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THE FOURTH ASSESSMENT (AR4) PRODUCT SET

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

The Fourth Assessment (AR4) Product Set

1. Background

In the context of the AR4 scoping the question of preparing Technical Papers on regions was raised and the Secretariat was asked to analyse various options and related resource implications. The Secretariat believes that one important lesson from the TAR and other previous assessments is, that it is advisable to consider the full range of products of an assessment cycle early in the process.

2. Lessons from the TAR and other previous IPCC assessments

At the time of the first IPCC assessment report the main products were the three Working Group contributions. Working Groups I and II produced stand-alone booklets of their Summaries for Policymakers (SPM) in English. A similar range of products was published for the Second Assessment Report (SAR). In addition to the three Working Group contributions the SAR contained a Synthesis Report. It was published by the IPCC together with SPMs of the three Working Group contributions in all UN languages. In the years 1996/1997 four Technical Papers, based on information assessed in the SAR were prepared. They were published in English, French and Spanish and widely distributed. Between 1997 and 2000 five Special Reports were prepared. Again the longer reports were published commercially in English, the SPMs were published by the IPCC in all UN languages.

For the Third Assessment Report (TAR) the Panel at its 13th Session provided some guidance concerning structure and publication and it asked its Secretary to examine the potential of placing IPCC publications on Internet while using a commercial publisher. Meanwhile the forms of electronic publishing have evolved and IPCC reports and other IPCC products are made available on the Internet and as CD ROM. Furthermore the demand for translations of IPCC products has increased.

As in the past the three Working Group contributions to the TAR were published commercially and soon after the release of the reports the Working Groups published stand alone versions of their respective SPM and TS in English. The Synthesis Report (longer report and SPM), and the Summaries for Policymakers (SPMs) and Technical Summaries (TSs) of the three Working Group contributions were published in all UN languages. The English version of this so-called "Volume 4" was published commercially. Following the adoption of the SYR the Panel at its 18th Session decided to publish in addition to "Volume 4" a stand-alone version of the SYR.

The English version of the full reports and all UN language versions of the SYR, SPMs, TSs were made available on the IPCC website and as CD-ROM. Graphics from IPCC reports were also made available as ppt and jpg files on the IPCC website. To the extent available, summaries in non-UN languages were also posted on the IPCC website.

At the time of the approval and acceptance of the TAR press conferences and press briefings were organised with the help of UNEP communication specialists. Presentations by the IPCC Chair, Co-chairs and authors at major international meeting such as UNFCCC sessions were posted on the IPCC website. WG III organised a series of seminars to disseminate findings for their Working Group. Other activities to widely disseminate the findings of the IPCC TAR were planned by the IPCC parent organisations UNEP and WMO in cooperation with other relevant UN bodies. So far sets of graphics and booklets of popularised versions of the TAR were prepared.

Immediately after adoption of the TAR the Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biodiversity was prepared. It was finalized by the IPCC Bureau in April 2002 and published in English, French and Spanish soon afterwards.

Main lessons learnt from the TAR and other previous assessments can be summarized as follows:

- Early clarity about the main set of products can help in planning the structure and outline of individual products may enable the IPCC to better respond to the information requirements of its users and helps avoiding unnecessary expenditures through duplication of publication efforts.

- Technical papers can be suitable instruments to prepare information on specific topics and for targeted user groups in a timely and cost effective manner.
- The nature of and responsibility for outreach and dissemination activities needs to be planned and clarified well in advance.

3. The AR4 product mix

The IPCC at its 18th session provided general guidance on the structure of the AR4. Each Working Group report should continue to consist of a Summary for Policymakers (SPM), a Technical Summary (TS) and an underlying report, prepared and peer-reviewed according to the IPCC Principles and Procedures. The Panel also recommended to shorten the underlying reports, while maintaining their comprehensive nature, and increase the focus and emphasis on new findings. It also recommended to shorten the SPMs and make them more comprehensible to policymakers. The Panel will consider at this session a proposal for an AR4 Synthesis Report.

3.1. Primary AR4 products

Following the guidance from the Panel the primary products of the AR4 would be

- Three Working Group contributions in English each of which should not exceed 700 pages
- Summaries for Policymakers of the three Working Group contributions each of maximum 10 pages, translated in all six UN languages
- Technical Summaries of the three Working Group contributions each of approximately 45 pages, translated in all six UN languages
- and subject to the decision by the Panel a Synthesis Report.

Translations, web-version, CD ROM and a set of graphic files from the reports (suitable for power-point presentations) should be made available as soon as possible within six month of the final adoption of the AR4.

3.2. Technical Papers

Technical Papers have been used to summarise or synthesize information from IPCC Reports on specific topics. According to the IPCC procedures Technical Papers have to be based on material already in IPCC Assessment Reports and Special Reports. Considering these procedures it is advisable that the possibility of preparing Technical Papers, which would be based on the AR4 is taken into consideration in the AR4 workprogramme and report structure.

3.2.1. Technical Paper on Water

The Panel at its 20th session asked for a scoping paper for a Technical Paper on climate change and water. The document is available for consideration by the Panel at this session.

3.2.2. Regional Technical Papers

Considering the recommendation by Plenary to shorten the Working Group contributions, while on the other hand requesting more regional information the preparation of regional Technical Papers may offer the possibility to synthesize and highlight climate change relevant information for major regions. While they may not be a substitute for regional chapters in the Working Group contributions they could help to shorten the Working Group reports. Preparatory work for regional Technical Papers could start already during the assessment process and authors for the Technical Papers could be part of the AR4 authors' team. However, consistent with IPCC procedures, actual writing would only commence after the three Working Group contributions have been accepted. A set of regional Technical Papers could be finalised by mid 2008. Costs for an IPCC Technical Paper are in the order of 250.000 to 300.000 SFR. As an example cost estimates for 7 Technical Papers for the main geographical regions, published in English and in those UN languages that are most suitable for the respective region, are provided in Table 1.

3.3. Further products that have been proposed for consideration

3.3.1. Further products and options for presenting regional information

Various alternative options could be developed within the AR4 products set or by other actors to make regional information better accessible. Some of these suggestions, which could also be used to address other key topics or sectors, are briefly described below. Advantages and disadvantages of various options, including Technical Papers, are also summarised in Table 2.

- **Annexes to AR4 Synthesis Report**
Key findings on regions could be summarised in annexes to the AR4 Synthesis Report, with appropriate cross-referencing to the full reports. In order not to enlarge the Synthesis Report too much a summary of key regional issues could be provided in the form of tables as has been the case in the TAR SYR.
- **IPCC outreach material specifically designed for regions**
This option would provide more flexibility in responding to requirements of certain regions, sub-regions or groups of countries such as LDC. Material may include fact sheets or leaflets summarising the most relevant information from the AR4 according to topics and/or regions, graphics, interactive models, data, and other web-based or audio-visual material. Implications for financial and human resources may be comparable to those required for Technical Papers. However, the IPCC procedures do not contain clear guidance on acceptance of such material as IPCC publications or products and therefore the status of such material in the IPCC product set needs to be clarified.
- **Regional seminars**
The timely development of a concept for seminars held after the completion of the AR4, which specifically address regional issues could complement other options or be developed as an alternative.
- **Summaries of AR4 information prepared by regional organisations**
Such publications would not be IPCC material and therefore would not have any budgetary and other resource implications. However, leaving it entirely to regional organisations may pose the risk that only a few regions would be able to produce such regional summaries. Other UN bodies might be encouraged to cooperate with regional organizations in this regard.
- **A Special Report on regional issues**
A Special Report would allow assessment of scientific, technical and socio-economic information published after completion of the AR4. Scoping and writing would start after completion of the AR4 and a new authors team would be selected. Costs for preparing an IPCC Special Report are in the order of 1,7 Million SFR. The Special Report would become available by the earliest end of 2009.

3.3.2. Other products and activities

- **Data sets and interactive models**
A CD containing key data sets from the AR4 would be of considerable benefit to both the scientific and education communities. In association with the use of data sets some experts have suggested the possibility of releasing interactive models.
- **Posters**
Posters highlighting the key findings of each of the Working Groups or key finding on certain topics or regions would be of great use in the follow up and outreach activities and should be considered part of the product package.
- **Outreach activities**

Well in time before the completion of the AR4 a detailed plan for outreach activities including seminars, briefing material and training kits for specific target groups or topics should be developed, either by the IPCC itself or in close collaboration with appropriate organisations. This would also include press briefings. The enhanced use of videos and web-based material should be explored. As mentioned above the status of such activities and material in the IPCC product set needs to be clarified.

3.4. Conclusions

Whatever the mix of products would be, an overall management framework that ensures consistent design and timely delivery of the products should be in place well before the completion of the AR4. Contracts need to be in place for publication, production of graphics, CD ROMs, web-based materials and the like. The “look and feel” of the products needs to be agreed, particularly for the posters and the power-point presentations.

TABLE 1

Technical papers on regions	Costs	Total Costs
Africa (100 pages/3 languages/3 CLA/15 LA/10 contributors)		312,200
	2x15 journeys	172,200
	publication	60,000
	translation (F, A)	80,000
Northern Asia (100 pages/3 languages/3 CLA/15 LA/10 contributors)		254,800
	2x10 journeys	114,800
	publication	60,000
	translation (CH, R)	80,000
Southern Asia (100 pages/2 languages/3 CLA/15 LA/10 contributors)		272,200
	2x15 journeys	172,200
	publication	60,000
	translation (A)	40,000
Latin America (100 pages/2 languages/3 CLA/15 LA/10 contributors)		227,760
	2x12 journeys	137,760
	publication	50,000
	translation (S)	40,000
North America (80 pages/1language/3 CLA/12 LA/10 contributors)		50,000
	publication	50,000
Pacific Region (80 pages/3 languages/3 CLA/12 LA/10 contributors)		205,840
	2x8 journeys	91,840
	publication	50,000
	translation (S, F)	64,000
Europe (80 pages/3 languages/3 CLA/12 LA/10 contributors)		142,700
	2x3 journeys	28,700
	publication	50,000
	translation (S, F)	64,000
Steering group (additional journeys)	8 journeys	45,920
Finalisation by Bureau (2 sessions, each three days)		518,640
	2x18 journeys	206,640
	6 days interpretation	312,000
Total costs		2,030,060

TABLE 2**Regional Information – a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of various options proposed for consideration**

Option proposed	Advantages	Disadvantages	Likely publication date	Estimate of resource implications (where calculated)
Do nothing in addition to AR4	No cost or other resource implications.	May not meet the call from governments for greater regional detail. There may in particular be insufficient cross-working group integration of regional information.	mid-2007	None
Regional Technical Papers (up to 7)	Provide cross-working group integration of relevant information from AR4, presented in more regionally focussed way. Greater flexibility to respond to needs of specific regional groups. Relatively quick to produce.	Must be based on AR4 science. Relatively high costs.	Late 2008	Approx. cost to IPCC TF: 2 Million SFR.
Annexes to AR4 Synthesis Report.	Provides synthesis of key policy-relevant issues on a regional basis. Convenient for users to have such regional information and synthesis of global assessment in a single volume. Low costs.	SYR would be a longer document. Regional coverage would be restricted by length. Less flexibility to respond to needs of specific regional groups.	Late 2007	Included within preparation costs of SYR.
Preparation of IPCC outreach material.	Could be hard-copy (brochures, leaflets), web or CD based. Greater flexibility to respond to needs of specific regional groups.	Not an accepted IPCC product. Requirements difficult to define.	Late 2008	Similar to or less than Technical Paper option.
IPCC outreach seminars.	Participants would have direct access to	Might need prior preparation of outreach	After Oct	Perhaps 4-6 events.

	<p>regionally specific expertise and conclusions.</p> <p>Greater flexibility to respond to needs of specific regional groups.</p> <p>Inexpensive (if not based on prior preparation of outreach material).</p>	<p>material (see above).</p> <p>Audience would be more limited than for widely distributed documents or website.</p>	2007.	
Summaries of AR4 information prepared by regional organisations.	No cost or other resource implications to IPCC.	<p>This product would be outside the control of IPCC.</p> <p>Risk that only certain regions would be covered.</p> <p>Consistency issues with IPCC AR4.</p>	Unknown	None.
A Special Report on Regional Issues	Can include new science post-AR4	<p>More time-consuming than TPs.</p> <p>More demanding on CLAs and LAs time.</p> <p>Less flexibility to respond to needs of specific regional groups</p> <p>If begun immediately after AR4, little new science would be available.</p> <p>If begun later, then later publication date would reduce value.</p>	Not earlier than late 2009.	Approx. cost to IPCC TF 1.7 million SFR.