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**REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

**Comments on the Report on Climate Change Assessments prepared by  
the InterAcademy Council and released on 30 August 2010**

(Submitted by the IPCC Chair on behalf of the E-team)

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## **1. The Overall Context**

Early this year, the IPCC Chair, the IPCC Vice Chairs, the Co-chairs of the three Working Groups (WGs) and the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI), the IPCC Secretary and the heads of the Technical Support Units (TSUs) (referred to as the E-team in succeeding paragraphs) undertook a number of actions to address criticisms in the media and a heightened level of public scrutiny of the work of the IPCC. The E-team further decided to request an independent appraisal of the principles and procedures for the preparation of IPCC assessment reports with a view to strengthening the process. On 16 February 2010, the IPCC Secretary sent a communication to all the member governments of the IPCC conveying the need for such a review. This was followed up with a presentation by the Chair and Secretary of the IPCC at the 11<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS-XI/GMEF) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) held in Bali in February 2010 where extensive discussion took place on the proposal, which was generally welcomed by all the government delegates present at the meeting. It was emphasized that the review should be carried out by an independent agency. Terms of reference were agreed following discussions between the Chair and Secretary of the IPCC and officials of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the office of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General. On 10 March 2010, the InterAcademy Council (IAC) was requested to conduct the review in a letter jointly signed by the UN Secretary-General and the Chair of the IPCC. IPCC member governments were informed by the IPCC Secretary in a letter dated 12 March 2010.

The terms of reference for the IAC were (i) to review the IPCC procedures for preparing reports, (ii) to analyse the IPCC process including the management structure, and (iii) to analyse appropriate communications strategies. During the course of the work of the committee set up by the IAC, presentations were made to the committee in open sessions by the Chair and the Secretary of the IPCC as well as by Dr Chris Field, Co-Chair of WGII. Members of the E-team, other Bureau members as well as past Bureau members were consulted in telephone interviews or meetings. The committee also gathered inputs via a widely distributed questionnaire. A large volume of information was provided by the IPCC Secretariat with the assistance of the Technical Support Units (TSUs). The report of the IAC review committee was submitted to the UN Secretary General and the Chair of the IPCC on 30 August 2010, and is being presented for consideration by the IPCC 32<sup>nd</sup> session to be held in Busan on 11-14 October 2010<sup>1</sup>.

Members of the E-team want to express their gratitude to the members of the IAC review committee for conducting a thoughtful, serious evaluation. An IPCC that acts to embrace the spirit and the substance of their recommendations will be strengthened as a result. Philosophically, these recommendations centre on the idea that the international community expects, and has every right to expect, the highest possible standards of scientific quality, balance, and openness from the IPCC. In the future, the IPCC will be even more squarely a focus of public attention than in the past, and it is the responsibility of the IPCC to justify the public's confidence in providing thorough scientific assessments that are policy relevant but never policy prescriptive.

On the basis of subsequent consultations among the E-team this document is being presented for consideration by the IPCC 32<sup>nd</sup> Session to be held in Busan on 11-14 October 2010. The information provided in this document carefully catalogues some of the actions already taken by the members of the E-team and some relevant issues that the E-team feels need consideration by the Panel as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 7

It is important to understand the problems to be addressed and the elements that need to be in a good solution. The IAC review makes a wide range of recommendations while noting that some of these can be implemented immediately but others will take more time and discussion as the options for implementation admit a range of possibilities or will cover complicated issues involving several stakeholders. The information provided in the current document catalogues some of the actions already taken or that can be tackled in the near-term by the WGs and members of the E-team and some relevant issues that the E-team feels need consideration by the Panel as a whole at its 32<sup>nd</sup> session in Busan.

### **The IAC recommendations**

The recommendations are presented in the same order as in IPCC-XXXII/Doc.22 where 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.

## **2. Evaluation of IPCC's Assessment Processes**

### **2.1 Scoping**

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

Substantial progress has been made in increasing the transparency of the process and criteria for the selection of Authors and Review Editors for the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5).

***Future:*** This process can be adjusted to increase the transparency of the selection process for participants in future scoping meetings.

The IAC committee also addresses a second aspect, without formulating a specific recommendation. This relates to the approval of the outlines of the assessment reports where they note that scientists may be given some flexibility to adjust the approved outlines during the assessment process without waiting for another Plenary session.

***Future:*** Revision of the procedures requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

### **2.2 Author Selection**

***IAC recommendation: Establish a formal set of criteria and process for selecting Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors***

Substantive improvements have already been implemented during selection for AR5. A guidance document for Focal Points was prepared to facilitate the task of the government Focal Points in identifying the best experts from their respective country. Author selection during the AR5 cycle was handled very carefully for the Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation (SRREN), the Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX), and the WG contributions to AR5. The WG Bureaux with the assistance of the TSUs followed the IPCC Procedures for evaluating nominees and selecting the Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors (CLA/LA/REs) taking into consideration the nominees expertise, geographical and gender balance, and experience with assessments. Working Group I (WGI) and Working Group III (WGIII) incorporated formal indicators of expertise, while Working Group II (WGII) relied on the overall strength of nominees' curriculum vitae. All WGs placed a high emphasis on scientific expertise required to cover comprehensively the approved outlines of the three assessment reports. The selection also took into account the ability of experts to make effective contributions as part of author teams.

**Future:** The scientific communities contributing to the three WGs are diverse enough that it may not be practical to completely standardize author selection. The IPCC can build on recent experiences to standardize the process and criteria for author selection as much as possible, and to enhance openness and transparency. There is scope for increasing the pool of nominations, especially from developing countries, and towards this end members of the Bureau and observer organisations could assist by enhancing their current efforts to identify experts in their regions qualified for specific roles.

**IAC 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.*

For the two special reports in progress and for the AR5, all WGs made a dedicated effort to encourage top nominations from around the world with a view to achieve regional balance as required by the IPCC procedures. For the WGII regional chapters of AR5, the WGII TSU and Bureau made a special effort to identify outstanding experts with a broad perspective and training. The WGII regional chapter authors and REs for the AR5 are fully as distinguished and qualified as those from any other IPCC chapter.

**Future:** Concerted efforts are being and will continue to be made to encourage broad use of Contributing Authors with relevant expertise for the region, including experts working outside the region. In the WGII treatment of regional issues, a separate chapter on “Regional Context” will help ensure that regional chapter authors and REs understand the strengths and limitations of the available regional climate information.

It is also essential for author teams dealing with regional chapters to make efforts to access literature in other languages.

## 2.3 Sources of Data and Literature

**IAC 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.*

All WGs have taken substantive steps to clarify and enforce the existing guidance on the use of literature from non-journal-based sources. The topic has been a focus of author training for the SRREN and SREX. The TSUs have jointly developed the ‘General Guidance on the Use of Literature in IPCC Reports’<sup>2</sup>. The document has been distributed to all authors of the two special reports. This guidance or a more advanced version will be a centrepiece of the training for AR5 authors and REs.

In addition, WGIII has started to collect meta-information from the authors on the non-journal-based literature cited. This includes ‘reasons for citation’, ‘commissioned by’, and ‘type of review, if yes, what kind’. However it should be noted that this adds to the workload of the authors. For the SRREN, the file has been distributed to the REs to enhance checking of the adequate handling of non-journal-based literature.

**Future:** The steps already implemented for guidance will be continued and updated as required. The WGs will give consideration to ways of appropriately flagging the non-journal literature used in future assessments.

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<sup>2</sup> Annex to IPCC-XXXII/INF. 4

## 2.4 Handling the Full Range of Views

**IAC 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.*

The IPCC procedures clearly require the representation of differing scientific viewpoints and this has been done in previous assessment reports. Implementation is the responsibility of the CLAs with the guidance of the REs.

**Future:** Continued careful adherence to the IPCC procedures, and guidance from the WG Co-chairs together with enhanced training of authors and REs will go a long way toward ensuring that the full range of scientific viewpoints (including diverse regional perspectives) is accurately presented and characterized. See also comments below on the role of REs.

More attention to the structure and wording of statements in the executive summaries, summaries for policymakers, and the synthesis report can help ensure that an emphasis on brevity does not erode the communication of appropriate balance.

## 2.5 Report Review

**IAC 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.*

The IPCC procedures require all comments to be addressed in writing. One role of the REs is to point out controversial issues. The TSUs drafted a guidance note on the role of REs that emphasizes the value of organizing comments by topic and importance<sup>3</sup>. For SRREN, this has already been amplified through dedicated training for REs, which is also being done for SREX. However it should be noted that this does not remove the prime responsibility of the author teams to classify and organise comments for appropriate responses.

**Future:** RE training sessions will be further used for the AR5. In considering the implementation of an additional written step as indicated in the IAC recommendation, it is noted that this would have implications for the scheduling of the review periods as well as increasing the workload of the REs.

**IAC 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.*

The role of REs has been strengthened in all WGs through careful selection of top individuals and increased training. For the AR5, for the first time, REs were selected at the same time as CLAs and LAs for all three WGs. For the AR5, the REs include many of the most senior and established scientists in the areas relevant to the assessment. Many have prior IPCC experience and are therefore familiar with the IPCC procedures. Many chapters for the AR5 will have three or more REs. The joint guidance note on the role of REs mentioned above, or a more advanced version, will be used as part of the training for AR5 REs. This document is intended as one element of a comprehensive approach that includes extensive training, measures to increase efficiency, and empowerment to ensure that REs and authors understand that the REs have the authority and the responsibility to insist on the highest standards of quality and balance, and also on avoiding policy prescriptive statements.

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<sup>3</sup> Annex to IPCC-XXXII/INF. 4

The WGs conduct dedicated briefings for REs when they first attend Lead Author meetings, explaining their role and tasks. After releasing the Second Order Draft of the SRREN, WGIII organized dedicated phone conferences with the REs for each individual chapter, asking for their general impression of the chapter's quality, for progress made since the First Order Draft and whether expert reviewers' comments and grey literature were handled well. These steps will form a foundation for training REs for the SREX and the AR5.

It is standard procedure that, at each of the Lead Author meetings, the WG Co-chairs emphasize to the authors the importance of adhering to IPCC procedures for dealing with non-published/non-peer reviewed literature which require that "each chapter team will review the quality and validity of each source before incorporating results from the source into the IPCC reports."

**Future:** The steps already implemented for the training of REs will be continued and updated as required. The role of REs, their enhanced responsibilities and increased workloads should be clearly specified and explained to the candidates and those who nominate them.

## **2.6 Summary for Policy Makers (SPM)**

***IAC 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.***

Governments already provide written comments on the SPM in advance as part of the review process, even though this is not clearly specified in the existing procedures. This is a great advantage to the author teams in preparing the final draft of the SPM for plenary approval. The quality of the SPM may also be improved as a consequence of additional comments from the floor. Careful management of the plenary process, including judicious use of contact groups on contentious issues should take advantage of the written comments, plus the insight that comes from real-time interactions.

**Future:** Revision of the procedures requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

The IAC report mentions a second aspect, without formulating a specific recommendation. This relates to the concern of some respondents to the committee's questionnaire about the consistency between the SPM and the underlying report. In the past, careful attention was given to this in the course of the approval process. In case of disagreement, the judgment of the authors determined the final wording in the SPM. This rule may be made more explicit in the procedures.

**Future:** Revision of the procedures requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

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

***IAC recommendations:***

***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.***

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

***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).***

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

***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.***

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

In July 2010, the IPCC convened a cross-WG expert meeting to update and revise the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) guidance on uncertainty<sup>4</sup>. The revised uncertainty guidance covers several of the issues raised in the IAC recommendations. This guidance is due to be completed in time for the first Lead Author meeting of WGI AR5 in early November 2010. It carefully addresses the relationships among the different terms for communicating uncertainty. It places an emphasis on explaining the basis for expert judgments on the evidence-agreement model, and clarifies the distinction between formal assessments of likelihood, e.g. through a multi-model ensemble analysis, and subjective assessments of confidence, e.g., by considering multiple lines of independent evidence. The revised guidance also emphasizes the importance of providing information about the range of uncertainties, including risks for low probability/high impact outcomes. All of the uncertainty language is to be based on a clear process that provides a traceable account.

***Future:*** This revised guidance will be used at every stage of the preparation of future assessment reports. As in the past, specific briefings on the implementation of this guidance will be given at Lead Author meetings.

## **4. Governance and Management**

### **4.1 IPCC Management Structure**

#### **4.1.1 Panel, Chair, Bureau**

***IAC 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.***

In 2006 the Chair of the IPCC took the initiative of forming of an executive team (referred to as the E-team) that includes the Chair and Vice Chairs of the IPCC, Co-chairs of the three WGs and the TFI, the Secretary of the IPCC and the heads of the TSUs of the various units in the IPCC. The Deputy Secretary of the IPCC was subsequently included as an Observer to assist with various Secretariat functions.

The purpose of this informal group is to bring about cohesiveness in decision-making, enhance coordination, increase consistency in the interpretation and application of procedures in the work of the IPCC and improve the management of IPCC functions. The E-team also provides a useful forum for review of progress and executive actions in keeping with decisions taken by the Panel.

In the following paragraphs, the E-team offers some issues for consideration on this recommendation. It appears that some improvements to the management structure could be particularly helpful for two reasons: (i) to constitute a formal decision-making body that could facilitate efficient progress between meetings of the Panel especially on issues such as error correction and other questions of scientific integrity, and (ii) to improve responsiveness in urgent situations. The size of an Executive Committee and its impact on the decision-making process, including its relations with the IPCC Bureau, needs to be considered carefully. Some aspects of this recommendation, for example the role of independent members, might require adjustments to make them compatible with

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<sup>4</sup> IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 15

the IPCC identity and mode of operation. It seems critical that clear terms of reference are defined and carried out. The proposed three members within the Executive Committee who are appointed from outside the IPCC could be Ex-Officio (i.e. without any vote) and have the role of advisors.

However, it is for the Panel to discuss and decide whether the inclusion of outside members in the Executive Committee would bring added value to the quality of decision-making and functioning of this group. The IPCC is a body consisting of all the governments of the world with decisions taken by consensus. Thus diversity of views is already present in the constitution of the IPCC and provides its inherent strength and basic character. It is expected that the Executive Committee would function within policies and mandates provided by the Panel. Hence this is an issue which requires careful reflection and consideration.

It is critical to define the role of the Executive Committee, if approved, and outline its authority and responsibility. It would also require some financial powers in order to be effective, and it would have to be determined how these would fit with WMO rules and procedures.

**Future:** The IAC's recommendation on the subject requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

**IAC recommendation: The term of the IPCC Chair should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment.**

It would be relevant to mention that, the first IPCC Chair served for two consecutive terms. In the context of adopting new election procedures in 2008, the Panel decided to allow all elected officials to serve a maximum of two terms in the same office.

**Future:** This requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

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

It would be relevant to mention that, in the past, there have been cases of Co-chairs serving consecutive terms extending up to three assessment cycles. In the context of adopting new election procedures in 2008, the Panel decided to allow all elected officials to serve a maximum of two terms in the same office.

**Future:** This requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

**IAC 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.**

The IPCC procedures<sup>5</sup> require all nominees to have relevant scientific, technological or socio-economic expertise and their Curriculum vitae (CVs) are made available to the Panel before the elections. The roles of the Bureau members are described in the IPCC procedures.

**Future:** Any further specification of the qualifications of Bureau members requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

#### **4.1.2 Secretariat**

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

The members of the E-team recognize that the specific requirements of Secretariat positions will only emerge as the mandate of the Secretariat in any revised future management structure of the IPCC as a whole becomes clearer.

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<sup>5</sup> Rule 19 of Appendix C to the Principles Governing IPCC Work



The E-team draws the attention of the Panel to the evolution of the structure and staffing of the IPCC Secretariat. When the IPCC was established, an ad-hoc arrangement was used for creating a Secretariat with WMO and UNEP pooling their resources in order to initiate the work of IPCC. From 1988 until 2005 the Secretariat strength did not change, and consisted of only two senior staff, namely the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary, the former being an employee of WMO and the latter of UNEP. In addition to these two senior persons, three general service staff were provided (two secretaries and one administrative assistant). In other words, for the period from 1988 to 2005, the IPCC Secretariat was staffed only by five individuals, and sometimes even less when positions remained unfilled for one reason or another. The IPCC Secretariat staffing, therefore, remained frozen during its initial 17 years of existence. In 2005, the position of Information Officer was created, which was filled in 2006. The total staff of the IPCC Secretariat today is ten persons. In addition, temporary staff are recruited for specific activities.

The need for strengthening the Secretariat was foreseen some years ago. At the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the IPCC held from 9-10 April 2008 in Budapest, Hungary, a Task Group was established composed of Mr David Warrilow, Mr Jose Romero, Mr Ogunlade Davidson and Mr Harlan Watson to review the tasks of the Secretariat as well as tasks carried out by the TSUs and to advise on whether there was a need for strengthening the IPCC Secretariat in order for it to carry out its duties during the fifth assessment period.

A dialogue was also started with the UN Secretary-General and his staff in November 2007 by the IPCC Chair on structural issues related to the Secretariat and the reporting arrangements of the staff of the Secretariat with WMO and UNEP. All these efforts were taken in hand for the purpose of ensuring that the Secretariat had the necessary capacity to deal with the challenges ahead, particularly in the post AR4 period.

In the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the IPCC held in Antalya, Turkey in April 2009, Mr Warrilow presented the report of the Task Group set up for assessing the needs to strengthen the Secretariat. He reported that “the IPCC Secretariat is the only permanent body in the IPCC structure. It provides essential central coordination, continuity and consistency of information and records”. He also noted that “the Secretariat is under great pressure because of the increased focus on IPCC since the publication of the AR4.” Further discussion at the Sessions during which the Secretary explained tasks and immediate needs for strengthening the Secretariat led to the approval of two additional professional posts, one for strengthening scientific and technical expertise in the Secretariat and the other for an Information Technology (IT) expert. A provision was also made for revisiting the requirements of the Secretariat with approval for short term temporary recruitment as required.

The IAC review emphasizes the need to redefine responsibilities of key secretariat positions and to allow for any future appointments. This issue requires careful consideration, because the entire functioning of the Secretariat and its capacity has to be appropriate for the challenges that will be faced in the future. This may require a study of the Secretariat to be carried out.

**Future:** This requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

***IAC 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 question of whether to establish the position of an Executive Director needs to be considered in the overall context of management and governance of the IPCC. In the following paragraphs, the E-team offers some issues for consideration on this recommendation. The terms of reference for this new position should be very well defined, including the relationships with the IPCC Chair and the Executive Committee, as well as the combination of administrative and scientific tasks and the reporting structure. In order to ensure institutional memory, it might be desirable to maintain the option that the Executive Director can serve for more than one assessment cycle.

An important issue that would arise in creating the position of Executive Director is the relationship of the IPCC Secretariat to the Panel's parent bodies, WMO and UNEP. Currently the Secretary is an employee of the WMO and the Deputy Secretary an employee of UNEP. This would need to be reconciled with the position of the Executive Director who is required to lead the Secretariat, reporting to the Chairman of the IPCC for the technical issues of the Secretariat, as does the current Secretary but it is unclear who would employ the Executive Director and to whom she/he would reporting for personnel issues.

The other important issue to be considered is the manner of appointment of the Executive Director. The recommendation of the IAC suggests the election of the Executive Director. However, in most international organisations, and particularly in UN bodies, the Executive Director is normally appointed. For instance, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat are appointed by the Secretary General of the UN based on recommendations provided by a search committee. The election of an Executive Director for the IPCC would, therefore, deviate from the practice being followed in other international organisations. It also needs to be considered that given the Executive Director's position being designed for a person with proven managerial expertise, whether the process of an election would be the best means to attract the right candidate.

**Future:** This requires consideration and decision by the Panel.

#### 4.1 Conflict of Interest and Disclosure

**IAC 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).*

Some aspects of this issue are covered in the report of the informal task group on procedures set up by the E-team<sup>6</sup>, which advocates a policy that addresses both bias and conflict of interest and emphasizes the importance of eliminating serious conflicts of interest. Possible conflicts of interest could range from paid positions with organizations or industries involved in climate-sensitive areas to serving as a journal editor responsible for decisions on papers that might be influential in IPCC reports to overlapping roles as IPCC author or review editor and member of a national delegation to an IPCC approval plenary or a UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP). In order to have something available for the first LA meeting of WGI in November 2010, a policy on conflict of interest is being developed by the WGI Co-chairs and TSU as a first step.

**Future:** The development of a common conflict of interest policy requires further consideration by the Panel and once developed would supersede any preliminary policies used by the WGs.

#### 4.3 Communications

**IAC 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.*

A communications strategy has evolved in the IPCC particularly since 1997, when a Vice Chair of the IPCC assumed responsibility for outreach activities. At that stage for the first time a website was developed and maintained for the IPCC through the pro bono contribution of an institute in India. Also an informal task group on communications strategy was established, which reported at every plenary session as a general routine.

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<sup>6</sup> IPCC-XXXII/INF. 4

This work on developing a communications strategy was formalized in a report submitted at the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPCC in Montreal held on 26-28 September 2005. Much of the analysis presented in that document is still relevant. Unfortunately, on account of a lack of capacity within the IPCC Secretariat communications and outreach have not received the attention required. After several efforts and discussions the Panel agreed in 2005 to establish the post of an Information Officer that was filled in the year 2006. The provision of a single person in this position is clearly not adequate for dealing with the demands for information from the outside world on the IPCC.

The IPCC has increased its investments in clear communication in several ways. This includes (a) upgrading the post of communications officer in the Secretariat, (b) engaging outside expertise to meet extra demands, and (c) working toward a comprehensive communications strategy<sup>7</sup>.

**Future:** While there is much more to do in developing a comprehensive communications strategy, activities to date have emphasized clarifying messages about the IPCC role and approach and training authors to interact with the media. Valuable components of a communications strategy could address options for making the assessment reports clearer and more approachable (e.g. through FAQs) or communication about what the IPCC is and does. Furthermore, the IPCC process itself needs to be explained and communicated. The E-team recognizes the value of clear communication and supports a comprehensive communications strategy but also feels strongly that two core principles must be respected in an effective communications strategy: firstly that the IPCC is strictly neutral with respect to policy options. Secondly, that the strength of the IPCC comes from its process of producing assessment reports that are approved in an intergovernmental plenary. While the IPCC is restricted to the production of Reports and Supplementary Material as laid out in its procedures, it welcomes their use by others as the basis for other kinds of products.

## 5. Additional Topics Mentioned by IAC

In addition to its formal recommendations listed above, the IAC review also included brief discussions in Chapter 5 of its report on the following topics that may need further elaboration and consideration by the Panel:

- (i) Reducing the growing burden on the scientific community;
- (ii) Maintain flexibility to accommodate future advances in scientific understanding and evolving needs of policymakers;
- (iii) Participation of developing countries and the private sector (Note report on Improving participation of developing/EIT countries in the IPCC<sup>8</sup>);
- (iv) Access to information;
- (v) WG structure and phasing of reports (Note extensive discussions and documentation related to the future of the IPCC at the end of the AR4).

## 6. Other Topics

There are some areas that were not fully covered in the IAC review. The E-team notes the following:

- (i) The review did not mention an important activity within the IPCC, which is carried out by the Task Force on Greenhouse Gas Inventories. The TFI which is responsible for developing greenhouse gas inventory guidelines for estimating and reporting, widely used by the UNFCCC and other bodies, does not produce assessment reports. However, it faces many of the same issues as the IPCC WGs including those related to selection of authors and REs, preparation of drafts and the review process;

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<sup>7</sup> IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 21

<sup>8</sup> IPCC-XXXI/Doc. 11

- (ii) The IAC review did not refer to the role of the IPCC Vice Chairs except in the context of conflict of interest guidelines. The three IPCC Vice Chairs are experienced professionals with substantial knowledge of IPCC processes and procedures and should play an important managerial role in the overall set up of the Panel. Furthermore, the WG Vice Chairs are highly skilled experts who could play a more active role in supporting the IPCC work in their respective regions through various channels (including, inter alia, identifying new appropriate experts during the nomination processes; encouraging the identification of relevant literature in local languages; and promoting regional workshops);
- (iii) The important role of the TSUs, coordination among them and the Secretariat, including the preservation of institutional memory.

## 7. Steps Towards Implementation

In order to consider and implement the recommendations of the IAC, the Panel could:

- (i) Take note of the actions already implemented or underway in the WGs;
- (ii) Assess structural challenges of the organization as a whole, including in relation to the structure of the Secretariat;
- (iii) Assess the reporting relationships and responsibilities of Secretariat staff as they apply to the WMO and UNEP;
- (iv) Consider the kind of delegation of authority that would be provided to a possible Executive Committee, should the constitution of the committee be decided on;
- (v) Develop a time table and plan for implementation of the recommendations that are accepted, which would need to take into account the drafting and approval of rules<sup>9</sup>;
- (vi) Define a clear process of transition from the current to the future structure whereby there is no impediment in the successful completion of the AR5 and other products currently in hand with the IPCC;
- (vii) Institute arrangements for monitoring and supervision of the timetable and plan developed under (v) to ensure appropriate implementation of the recommendations that are accepted.

## 8. E-team Informal Task Group on Procedures

The E-team at its meeting held in Oxford on 5-6 March 2010, decided not to lose time and to initiate action on some critical issues that were part of the terms of reference for the IAC review. Accordingly, a small group was set up, chaired by Prof. Thomas Stocker, Co-Chair of WGI, to give attention to some specific subjects without delay. A preliminary oral report on the work of this group was made to the IPCC Bureau on 19-20 May 2010. A written report has been provided for the information of the Panel as IPCC-XXXII/INF. 4.

The topics covered by this report are as follows:

- A. Procedures for preparing IPCC reports and their implementation;
- B. Management and structure issues;
- C. How to deal with errors;
- D. Conflicts of interest;
- E. Security and confidentiality.

It includes as Annexes the two guidance notes on the use of literature and on the role of REs that have been referred to earlier.

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<sup>9</sup> IPCC-XXXII/Doc. 22, for instance section 4