relevant for the development of the AR4**

2.1 The IPCC assessment process is guided by the IPCC mandate and the Principles Governing IPCC works. In addition the Panel at recent sessions has taken decisions which specifically guide the development of the AR4. It also forwarded some issues for further consideration to future Panel sessions. One of them is the treatment of cross cutting matters, including sustainable development. The second issue, which requires further consideration and decision by the Panel is whether to prepare a Synthesis Report. The Panel also has to decide on scope and nature of the Synthesis Report and whether there is a need for policy relevant scientific technical questions.

2.2 Decisions and recommendations with direct relevance for the AR4 are quoted below.

#### ***Decisions and recommendations agreed by the Panel at its 18<sup>th</sup> Session, Wembley/UK, 24-29 September 2001***

2.3 *Mandate for the Continuation of the IPCC - Decision:* The IPCC decides that its work must continue to maintain its high scientific and technical standards, independence, transparency and geographic balance, to ensure a balanced reporting of viewpoints and to be policy relevant but not policy prescriptive or policy driven.

2.4 *Decision 1:* The IPCC decides to continue to prepare comprehensive reports, and recommends that the new Working Group Co-chairs and other members of the Bureau examine whether it is feasible to: (i) shorten the underlying reports, while maintaining their comprehensive nature, and increase the focus and emphasis on new findings, and (ii) shorten the Summaries for Policymakers (SPMs) and make them more comprehensible to policymakers. Each Working Group report should continue to consist of a SPM, a Technical Summary (TS) and an underlying report, prepared and peer-reviewed according to the IPCC Principles and Procedures.

2.5 IPCC-18 identified additional issues to be considered by IPCC-19 e.g. that mechanisms must be developed to ensure:

- greater consideration of cross-cutting issues including sustainable development;
  - appropriate representation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
  - that the non-English literature is appropriately assessed;
  - a deeper engagement with industry and NGOs;
- and whether or not the Synthesis report should act a guide to the rest of the assessment.

#### ***Decision of the Panel at its 19<sup>th</sup> Session, Geneva, 17-20 April 2002***

2.6 *Decision 6:* In relation to the timing of the Fourth Assessment Report IPCC decided that:

1. The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) would be completed in 2007;
2. Working Group reports and, if it is decided to prepare one, the Synthesis Report, would be sequenced such that the Working Group I report would be finalised during the first quarter of

2007, Working Group II and Working Group III reports in mid-2007 and the Synthesis Report during the last quarter of 2007;

3. The AR4 will be comprehensive, but more focused and shorter, emphasizing recent information;
4. The scope and nature of the Synthesis Report will be approved by the Panel at its next session;
5. To the extent there is a need for policy relevant scientific technical questions they will be prepared through a SBSTA-IPCC dialogue taking into account lessons learnt from the TAR process; and,
6. The terms of office of the new Bureau should extend until the first or second session after finalisation of the AR4, but a final decision would need to be taken at a later date by the Panel taking into consideration all relevant timing issues including the conduct of outreach activities.

### ***Relevant decisions from other Panel Sessions***

2.7 A number of decisions from previous Panel sessions need to be recalled, as they are still applicable to the upcoming assessment, in particular decisions from the TAR decision paper (IPCC-13, Maldives, 22 & 25-28 September 1997) regarding enhanced participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and of experts from business/industry/finance, development and environmental organizations, utilization of the non-English language literature, publication and translation procedures and funding for Technical Support Units.

These decisions are contained in Annex 1 to this document.

## **3. Proposed Elements of the AR4 Scoping Process**

### ***Scoping meetings***

3.1 Two scoping meetings are planned with the task of preparing detailed outlines of the chapters and subchapters for each working group contribution and identifying key issues that would be addressed under each chapter or sub-chapter. Cross-cutting themes would be identified as well as a mechanism developed to facilitate consistent treatment of them and to enhance cross working group cooperation throughout the assessment process. Furthermore, the scope and nature of the Synthesis Report would be considered.

3.2 The focus of the first scoping meeting would be to agree on the general scope and approach, and to identify key scientific issues to be addressed in the Working Group contributions to the AR4. It would also consider user feedback and user needs. Issues related to scenarios would be addressed and cross cutting themes would be identified. Matters related to the Synthesis Report would be introduced.

3.3 The second scoping meeting would focus on cross cutting themes and on the mechanism for addressing them. It would further address scope, nature and possible structure of the Synthesis Report, agree on an overall timetable and finalize the chapter outlines of the Working Group contributions.

3.4 The outline of the AR4 and the workprogramme should be considered and approved by Plenary Sessions of the three IPCC Working Groups and by the Panel (IPCC-21) to be held during the last quarter of 2003.

### ***Cross Cutting Themes***

3.5 In line with recommendations of IPCC-18 one aim of the scoping process is to develop a mechanism, which would ensure a fuller and effective treatment of cross-cutting issues. In order to facilitate and improve cross Working Group co-operation and to achieve better integration and consistent treatment of key issues throughout the AR4 identification of a number of cross cutting themes (CCT) as a management tool is suggested. Each CCT would require in-depth study and reflection at the design stage, such as the drafting of concept papers. Considerable follow-up and

interaction with a range of actors will be essential during subsequent stages of the AR4 process. This intellectual effort could be led by a group of 2 or 3 experts who would be identified on the basis of their expertise, interest and availability to carry out this function.

3.6 A number of topics that are of cross cutting nature have already been suggested. They include uncertainty, risk and decision making, integration of adaptation and mitigation (including costs), and issues related to sustainable development and climate change. The regional focus of the AR 4 needs to be treated in a consistent manner in all working group contributions. The socio-economic aspects of climate change need to be given focused treatment and attention needs to be given to linkages and synergies with other environmental issues.

3.7 The consultative meeting on climate change and water, which was organised by WG II (Geneva, 11-12 November 2002) suggested also that water be given a more integrated and expanded treatment within the Fourth Assessment. The Expert Meeting on “Levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere preventing dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”(Geneva, 21-22 January 2003) identified as one option for further addressing this topic in the IPCC workprogramme the consideration of the scientific, technical and socio-economic issues associated with Article 2 of the UNFCCC in the context of the AR4.

### ***Expert meetings***

3.8 A number of expert meetings are proposed to support the scoping process, in particular on cross cutting themes. Initial expert meetings on topics such as uncertainties, climate sensitivity, integration of mitigation and adaptation and regional issues would be held between the first AR4 scoping meeting and the first Lead Authors meetings (period between May 2003 and May 2004). The objective of these meetings would be to provide input for the overall scoping and consideration of cross cutting themes at the second AR4 scoping meeting and to prepare guidance material on cross cutting themes to be available at the time of the first Lead Authors Meetings. Further workshops, expert and joint drafting meetings in particular on cross cutting themes will be convened throughout the assessment process as required. Activities carried out in the context of planned special reports and in the framework of the NGGIP will be taken into consideration in the overall scoping and assessment process.

3.9 Expert meetings and workshops already approved by the Panel or held recently will also provide input to the scoping process. They include the Workshop on changes in extreme weather and climate events (Beijing, June 2002), the strategy meeting on climate change and water (Geneva, November 2002), the TGCIA Expert Meeting on scenario application in research on climate change, impacts/adaptation and mitigation (Amsterdam, January 2003), the Expert Meeting on dangerous levels of greenhouse gases (Geneva, January 2003), and the Expert Meeting on climate change and sustainable development (Colombo, March 2003).

### ***Consultations with the user community***

3.10 A dialogue with governments and consultations with participating organisations are planned throughout the scoping process. Governments and participating organisations are asked to provide feedback on the TAR and information about scientific technical questions that they may want to see addressed in the AR4. These contributions will be considered at the first scoping meeting. Relevant submissions by Parties to the UNFCCC on the TAR and future information needs, as well as the result of the SBSTA-17 considerations on research needs, will also be made available to the experts participating in the scoping meetings. After the first scoping meeting a draft scoping paper would be circulated to governments and participating organisations for comments.

3.11 To enhance engagement with business, industry and environmental NGOs two consultative meetings, one with business and industry and one with environmental NGOs are planned between the

scoping meetings. SBSTA-18 in June 2003 may be used for further consultations with Parties and organisations.

#### **4. Synthesis Report**

4.1 The SAR Synthesis Report specifically addressed scientific technical information relevant to interpreting Article 2 of the UNFCCC. The TAR Synthesis Report (SYR) followed a different approach. Scope and structure were developed in consultations with the user community in particular the UNFCCC. COP-3 (1997) requested in decision 7/CP.3 its SBSTA to “give further consideration to issues related to the work of the IPCC and to formulate policy relevant questions which should be addressed in the TAR”. Governments submitted questions through SBSTA; the IPCC reviewed them and finally agreed on 9 questions at its 14<sup>th</sup> Session in Costa Rica in April 1999.

4.2 In general the feedback on structure, approach and content of the TAR SYR has been positive. However, it was also suggested to use simpler questions or topics to structure the SYR. Contrary to COP-3 neither COP-7 nor COP-8 have asked SBSTA to develop policy relevant questions to be addressed by the IPCC.

4.3 An alternative approach to a question answer format would be to structure the AR4 Synthesis reports according to topics or cross cutting themes. In effect, synthesising the relevant work from the three WG Reports. Key policy relevant questions could be addressed under these topics or themes if appropriate.

4.4 It is expected that submissions by Parties to the UNFCCC on the use of the TAR can provide some guidance on policy relevant topics and user requirements. In addition the proposed consultations with the user community would provide further insight on information needs. It is suggested that structure and scope of the AR4 SYR would be developed in conjunction with the overall scope and outline of the AR4, taking the above-mentioned submissions and other user feedback into consideration.

4.5 It is foreseen that the Panel will approve the nature, scope and general structure of the AR4 SYR at its 21<sup>st</sup> Session.

#### **5. Proposed schedule**

*14-16 April 2003, Marrakech*

1<sup>st</sup> AR4 Scoping meeting

*1-3 September 2003, Berlin*

2<sup>nd</sup> AR4 Scoping meeting

October 2003, TBD

Plenary sessions of the three Working Groups followed by IPCC-21:

The three IPCC Working Groups will meet in plenary sessions and approve the outline and workprogramme for their respective contributions to the AR4. They will also provide general guidance on the selection of Lead Authors. IPCC-21 will approve the AR4 outline, including scope, nature and general structure of the Synthesis Report, the overall workprogramme and budget.

November 2003

The IPCC Secretariat will send a call for nominations for Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, Contributing Authors, Expert Reviewers and Review Editors to governments and participating organisations.

April 2004

Sessions of the Bureaus of the three Working Groups and the IPCC Bureau:

The Working Group Bureaus and the IPCC Bureau will select Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors. Special attention will be given to full geographical coverage, inclusion of all skills and disciplines, and to involve a new generation of experts. In accordance with the IPCC procedures the IPCC Secretariat will inform 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.

#### May 2003 to May 2004 – Expert Meetings

Consistent with the approved IPCC workprogramme and budget for 2003 and 2004 a number of expert meetings will be held to support the scoping process and to prepare guidance material required for the assessment process.

#### From June 2004 onwards

First Lead Authors meetings will be held.

**Relevant decisions from the TAR Decision Paper** (IPCC-13, Maldives, 22 & 25-28 September 1997)

*Decision 9:* Promoting Enhanced Participation of Experts from Developing Countries and Countries with Economies in Transition:

- (i) The IPCC agrees that the IPCC Vice-Chairs and Working Group Bureau members from developing countries and countries with economies in transition work with IPCC focal points within their regions to identify appropriate Review Editors, Lead Authors, Contributing Authors and peer-reviewers; in addition, all members of the Bureaux are encouraged to assist in this process;
- (ii) The IPCC agrees that the Working Group Bureaux should ensure balanced representation of Lead Authors (experts from developed and developing countries, and countries with economies in transition);
- (iii) The IPCC agrees that the Working Group Bureaux should be encouraged to increase the number of expert meetings and workshops in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, thus contributing to enhancing the networks of scientists and other experts in these regions.

*Decision 10:* Promoting the Participation of Experts from Business/Industry/Finance, Development and Environmental Organizations

- (i) The IPCC agrees that non-government experts, including those from business, industry, finance and development and environmental organizations, with relevant expertise, should be involved in the preparation and review of the Third Assessment Report;
- (ii) The IPCC agrees that its Bureau and the TSUs assist the IPCC Secretary in identifying those experts;
- (iii) The IPCC agrees that it will be critical to have balance, including geographic balance, within and between experts from various non-governmental organizations. These experts will act in their personnel capacity, bring to bear their scientific, technological and economic expertise.

*Decision 11:* Utilization of the Non-English Language Literature

- (i) The IPCC agrees that the Working Group Bureaux, in conjunction with the chapter Lead Authors, should make every effort to assess the non-English language literature.

*Decision 12:* Publication Procedures

- (i) The IPCC agrees that its Secretary, in conjunction with the Working Group TSUs, should examine the potential of placing IPCC publications on Internet while using a commercial publisher.

*Decision 13:* Translation Procedures

- (i) The IPCC agrees that the IPCC Secretary should invite all governments (developed, developing and countries with economies in transition) to contribute to the work of the IPCC by translating accepted Working Group Reports into non-English languages, in particular the official UN languages.

*Decision 15:* Funding for Technical Support Units

- (i) The IPCC agrees that the traditional approach be largely continued, whereby the government of the developed country Co-Chair assumes the primary responsibility for funding the TSU (office space, equipment, postage, communications, publications, travel, expert meeting facilities, and 1-2 professional and 3-4 support staff);
- (ii) The IPCC agrees that the IPCC Trust Fund should fund, to the extent needed and financially feasible, the agreed costs to assist the developing country Co-Chairs perform their duties;

- (iii) The IPCC agrees that secondments and/or financial assistance to the TSUs from the developed country Vice-Chairs is highly desirable