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REPORTS

Participation of developing countries in IPCC activities

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

REPORTS

Participation of developing countries in IPCC activities

Background

During the 41st Session of the IPCC (Nairobi, Kenya, 24-27 February 2015), the Panel agreed (Decision IPCC/XLI-4, paragraphs 24-27) that a number of additional measures would be suitable to attract qualified experts from developing countries and enhance and facilitate their engagement with the IPCC, including the following:

- Further encourage Co-Chairs and other Bureau members to engage experts from developing countries in Technical Support Units (TSUs), author teams and as reviewers. Increasing training for TSUs and author teams will help ensure effective participation by all authors;
- Increase the number of IPCC activities in developing countries;
- Arrange briefings and training sessions for government representatives e.g. before sessions of the IPCC;
- In the context of communication and outreach activities, to provide experts with information about the IPCC process and how they can participate in IPCC work.

Following this decision, the IPCC Secretariat assessed progress made on this matter since the 30th Session of the IPCC in Antalya, Turkey, 21 – 23 April 2009, where Decision IPCC/XXX-7 on the same matter was adopted. The main finding is that there is no convincing evidence available which indicates an improvement in developing country participation in IPCC Sessions, in author teams and as expert or government reviewers in IPCC Assessment Reports (see Appendix 1).

The IPCC Secretariat invited the representatives of the Missions of Developing Countries (DC) to the United Nations in Geneva for a briefing session which was held at the Headquarters of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in Geneva on 24 February 2016. The aim of the briefing session was to raise awareness regarding the IPCC work and show the identified deficiency in DC participation in IPCC Sessions and in serving as Authors, Review Editors and Expert Reviewers of IPCC products (Assessment Reports, Special Reports, Technical Papers, etc). The list of participants from 29 DCs is presented in Annex 1.

Representatives of developing country missions invited the IPCC Secretariat to:

- Always send a copy of the communication sent to National Focal Points, for information, to enable them follow up with their respective governments if the need arises; and
- Recommend to the IPCC Scholarship Programme Science Board to increase the cutoff age for eligibility of applicants.

The Secretariat already regularly includes workshops for young scientists in its outreach activities in different countries and has started organizing briefings for government officials and parliamentarians on how their countries can engage more with the IPCC. An example of stakeholders' initiatives to enhance participation of developing country scientists in climate assessments and the IPCC is described in Appendix 2.

The actions that the Secretariat intends to undertake to implement Decision IPCC/XLI-4, paragraphs 24-27 were presented to the 52nd Session of the Bureau (Geneva, Switzerland, 18-19 August 2016). The Chair of the IPCC requested the Secretariat to take into consideration comments made by the Bureau in preparation of the documentation to be submitted to the 44th Session of the IPCC in October 2016.

Ways to improve developing country participation

The Secretariat intends to undertake the following Actions in order to implement Decision IPCC/XLI-4:

Action 1

To prepare appropriate regional and/or national plans of action aimed at enhancing DCs' participation in IPCC activities, with associated implementation, follow-up and monitoring mechanisms. These will be prepared working with the members of the Bureau, and in consultation with National Focal Points and Observer Organizations.

Amongst other possibilities for implementation, this process would involve identifying regionally specific knowledge gaps, emerging issues and key uncertainties. An inventory of available literature in all United Nations languages would be carried out to develop a mapping of relevant experts, which could be presented to the National Focal Points to help them identify potential nominees for the IPCC author teams while allowing for other national strategies for the identification of suitable experts. The ongoing outreach events should also be used as a platform to attract relevant experts and raise awareness about IPCC activities.

Action 2

To transmit a copy of all communications to the National Focal Points to developing country Permanent Representatives to UNEP and to WMO and follow up with the Missions and National Focal Points in case no response to invitations is received within a week after the stipulated deadlines.

Currently, there is no mechanism for real-time monitoring and follow-up on invitations sent to National Focal Points for participation in IPCC activities neither is there any means for identifying cases where a designated National Focal Point becomes unavailable without notifying the Secretariat.

Action 3

To arrange briefing and training sessions for government representatives before sessions of the IPCC. Developing Country representatives could attend a one-day briefing session before the 45th Session of the IPCC and subsequent sessions.

Owing to the financial implications associated with this Action, the Secretariat has submitted the necessary budgetary proposals to the 44th Session of the IPCC. The agenda for the briefing sessions, which will be open to all registered delegates who may wish to attend, will be developed and posted on the IPCC website not later than four weeks before each Panel Session.

Action 4

To give more publicity to call for nominations of IPCC Experts and provide contact details for National Focal Points who could be contacted to nominate the experts. The calls will be worded to encourage potential female authors to express their interests in an endeavor to increase the participation of women in IPCC activities.

The IPCC Secretariat and the Technical Support Units (TSUs) will publicize the call for nominations of authors and the required expertise on their respective websites and webpages and will keep updated the public contact data base of National Focal Points. Potential authors would contact the respective National Focal Points who would then use their discretion to assess the experts' relevance.

Action 5

To provide training for new authors during the first Lead Author meetings (LAM1). Working Groups may consider identifying mentors to provide guidance to new authors early in the assessment process.

After the authors have been selected, Working Group TSUs should develop training packages for their author teams to enhance their contributions in the preparation of the reports and provide encouragement and support to keep them motivated.

Participation in IPCC Plenary Sessions

Prior to the briefing session of DC Representatives, the IPCC Secretariat identified DCs which have not participated in the last three IPCC Plenary Sessions. This analysis has been extended to include the 43rd Session of the IPCC. As shown in Figure 1, of the 137 DCs listed in [IPCC-XLII/INF. 16](#), only 75 participated in the 40th Session of the IPCC (Copenhagen, Denmark, 24-31 October 2014), 64 attended the 41st Session of the IPCC (Nairobi, Kenya, 24-27 February 2015), 85 participated in the 42nd Session of the IPCC (Dubrovnik, Croatia, 5-8 October 2015), and 78 attended the 43rd Session of the IPCC (Nairobi, Kenya, 11-13 April 2016). The participation of DCs in IPCC Sessions is neither consistent nor showing an increasing trend despite the fact that financial support is made available from the IPCC Trust Fund for one representative from each of the DCs and countries with Economies in Transition (EIT).

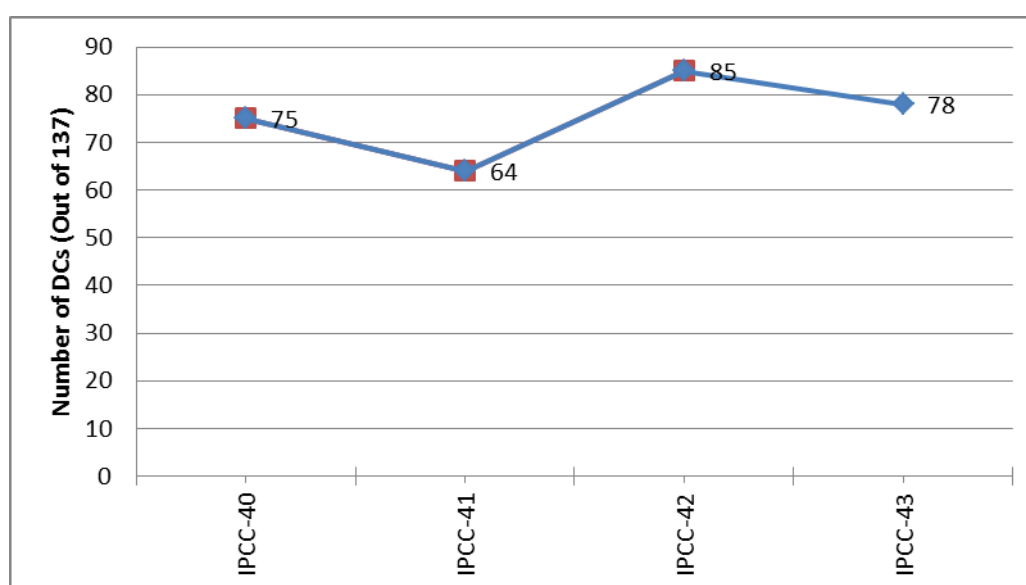


Figure 1: Number of Developing Countries which participated in the last four IPCC Plenary Sessions.

A comparison of the attendance in IPCC Plenary Session with those of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reveals that a large percentage of DCs have been consistently participating in the last five COPs since COP17 (Figure 2). The higher attendance in COP meetings relative to IPCC meetings could in part be attributed to higher awareness and political support of UNFCCC processes and proceedings and the legally binding nature of its decisions.

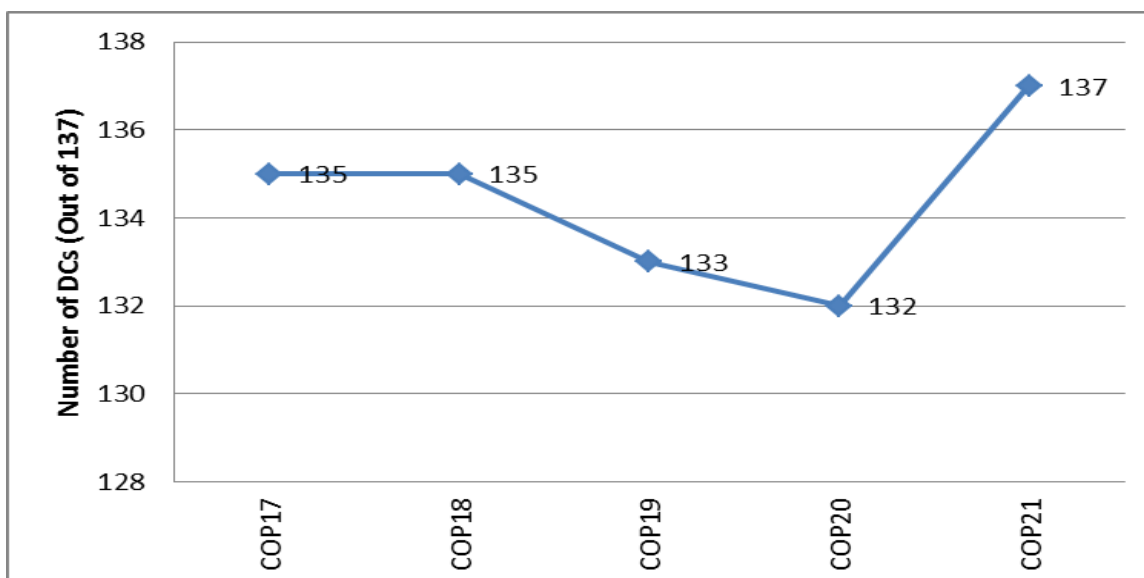


Figure 2: Number of Developing Countries which participated in the last five Conferences of Parties to the UNFCCC.

Participation of Experts in past Assessment Reports

The IPCC Secretariat has undertaken an analysis of the percentage contributions in past assessment reports (SAR¹, TAR², AR4³ and AR5⁴) by experts from developed countries, DCs and EITs. The results shown in Figure 3 reveal that the majority of selected experts (Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors) are from developed countries. In Working Group I and Working Group II, the number of authors and REs from DCs and EITs decreased from AR4 to AR5. In Working Group III, the involvement of experts from DCs increased by about 5.9%, while those from EITs decreased by about 1.1%.

The contribution of developed countries is even higher during the review process (expert and Government reviews) of IPCC ARs (Figure 4). In all three WG ARs, developed country contribution in reviewing the AR5 exceeded 80%, reaching more than 90% in WGI and WGIII.

This lack of a clear increase in DCs and EITs involvement in IPCC author teams despite efforts which were made early in the AR5 cycle (see [IPCC-XXXI/Doc.11](#) and [IPCC-XXXI/INF.1](#)) demonstrates a need for identifying possible obstacles, constraints and actions and initiatives needed to overcome them, and for addressing new challenges and emerging issues.

¹ IPCC Second Assessment Report

² IPCC Third Assessment Report

³ IPCC Fourth Assessment Report

⁴ IPCC Fifth Assessment Report

Figure 3: Percentage Contributions (CLAs, LAs & REs) in Previous Assessment Reports

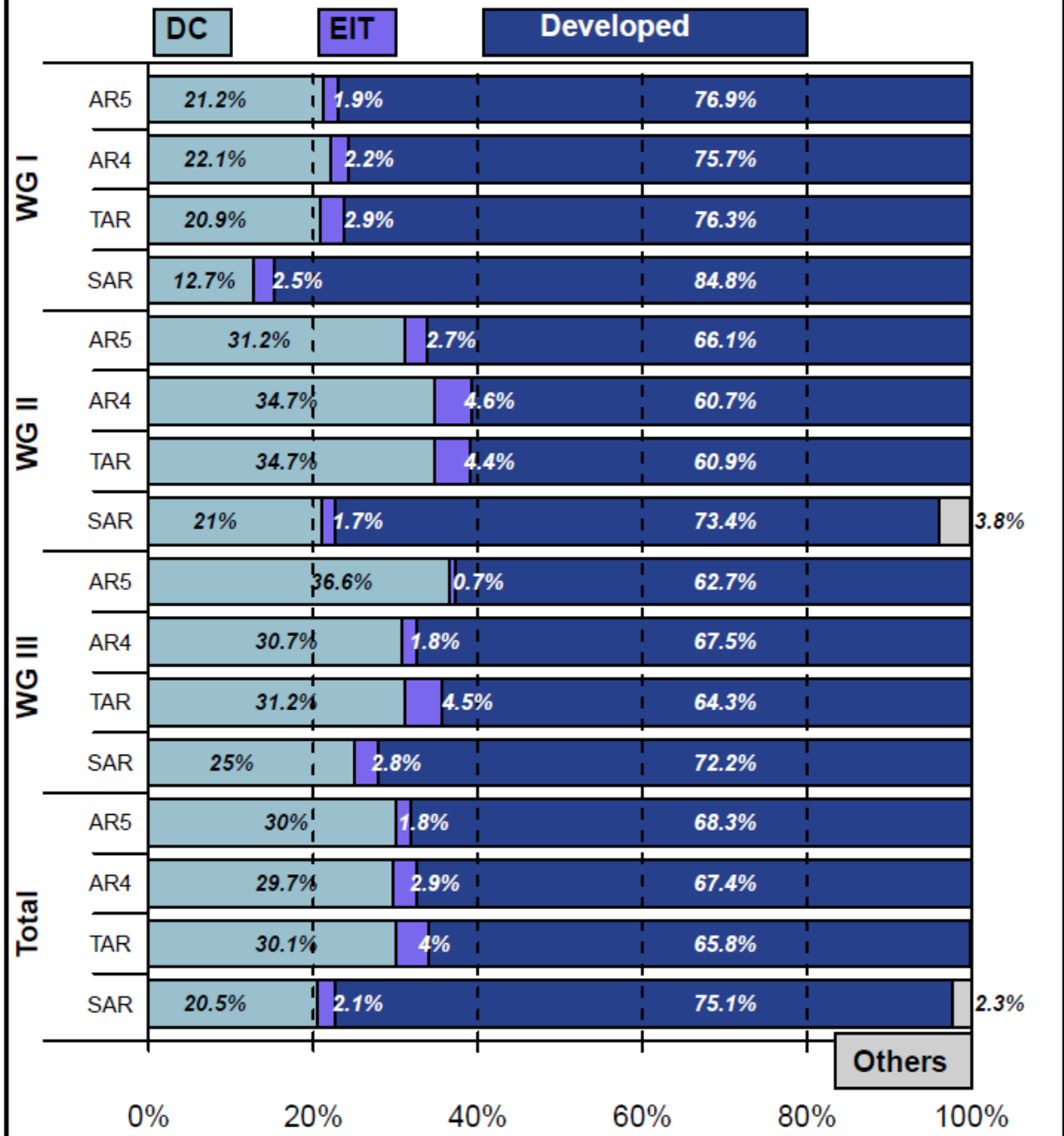
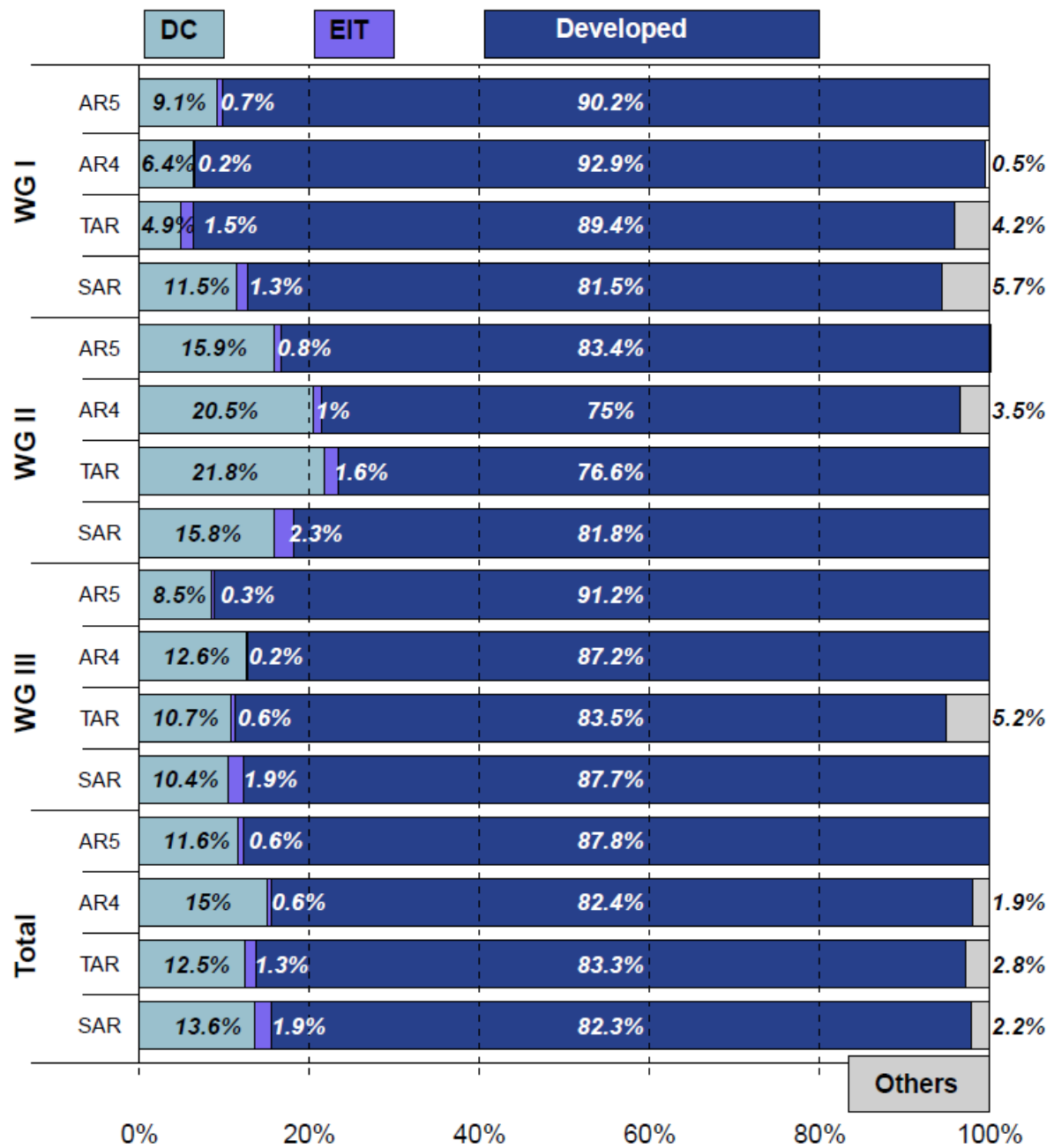


Figure 4: Percentage of Reviewers in Previous Assessment Reports



An example of initiative for Africa

IPCC authors, CDKN⁵, the African Future Earth Committee, UCL STEaPP⁶ and other networks have taken an initiative to forge collaboration on specific ways to enhance African participation in climate assessments and the IPCC. As part of this initiative, the UCL STEaPP is organizing a network-connecting workshop to be held on 12-13 October 2016, which is expected to involve participants from African networks, universities and research centres.

UCL is ready to be contracted to develop and run an educational programme in climate assessments and the IPCC, with a proposed summer school course in September 2017. The programme aims to both enhance the effective participation by African climate scientists in the 6th Assessment Working Group Reports of the IPCC and develop their capabilities to leverage their skills in scientific assessment into local policy action on climate change. This programme will also improve the IPCC's outreach in Africa by reaching out to scientific communities in addition to the existing focal points, and thus bring the IPCC closer to African scientists. The ultimate goal of the programme – which may subsequently be expanded to other continents – is to increase the capacity of scientists to leverage knowledge into effective climate action.

⁵ Climate and Development Knowledge Network

⁶ University College London's (UCL) Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy department

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Geneva, Switzerland, 24 February 2016

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