

**FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE IPCC**  
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**SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT (AR6) PRODUCTS**

**Special Reports**

(Submitted by the Acting Secretary of the IPCC)

## SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT (AR6) PRODUCTS

### Special Reports

Section 3 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work on Procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, adoption, approval and publication of IPCC reports indicates that among the main classes of IPCC material are IPCC Reports (which include Assessment, Synthesis and Special Reports and their Summaries for Policymakers and Methodology Reports). Furthermore Section 2 defines “Special Report” as an assessment of a specific issue that generally follows the same structure as a volume of an Assessment Report. Finally Section 4 of Appendix A contains provisions for the preparation of Special Reports (SRs).

Paragraph 1 of Decision IPCC/XLI-4 on the Future Work of IPCC says that with regard to IPCC product types and their timing, the Panel decided that “it will continue to prepare every 5-7 years comprehensive Assessment Reports (AR), including regional aspects, together with the three-stage review process, supplemented by Special Reports. In determining its future reports and their timing the IPCC will take into account the work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)”.

Paragraph 2 of Decision IPCC/XLI-4 on the Future Work of IPCC provides that “The identification of Special Reports, including those with focus on regional information and priorities, should be made as early as possible and in the context of all deliverables of the cycle. Should new requests be received, in particular from the UNFCCC, they will be dealt with in consistence with the “Decision Framework for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers, last amended at the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Panel (Geneva, Switzerland, 31 Aug. - 4 Sept. 2008)”.

In Decision IPCC/XLI-6 on Workshops and Special Reports, second paragraph, the Panel requested the IPCC Secretariat to invite Member States to submit views on potential themes for Special Reports during AR6 cycle and input from the Working Group Co-chairs, and agreed to further discuss the issue at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Panel.

In a letter of 6 July 2015 to the IPCC National Focal Points and Ministries of Foreign Affairs (if no focal point has been designated) as well as to the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and IPCC Observer Organizations, the Deputy Secretary of the IPCC invited them to submit proposals for Special Reports to be prepared and concluded during the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) cycle.

At the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Panel (Dubrovnik, Croatia, 5-8 October 2015) the Acting Chair of the IPCC transmitted to the Panel three information documents containing all the proposals received by the Secretariat so far. The Panel agreed that there was not enough time to allow for an initial discussion on the subject and that the new IPCC Bureau should consider this issue during its 50<sup>th</sup> Session on 9 October 2015. Some delegations requested that the new IPCC Bureau should consider the various themes that seemed to be emerging from the submissions received so far concerning the Special Reports that could be submitted to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the IPCC in order to help move the process forward.

At its 50<sup>th</sup> Session (Dubrovnik, Croatia, 9 October 2015) the IPCC Bureau considered the topic of Special Reports and recognized that this matter was to be discussed and decided upon at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Panel. However, to assist the Panel in reaching an informed decision, it was agreed that:

“The Secretariat would prepare a document containing a synthesis of the proposals received for SRs clustering them by themes for submission to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Panel. The Co-chairs of each Working Group (WG), having consulted with their Vice-chairs and with the Co-chairs and Vice-chairs of the other WGs, will draft a commentary on the proposals for SRs taking into account the relevant guidance on scientific matters specified under the Decision Framework for Special Reports agreed at the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Panel (Geneva, Switzerland, 31 Aug. - 4 Sept. 2008) and later related decisions. These commentaries will be submitted for consideration by the IPCC Bureau at its next session in 2016. The commentaries will not prioritize any individual proposal”.

In following up to this mandate the Co-chairs of Working Groups I, II and III produced a commentary on each individual proposal. The Co-chairs also produced a commentary of proposals clustered by themes.

In his letter of 19 January 2016, the Acting Chair of the IPCC invited a selected number of most relevant international organizations to provide information on the organization of possible workshops and reports or other products that each organization may intend to produce in relation to any of the proposals for Special Reports received by the Secretariat by that date.

The matter of Special Reports was considered at the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Bureau. The Bureau commended the coordination by the Working Group Co-chairs in the preparation of the clusters and commentaries. There was broad convergence in supporting clusters A (land use, land degradation and agriculture), B (oceans and cryosphere), F (emissions pathways, including the 1.5°C proposal) and I (cities) as priority themes. The Chair of the IPCC concluded that the documentation to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Panel should include:

- A recommendation to accept the invitation from the COP21 to prepare a Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways and that the scope of such Special Report would be addressed during the scoping process. Accepting this proposal could, depending on the scoping of the report, cover most elements of the other cluster F proposals.
- A recommendation on the range of Special Reports that the Bureau gave support under 9 clusters.
- A roadmap to integrate proposals in AR6 scoping, what could be handled by Working Groups` contributions and what could be handled within the Special Report on 1.5°C.
- An assessment of options for the treatment of regional aspects in AR6 (see IPCC-XLIII/INF. 19).

In the light of all the above the Panel is invited to consider:

- Accepting the invitation by the UNFCCC to prepare a Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways. The scope and other considerations would be decided during the scoping process;
- Agreeing on one or more additional themes for an Special Report among clusters A (land use, land degradation and agriculture), B (oceans and cryosphere) , F (emissions pathways, including the 1.5°C proposal) and I (cities);
- Agreeing that all other submitted themes for Special Reports should be taken into consideration during the scoping exercise of the AR6 across the three Working Groups;
- Options for the enhanced treatment of regional aspects in AR6.

Document IPCC/XLIII/INF.7 includes a compilation of the proposed themes for Special reports during the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) cycle.

Document IPCC/XLIII/INF.8 includes a Commentary from the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III on each of the proposals for Special Reports contained in document IPCC-XLIII/INF.7.

Document IPCC/XLIII/INF.9 includes the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III commentary on Clusters of proposals for Special Reports contained in document IPCC-XLIII/INF.7.

Document IPCC/XLIII/INF.19 includes an assessment of options for treating regional aspects, a roadmap to integrate proposals for special reports in AR6 scoping, what could be handled by Working Groups` contributions and what could be handled within the Special Report on 1,5<sup>0</sup>C.