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ENGLISH ONLY

OTHER BUSINESS

Request for Panel Approval of Two Changes to the AR4 Synthesis Report

(Submitted by the Co-Chairs of the IPCC Working Group II)

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT

This document is submitted following consideration of the Executive Committee at its Ninth meeting on 7 June 2012, to remove the request for two changes in the AR4 Synthesis Report from document IPCC-XXXV/Doc.15, and revise the text in a separate document in accordance with the Executive Committee decision.

OTHER BUSINESS

Request for Panel Approval of Two Changes to the AR4 Synthesis Report

Based on the IPCC Protocol for Addressing Possible Errors in IPCC Assessment Reports (approved at IPCC-XXXIII held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), substantive changes to past Synthesis Reports must be submitted to the Panel for approval, prior to posting; the Panel may delegate the approval step to the Executive Committee.

IPCC received a request for a change to two passages of the AR4 Synthesis Report dealing with projected impacts on yields of North African rainfed agriculture. The request was submitted by Drs. Pachauri, Parry, Canziani, van Ypersele, Barros, and Field.

Because the change was requested by the individuals responsible for the decision on action (the IPCC Chairman and the Co-chairs of the relevant working group), the request should move to Section 3, Step 5A of the Error Protocol.

The text in question is in the Synthesis Report (Table SPM.2. on page 11 and 3.3.2 on page 50). Both passages read: "By 2020, in some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50%." The problem with this passage is that it drops all mention of a role for climate variability, creating the impression that IPCC is projecting that climate change alone could cause agricultural yields to drop by 50% by 2020. In the background reference and in the WGII report, it is clear that this projected impact reflects the combined effects of climate change and variability.

Based on extensive discussions involving the WGII Co-chairs from the AR4, these statements provide such an incomplete message that most readers will interpret them incorrectly. This problem does not affect the text in the WGII report or the WGII SPM, where the role of climate variability is prominent.

Based on section three of the error correction protocol, the IPCC Chairman and the WGII Co-chairs from the AR4 and the AR5 propose a straightforward correction to the two statements in the Synthesis Report.

The text of the correction is as follows.

- 1) AR4 SYR SPM, page 11, Table SPM.2., line 3: After 50%, insert ", as a consequence of climate variability and change"
- 2) AR4 SYR, p 50, column 1, line 20: After 50%, insert ", as a consequence of climate variability and change"

In both places, the changed statements will now read, "By 2020, in some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50%, ", as a consequence of climate variability and change."

The inserted wording matches, as closely as possible, the wording in the WGII SPM.

Acting on behalf of the IPCC Chairman, as well as the Co-chairs of WGII from the AR4, the Co-chairs of WGII request panel approval of these two changes to the AR4 Synthesis Report.