

**THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPCC
Busan, 11-14 October 2010**

IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 22
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Agenda Item: 5
ENGLISH ONLY

**REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT BY THE INTER ACADEMY COUNCIL**

Note by the Secretariat

(Prepared in consultation with the e-team)

Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures, Report by the InterAcademy Council

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1. Introduction

At the request of the United Nations Secretary-General and the IPCC Chair, the InterAcademy Council (IAC) has carried out a review of the IPCC processes and procedures. The report “Climate Change Assessment – Review of the Processes and Procedures of the IPCC”, thereafter referred to as Review, was completed on 30 August 2010 in time for consideration by the 32nd Session of the IPCC. The report is contained in document IPCC-XXXII/Doc.7

The proposed terms of reference for the review were:

1. Review IPCC procedures for preparing reports including:
 - Data quality assurance and data quality control;
 - Guidelines for the types of literature appropriate for inclusion in IPCC assessments, with special attention to the use of non peer-reviewed literature;
 - Procedures for expert and governmental review of IPCC material;
 - Handling of the full range of scientific views; and
 - Procedures for correcting errors identified after approval, adoption and acceptance of a report.
2. Analyze the overall IPCC process, including the management and administrative functions within the IPCC, and the role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, with a view to strengthen and improve the efficiency of the assessment work and effectively ensure the consistent application of the IPCC Procedures.
3. Analyze appropriate communication strategies and the interaction of the IPCC with the media to ensure that the public is kept apprised of its work.
4. Prepare a report on the outcome of the consultations referred to above, including:
 - Methodology of the report preparation and measures taken to ensure high quality of the report findings;
 - Recommendations for amendments to the IPCC procedures;
 - Recommendations concerning strengthening the IPCC process, institutions and management functions;
 - Any other related recommendations;
 - Outline of a plan for the implementation of recommendations.

This document has been prepared by the Secretariat (in consultation with the e-team) to facilitate the Panel's consideration of the Review and its recommendations. The structure of the document follows the outline of the main body of the Review (Chapters 2 to 4). It should be noted that the recommendations appear in a different order in the Executive Summary of the IAC report. This document quotes recommendations by the IAC Review Committee, hereafter referred to as Committee, and outlines options in the context of the full Review. The Review raises a number other important topics, not presented as recommendations, that may warrant consideration by the Panel.

The Review indicates that many recommendations, in particular recommendations to strengthen, modify, or enforce IPCC procedures, including the treatment of gray literature, the full range of views, uncertainty, and the review process can be implemented during the fifth assessment process and should be considered at the upcoming Plenary, while recommendations related to management, communications, and conflict of interest may require discussion at several Plenary sessions.

Attention is also drawn to other documents prepared for this Session that are relevant in this context:

- Report of the IPCC Cross-Working Group Meeting on Consistent Treatment of Uncertainties, Jasper Ridge, CA, USA, 6-7 July 2010 (IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 15);
- Draft Communications strategy (IPCC-XXXII/Doc.21);
- Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures - Notes on the Informal Task Group on Procedures (IPCC-XXXII/INF.4);
- Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures - Compilations of comments received from governments (IPCC-XXXII/INF.5);
- Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures - Comments by the E-team (IPCC-XXXII/INF.6).

2. Evaluation of IPCC's Assessment Processes

2.1 Scoping

Recommendation: The IPCC should make the process and criteria for selecting participants for scoping meetings more transparent.

The Panel may wish to consider further guidance to the IPCC Chair and Co-chairs or amend Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Sections 4 and 6.1)

The Panel may also wish to consider other observations such as how to provide for some flexibility to adjust the approved outlines of reports during the assessment process without waiting for another Plenary Session.

2.2 Author Selection

Recommendation: The IPCC should establish a formal set of criteria and processes for selecting Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors.

Recommendation: The IPCC should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment.

In order to implement this recommendation for future reports, the Panel may wish to consider amendments to Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and Annex 1, section 6) or specific guidance to the Working Group Co-chairs and Bureaux, taking into consideration action taken and experience gained during the nomination and selection process for ongoing Special Reports and the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). Identification of Contributing Authors for ongoing Reports might also be considered as a way to further enhance disciplinary and regional expertise.

In this context it should be recalled that regional representatives (now Working Group Vice-Chairs) were added to the Bureau to enhance interaction with and identification of experts from their respective regions.

2.3 Sources of Data and Literature

Recommendation: The IPCC should strengthen and enforce its procedure for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature, including providing more specific guidance on how to evaluate such information, adding guidelines on what types of literature are unacceptable, and ensuring that unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature is appropriately flagged in the report.

- *The Panel may wish to encourage Co-chairs to reinforce the application of existing procedures and in addition it may consider and address the recommendation by the Committee through amendments to Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Annex 2), taking into consideration the proposals made by the Informal Task Group on Procedures (see document IPCC-XXXII/INF.4) .*

2.4 Handling the Full Range of Views

Recommendation: Lead Authors should explicitly document that a range of scientific viewpoints has been considered, and Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors should satisfy themselves that due consideration was given to properly documented alternative views.

While the Principles Governing IPCC Work and its Appendix A clearly call for a reflection of a range of views, i.e. authors teams “shall reflect the need to aim for a range of views, expertise and geographical representation” and “Lead Authors should clearly identify disparate views”, the Panel may wish to provide further guidance to the Co-chairs of ongoing reports on how to enhance that aspect or amend Appendix A (Sections 4.1, 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5,) accordingly.

2.5 Report Review

Recommendation: The IPCC should adopt a more targeted and effective process for responding to reviewer comments. In such a process, Review Editors would prepare a written summary of the most significant issues raised by reviewers shortly after review comments have been received. Authors would be required to provide detailed written responses to the most significant review issues identified by the Review Editors, abbreviated responses to all non-editorial comments, and no written responses to editorial comments.

Recommendation: The IPCC should encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority to ensure that reviewers’ comments are adequately considered by the authors and that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the report.

Attention is drawn to ongoing activities and proposals as described in documents IPCC-XXXII/INF.6 and INF.4. The Panel may wish to consider whether additional guidance to Co-chairs or amendments of Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC Work is necessary.

2.6 Summary for Policy Makers

Recommendation: The IPCC should revise its process for the approval of the Summary for Policy Makers so that governments provide written comments prior to the Plenary.

Current practice emphasized the value of written comments and how they are addressed in the approval process. The Panel may wish to consider also additional guidance based on the broader framing of this topic in the Review.

2.7 Synthesis Report (SYR)

While no recommendations are formulated on the Synthesis Report the Committee made a number of observations.

While the scope and structure of the AR5 SYR have been developed in the past months, following the guidance received from the Panel and is subject of a decision of the current Session, the Panel may wish to consider further guidance that addresses the observations by the Committee.

3. IPCC's Evaluation of Evidence and Treatment of Uncertainty

The Review Committee analyzed the uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report and its application by the Working Groups and formulated the following recommendations:

Recommendation: All Working Groups should use the qualitative level-of-understanding scale in their Summary for Policy Makers and Technical Summary, as suggested in IPCC's uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate.

Recommendation: Chapter Lead Authors should provide a traceable account of how they arrived at their ratings for level of scientific understanding and likelihood that an outcome will occur.

Recommendation: Quantitative probabilities (as in the likelihood scale) should be used to describe the probability of well-defined outcomes only when there is sufficient evidence. Authors should indicate the basis for assigning a probability to an outcome or event (e.g., based on measurement, expert judgment, and/or model runs).

Recommendation: The confidence scale should not be used to assign subjective probabilities to ill-defined outcomes.

Recommendation: The likelihood scale should be stated in terms of probabilities (numbers) in addition to words to improve understanding of uncertainty.

Recommendation: Where practical, formal expert elicitation procedures should be used to obtain subjective probabilities for key results.

Attention is drawn to ongoing activities including the outcome of the recent cross Working Group meeting on uncertainty guidance (see document IPCC-XXXII/Doc.15). The Panel may wish to encourage the Working Group Co-chairs to enhance consistent evaluation of evidence and treatment of uncertainty and if appropriate provide additional guidance.

4. Governance and Management

4.1 IPCC Management Structure

4.1.1 Panel, Chair, Bureau

Recommendation: The IPCC should establish an Executive Committee to act on its behalf between Plenary sessions. The membership of the Committee should include the IPCC Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs, the senior member of the Secretariat, and 3 independent members, including some from outside of the climate community. Members would be elected by the Plenary and serve until their successors are in place.

The Panel may wish to consider the need to create an Executive Committee with defined responsibilities and authority. If the Panel so decides, this would need to be elaborated in an Appendix to the Principles Governing IPCC Work addressing inter alia:

- *Membership;*
- *Terms of Reference and delegation of decision-making powers;*
- *The relationship of such an Executive Committee with the IPCC Bureau;*
- *Reporting to and interaction with the Panel and the IPCC Bureau in way that ensure effectiveness as well as transparency.*

Recommendation: The term of the IPCC Chair should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment.

Recommendation: The terms of the Working Group Co-chairs should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment.

While it has to be recalled that the Panel decided before the past elections (September 2008) to limit the term of Members of the Bureau to two terms in the same office, it may wish to consider amending this rule for future elections and revise Appendix C to the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Rule 10) accordingly.

Recommendation: The IPCC should develop and adopt formal qualifications and formally articulate the roles and responsibilities for all Bureau members, including the IPCC Chair, to ensure that they have both the highest scholarly qualifications and proven leadership skills.

This recommendation is consistent with Paragraph 5 of the Principles Governing IPCC work and the Panel may wish to consider if further strengthening of the respective provisions in Appendix C to the Principles Governing IPCC Work (Rules 7 and 19) is required.

4.1.2 Secretariat

Recommendation: The IPCC should redefine the responsibilities of key Secretariat positions both to improve efficiency and to allow for any future senior appointments.

Recommendation: The IPCC should elect an Executive Director to lead the Secretariat and handle day-to-day operations of the organization. The term of this senior scientist should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment.

The Panel may wish to consider the need for substantial institutional and structural changes of the IPCC and the IPCC Secretariat and their implications, taking into consideration the broader framing in the Review. If the Panel so decides, it would need to consider a range of possible options. Key issues to address include:

- *IPCC management structure and governance;*
- *Responsibilities and duties of the IPCC Secretariat and staff required to perform these functions (in this context previous considerations by the Panel about strengthening the IPCC Secretariat could be recalled;*
- *Relationship of IPCC with its sponsoring organizations relationship of senior staff of the IPCC Secretariat with the IPCC Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs and, if established, the Executive Board;*
- *Institutional, legal and financial implications.*

4.2 Conflict of Interest and Disclosure

Recommendation: The IPCC should develop and adopt a rigorous conflict of interest policy that applies to all individuals directly involved in the preparation of IPCC reports, including senior IPCC leadership (IPCC Chair and Vice Chairs), authors with responsibilities for report content (i.e., Working Group Co-chairs, Coordinating Lead Authors, and Lead Authors), Review Editors, and technical staff directly involved in report preparation (e.g., staff of Technical Support Units and the IPCC Secretariat).

The Panel may wish to consider this recommendation and initiate the development of conflict of interest policies for officials, experts and staff of IPCC including its Technical Support Units taking into consideration examples for the UN system and other relevant organizations. Such a conflict of interest policy could become an Appendix to the Principles Governing IPCC Work.

4.3 Communications

Recommendation: The IPCC should complete and implement a communications strategy that emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders, and which includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately.

Attention is drawn to past and recent activities and the draft communications strategy presented in document IPCC-XXXII/Doc.21. The Panel is invited to provide further guidance on communication matters.