

ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE IPCC
Batumi, Georgia, 14 - 18 October 2013

IPCC-XXXVII/Doc. 5
(3.IX.2013)
Agenda Item: 9.2
ENGLISH ONLY

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Possibility of convening Bureau sessions through electronic means

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

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Possibility of convening Bureau sessions through electronic means

The IPCC Bureau discussed the possibility of convening its sessions through electronic means at its Forty-Fifth Session (Geneva, 13-14 March 2012) and Forty-Sixth Session (Geneva, 28 February–1 March 2013). Agreement was expressed by Bureau Members that there would be large savings and reduced environmental impact by holding sessions electronically.

This subject was also addressed by the IPCC Executive Committee starting at its Fourteenth meeting. The IPCC Secretariat consulted extensively the Language, Conference and Publishing Services Department of WMO to ascertain the functionality of available technologies and the possibility of interpretation, and organized a test-run on a small scale with some volunteer Bureau Members and interpreters in December 2012.

The system installed at WMO allows twenty video connections, but it is not advisable to have more than seven (plus Geneva) in Salle A, which is the venue of IPCC Bureau sessions held at WMO. This creates a limitation in the number of possible participants. Remote interpretation is constrained by various reasons, some of them purely technical and others related to the fact that the quality of interpretation can not be guaranteed. In addition, WMO has signed and ratified an agreement on the conditions of employment of short-term conference interpreters, which does not envisage the use of remote interpretation.

In the discussion at the Forty-Sixth Session, the option of using English only for remotely connected participants was suggested in order to solve the problem of interpretation. This, however, would require a change in the IPCC procedures with the approval of the Panel.

The attached proposal to amend paragraph 14 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work is submitted to the Panel for consideration and approval.

The Panel is invited to note, however, that such amendment could facilitate the holding of Bureau sessions through electronic means but not yet solve other constraints of a technological nature that may exist.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING IPCC WORK

Approved at the Fourteenth Session (Vienna, 1-3 October 1998) on 1 October 1998, amended at the Twenty-First Session (Vienna, 3, ~~and~~ 6-7 November 2003), the Twenty-Fifth Session (Mauritius, 26-28 April 2006) and the Thirty-Fifth Session (Geneva, 6-9 June 2012) and the Thirty-Seventh Session (Batumi, 14-18 October 2013)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (hereinafter referred to as the IPCC or, synonymously, the Panel) shall concentrate its activities on the tasks allotted to it by the relevant WMO Executive Council and UNEP Governing Council resolutions and decisions as well as on actions in support of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change process.

ROLE

2. The role of the IPCC is to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation. IPCC reports should be neutral with respect to policy, although they may need to deal objectively with scientific, technical and socio-economic factors relevant to the application of particular policies.

3. Review is an essential part of the IPCC process. Since the IPCC is an intergovernmental body, review of IPCC documents should involve both peer review by experts and review by governments.

ORGANIZATION

4. Major decisions of the IPCC will be taken by the Panel in plenary meetings.

5. The IPCC Bureau, the IPCC Working Group Bureaux and the Bureaux of any Task Forces of the IPCC shall reflect balanced geographic representation with due consideration for scientific and technical requirements.

6. IPCC Working Groups and any Task Forces constituted by the IPCC shall have clearly defined and approved mandates and work plans as established by the Panel, and shall be open-ended.

PARTICIPATION

7. Participation in the work of the IPCC is open to all WMO and UN Member countries.

8. Invitations to participate in the sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups, Task Forces and IPCC workshops shall be extended to Governments and other bodies by the Chairman of the IPCC.

9. Experts from WMO and UN Member countries or international, intergovernmental or non-governmental organisations may be invited in their own right to contribute to the work of the IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces. Governments should be informed in advance of invitations extended to experts from their countries and they may nominate additional experts.

PROCEDURES

10. In taking decisions, and approving, adopting and accepting reports, the Panel, its Working Groups and any Task Forces shall use all best endeavours to reach consensus. If consensus is judged by the relevant body not possible: (a) for decisions on procedural issues, these shall be decided according to the General Regulations of the WMO; (b) for approval, adoption and acceptance of reports, differing views shall be explained and, upon request, recorded. Differing views on matters of a scientific, technical or socio-economic nature shall, as appropriate in the context, be represented in the scientific, technical or socio-economic document concerned. Differences of views on matters of policy or procedure shall, as appropriate in the context, be recorded in the Report of the Session.
11. Conclusions drawn by IPCC Working Groups and any Task Forces are not official IPCC views until they have been accepted by the Panel in a plenary meeting.
12. Invitations to participate in the sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups, Task Forces and IPCC workshops should be extended at least six weeks in advance of the opening of the session.
13. Major reports, including Assessment Reports, Special Reports and Methodology Reports, basic documentation and other available reports for consideration at the sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups shall normally be made available by the IPCC Secretariat at least four weeks in advance of the session and, to the extent possible, in all official UN languages.
14. Interpretation into all official UN languages shall be provided for all sessions of the IPCC meeting in plenary, of its Bureau and its Working Groups. Should members of the IPCC Bureau [or government representatives] participate in a session of the Bureau via video conferencing or other electronic means the interaction with these members of the Bureau [and government representatives] may be in English only. Such arrangements will be subject to agreement by the Bureau and availability of technical facilities.
15. The scheduling of the sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups and Task Forces shall be coordinated, to the extent possible, with other related international meetings.
16. These Principles shall be reviewed at least every five years and amended as appropriate.
17. Procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, approval, adoption and publication of IPCC reports are given in Appendix A.
18. Financial procedures for the IPCC are given in Appendix B.
19. Procedures for the Election of the IPCC Bureau and Any Task Force Bureau are given in Appendix C.