

ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

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COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AND OUTREACH

Evaluation of communications strategy and its implementation plan and consideration of evaluation metrics for assessing the effectiveness of IPCC communication

(Submitted by the IPCC Executive Committee)

IPCC Secretariat

c/o WMO • 7bis, Avenue de la Paix • C.P. 2300 • 1211 Geneva 2 • Switzerland
telephone : +41 (0) 22 730 8208 / 54 / 84 • fax : +41 (0) 22 730 8025 / 13 • email : IPCC-Sec@wmo.int • www.ipcc.ch



COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AND OUTREACH

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1. Evaluation of Communications Strategy

At its 35th Session in June 2012, the Panel adopted the *IPCC Communications Strategy*¹ and requested the IPCC Executive Committee to present an evaluation report on the Strategy and its implementation to the Panel at its 37th Session.

The Communications Strategy was based on the Guidance² received from the Panel at its 33rd Session (Abu Dhabi, 10-13 May 2011). In general it emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders. It includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of the IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately.

As requested by the Panel at its 35th Session (Geneva, 6-9 June 2012), the IPCC Executive Committee elaborated an Implementation Plan for the Communications Strategy and reported on its completion to the Bureau and Focal Points.

The Implementation Plan includes a set of procedures, including the role, tasks and responsibilities of the involved individuals, to allow the IPCC to make effective rapid responses to urgent enquiries. These procedures include a contingency plan for managing rapidly escalating communications needs.

No situations requiring these procedures to be invoked formally have arisen since the Implementation Plan was finalized. However, they have been used to produce timely responses on several occasions to the publication of drafts of the Fifth Assessment Report, or articles based on them, with the result that the IPCC's position was widely reported in subsequent coverage. (See IPCC-XXXVII/Doc.14, agenda item 7.2 for details.)

Several action items arose from the Implementation Plan, most of which have been carried out. Work continues on the following: guidance to authors on speaking to the media; joint outreach activity calendar; specific email address for alerts of potential rapid response situations; updated pages on website translated into other United Nations (UN) languages.

A sub-group of the IPCC Executive Committee, the Communications Action Team, has met regularly to review communications activities.

Within the framework provided by the Communications Strategy, the IPCC Executive Committee has also agreed policies on social media and on embargoes.

2. Evaluation of IPCC communications

Paragraph 13 of the *IPCC Communications Strategy* states: "The Secretariat will evaluate IPCC communications and report to the Panel, including the type and extent of outreach and media coverage. Evaluation reports should also be made to the Bureau and Executive Committee at regular intervals. The Senior Communications Manager will investigate the use of metrics to support evaluation."

¹ http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session35/IAC_CommunicationStrategy.pdf

² http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session33/ipcc_p33_decisions_taken_comm_strategy.pdf

Evaluation metrics

The Secretariat provides monthly reports to the IPCC Bureau and Executive Committee on communications activity and media coverage of the IPCC. Besides detailing the IPCC's media activities and the main articles about the IPCC, these reports draw on data from a media monitoring company, Meltwater Group, to provide basic evaluation by counting the number of articles about the IPCC on online media and blogs, and rating them as positive, negative and neutral, depending on certain words appearing in the articles. Please see Annex 1 for an analysis on this basis of 19,000 media articles and blog posts about the IPCC appearing in the first half of 2013.

This indicates that 79% of mentions were neutral, 13% negative and 8% positive. It is to be expected that the vast majority of mentions will be neutral as the IPCC is not an advocacy organization.

The analysis is currently done in house. A more detailed evaluation would be possible but would have budgetary implications. Such rating is necessarily subjective and the more sophisticated it is, the more labour-intensive it will be. Checks with other international organizations indicate that there is no satisfactory automated system for evaluating coverage and no obvious metrics that can be used. At the suggestion of the Executive Committee, we will look at the possibility of filtering this material to look at the coverage of the more influential media rather than all media.

Evaluation of non-media impacts

In 2012 the Government of Norway and other donors funded a project to communicate the *Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* (SREX) through seven regional events between April and August (Havana, Beijing, Delhi, Bangkok, Addis Ababa, Dakar and Sao Paulo). Total funding was just under \$700,000. An analysis by the Government of Norway showed that the series had attracted 1,168 participants from a variety of stakeholders from about 65 developing countries, and produced significant media coverage at each event. This 1,168 comprised 1,002 from the country where the event took place and 166 from other countries in the region. Attendance at each event ranged from 90 to 330.

Climate & Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), one of the partners in the SREX event series, also noted the strong interest in the events (in some cases people had to be turned away) from government departments, research institutes, business and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). By June 2012 the three relevant CDKN websites had attracted over 1,000-1,200 unique visitors each.

This indicates that such outreach activity can deliver the findings of IPCC reports to large numbers of our target audience.

(Details of the SREX project are at: <http://ipcc-wg2.gov/SREX/press-events/>)

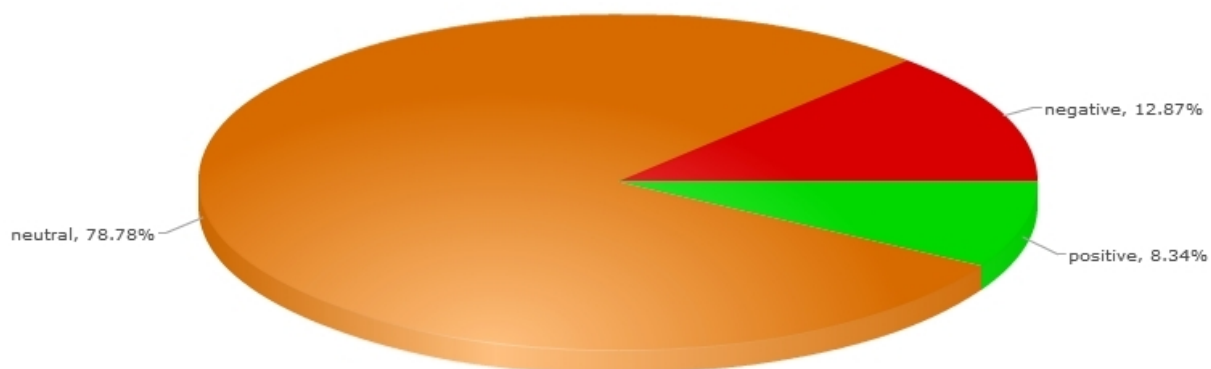
3. Communications activities

For details of communications activities since the 35th Session of the Panel, please see document IPCC-XXXVII/Doc. 14.

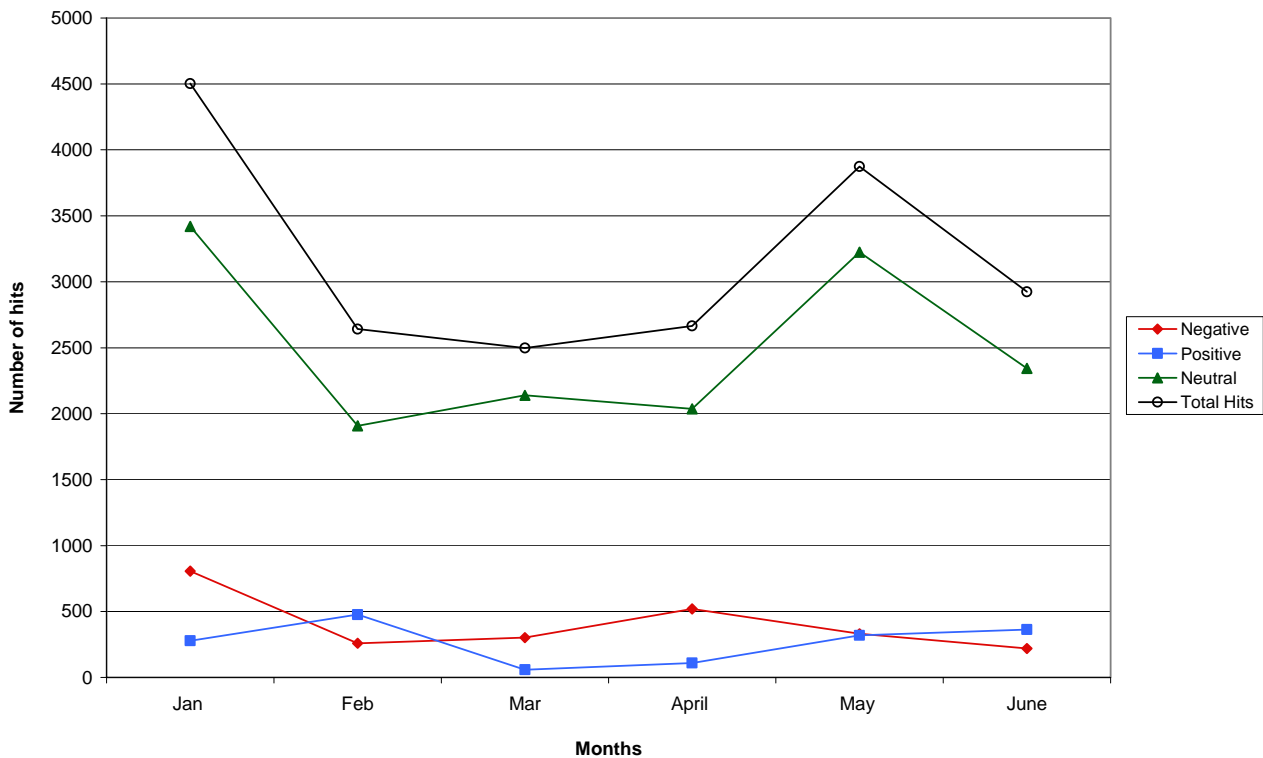
**EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND
CONSIDERATION OF EVALUATION METRICS FOR ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
IPCC COMMUNICATION**

EVALUATION OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF IPCC

IPCC - Title_Jan-June 13



IPCC Title January 2013 - June 2013



Total number of hits: January – 4,503; February – 2,642; March – 2,498; April – 2,666, May – 3,873; and June – 2,925

Methodology

All articles that were found on the worldwide web (including blogs) that had a mention of 'IPCC', 'Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change', and all the elected members of the Executive Committee were rated. The system also picked up other language variations of these terms. Hits that were not in English were translated using Google Translate before being rated.

A system called Meltwater collects all the hits under the heading 'IPCC-title' and the Secretariat manually rated these as positive, negative, neutral, or no value.

Positive: all articles or items that had positive words in describing IPCC whose overall story was not a criticism of the IPCC and its processes. These include 'credible' 'Nobel prize winner' 'best source of climate science' etc

Negative: all articles or items that had negative words or phrases to describe or in reference to IPCC. These include 'alarmist', 'discredited', etc

Neutral: this includes all articles with references to IPCC reports, work and authors and any article with factual information about the IPCC.