



INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL
ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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**NOTE ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSAL FOR FURTHER ACTION ON
“FACTORIZING OUT DIRECT HUMAN INDUCED-CHANGES IN CARBON STOCKS”
(LULUCF TASK 3)**

(Submitted by the Chairman)

Background

1. At the 7th Conference of the Parties held in Marrakech the UNFCCC requested the IPCC vide decision 11/CP.7, Paragraph 3 (d):

“To develop practicable methodologies to factor out direct human-induced changes in carbon stocks and greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks from changes in carbon stocks and greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks due to indirect human-induced and natural effects (such as those from carbon dioxide fertilization and nitrogen deposition), and effects due to past practices in forests (pre-reference year), to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth session.”

2. This matter was discussed in subsequent Sessions of the IPCC Bureau, the expert meeting held under the TFI in September 2002 as well in the 20th Session of the IPCC held in Paris during February 19th to 21st, 2003. The draft report of the 20th Session provides a summary of the discussions that took place based on the document introduced by the Chair. These highlighted the conclusion the Bureau had reached earlier, that there was uncertainty as to whether the science was adequate to support the development of methodologies that the UNFCCC had asked for. However, there were points in the SBSTA request that IPCC can provide some guidance on, as it does in so many other tasks. It was proposed, therefore, that a high-level science meeting be held to further scope the issues involved. The decision taken by the Panel was that “through the Chair, to establish a steering committee to conduct a high level scientific meeting that would survey the current understanding of the processes affecting carbon stocks and human influences upon them. The steering committee to use the outcomes of the Expert Meeting as a basis for reporting back to the 21st Session of the Panel on how to progress Task 3.”

3. In pursuance of the decision of the 20th Session of the IPCC, the Chair established a Management Committee consisting of Dr Susan Solomon, Dr Martin Parry, Dr Ogunlade Davidson and either Dr Thelma Krug or Mr Taka Hiraishi. The Secretary of the IPCC would ex-officio act as the Secretary of this Committee, which would be chaired by Dr Susan Solomon (Co-chair, Working Group 1) and Dr Martin Parry (Co-Chair, Working Group II). The Committee was required to produce a document taking into account the scientific report of the proposed meeting and make recommendations for any further action by the IPCC.

Assessing the Science

4. The high-level science meeting took place in Geneva during July 21-23, 2003. The final report of this meeting is submitted as document IPCC-XXI/INF.1. One major conclusion that was developed at various stages of the meeting culminating in the final session emphasized the fact that the scientific community cannot currently provide a comprehensive methodology that would factor out direct human-induced effects from indirect human-induced and natural effects for any broad range of LULUCF activities and circumstances.

5. Following the high-level science meeting, the Management Committee met on the afternoon of July 23, 2003. The Chairman of the IPCC was present at this meeting of the Management Committee and participated in the deliberations held on the outcome of the science meeting. In the absence of Dr Ogunlade Davidson, Dr Eduardo Calvo participated in the meeting of the Management Committee. Also, in the absence of Dr Thelma Krug, Mr Taka Hiraishi participated in the meeting. The discussion focused on the outcome of the science meeting, noting presentations regarding limitations in scientific understanding and research needs. There was, however, a suggestion to deal with some segments of Task 3 where some advance may be possible on the basis of existing scientific knowledge. It was also put forward by some members of the Management Committee, that this might help SBSTA and the UNFCCC. However, the discussion in the Management Committee pointed to:

5.1. The fact that the science had not advanced adequately to allow a comprehensive methodology to be developed as required by the UNFCCC in their request to the IPCC.

5.2. The unknown extent of benefits if any from an approach dealing with segments of the problem, and that such efforts would not address the request as conveyed to the IPCC.

5.3. The difficulties of engaging in work that would address the request in a non-policy prescriptive way, as well as the practical and scientific needs of the AR4. Hence, there would be major constraints in undertaking a responsible task on subtopics in this area.

Discussions in the TFB

6. Mr Hiraishi, Co-chair of the TFB suggested that the TFB discuss this issue in their meeting to be held on August 1, 2003, and come up with a specific proposal if any for consideration, in case they favoured carrying out any further activity in this direction. The draft report of the TFB on this subject is quoted below.

7. "The matter was discussed in the TFB and the conclusion reached was as follows:

The IPCC National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Task Force Bureau, at its tenth session (Sydney, 1st August 2003), briefly reviewed the status of this issue, and discussed if there is any future actions that TFB could initiate, such as preparation of a methodological report on the current status of factoring-out relevant technologies in terms of their validity, limitations, uncertainties, costs and other requirements so as to express IPCC's continued willingness to be helpful to the UNFCCC forum.

Various views were expressed:

Some members expressed their support to preparation of such a methodological report.

A number of members cautioned that such a proposal by TFB might not be helpful under the current situation, where the decision-making is clearly in the hands of the Panel and the IPCC Bureau, and TFB had not been given any clear mandate towards such a direction. Some members also expressed their caution that this kind of proposal might generate an impression of divisive activities within the IPCC.

After extensive discussions, TFB concluded to note that the issue of LULUCF Task 3 is very much pending on the consideration and conclusion by the Panel and SBSTA."

Recommendations from the Management Committee & Action taken

8. This issue, therefore, needs to be resolved at the 21st Session of the IPCC, based on the recommendations of the Management Committee, which have been determined on the basis of (1) the conclusions of the high-level science meeting, (2) the Committee's own discussions held in Geneva on July 23rd and (3) the decision taken by the TFB as reported above.

9. The Management Committee concluded that:

9.1. At this stage, scientific knowledge and the published literature on the subject have not advanced far enough for a comprehensive methodology to be developed, consistent with the scientific rigour that defines the work of the IPCC.

9.2. That any limited exercise attempting to shed light on components of the total problem would not provide an adequate basis for the development of comprehensive methodology, and would unduly strain the scientific resources of the IPCC.

9.3. Under the circumstances, an appropriate response would need to be communicated from the IPCC to SBSTA and the UNFCCC Secretariat that at the current stage, the IPCC would not be able

to meet the request made by the UNFCCC. However, IPCC should send prior to IPCC-21 a copy of the Science Statement to the SBSTA Chairman and SBSTA/COP Bureau and the UNFCCC Secretariat.

9.4. In an effort to find a constructive means to meeting the requirements of SBSTA, an IPCC-UNFCCC Joint Working Group meeting is proposed with the SBSTA Chairman, members of the SBSTA/COP Bureau and the UNFCCC Secretariat during the course of the 21st Session of the IPCC at Vienna. This meeting would attempt to explore, against the background of the findings of the science meeting, if IPCC could help in meeting any part of the requirements of SBSTA.

10. Following up on the decision of the Management Committee, the final version of the report of the *IPCC Meeting on Current Scientific Understanding of the Processes Affecting Terrestrial Carbon Stocks and Human Influences upon Them*, which includes the science statement has since been communicated to SBSTA.

Recommendation from the Chair

11. The Joint Working Group meeting between the IPCC and the UNFCCC has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 5. The Chair will then present his recommendations to the Panel taking into consideration discussions that have taken place in this meeting.