

Expert Review of the Working Group III contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

This explanatory note outlines the background and process for the expert review of the Working Group III contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6 WGIII). The expert review is an integral part of the preparation of IPCC reports and Expert Reviewers will be acknowledged in the final report, due for completion September 2021.

Background

As outlined in the Principles Governing IPCC Work, the expert review process must be objective, open and transparent, with wide participation involving as many independent experts as possible¹. The revised wording of the Procedures approved at the 33rd Session of the IPCC in Abu Dhabi, 10 -13 May 2011, stressed the need to seek a wide participation in the process². The purpose of the expert review is to ensure that the report is comprehensive, objective and balanced.

The First Order Draft (FOD) of the AR6 WGIII will be available for expert review for an eight-week period from 13 January to 8 March 2020. The Second Order Draft (SOD) will be reviewed from 19 October to 13 December 2020 by experts and government representatives.

Review Process

The IPCC Procedures require that the review be carried out by experts. This is not a public review and prospective Expert Reviewers are requested to provide information on their relevant scientific and technical expertise when they register.

The IPCC Procedures state that *the review shall be undertaken by experts nominated by governments and participating organizations. In addition, the Working Group Bureaux shall seek the participation of the range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views, expertise, and geographical representation.*

The IPCC Secretariat will notify member governments, through their Focal Points, of the date from which experts can register and the start of the review period, inviting them to solicit the participation of experts in their country. All those previously nominated for a role in the AR6 WGIII, but not selected, will be invited to participate. All experts who submit comments on the FOD will be invited to review the SOD and to submit further comments.

The process includes an online registration system for Expert Reviewers that requests: contact details, a description of expertise related to the report, a list of up to five most relevant publications, and highest academic degree. A personal and non-transferable user name and password is generated for each Expert Reviewer upon successful completion of the registration process.

¹ See Section 4.2.4.1 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work: <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/ipcc-principles-appendix-a-final.pdf>

² See Section 5 of Decisions Taken with Respect to the Review of IPCC Processes and Procedures: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/ipcc_p33_decisions_taken_procedures-1.pdf

To access the draft, Expert Reviewers must agree to the terms of the review. All drafts and any supporting material such as unpublished literature are provided strictly for the purpose of the review and must not be cited, quoted, or distributed. Expert Reviewers are requested not to discuss the contents of the drafts in public fora such as blogs and other media. The final version of the AR6 WGIII will become public following its acceptance by the IPCC in September 2021.

Review comments should focus on substantive issues and must be provided in English, using the Excel comments spreadsheet within the review system. Constructive contributions are sought:

- Considering the structure, comprehensiveness and balance in Chapters, including appropriate use of peer-reviewed literature;
- Wherever possible, providing suggestions for revisions of specific text and provide supporting evidence from the literature as appropriate;
- Giving full citations for any suggested relevant papers;
- Considering ways of shortening the text without loss of relevant information;
- Considering ways of improving the presentation of material graphically or through tables;
- Avoiding suggesting revisions that would go beyond the Panel-approved outline for the Chapters of the report;³
- Recognising that authors are required to work within page length constraints and must present a concise assessment of current knowledge, not a scientific review of how that knowledge was derived.

In accordance with the IPCC Procedures, copies of any non-published or not publicly available literature that is cited in the draft report can be provided by the WG III TSU to Expert Reviewers upon request during the review period. An online form can be found within the review website for this purpose.

All Expert Review comments on the FOD and the SOD, together with the author responses to those comments, will be made available on the IPCC website after acceptance of the report by the Panel and its publication. Review comments will not be anonymous and Expert Reviewers will be identified as part of the public record of the AR6, with their name, affiliation, and country of residence being published in the Annex of Reviewers in the final AR6 WGIII report.

³ See the Panel-approved outline for the chapters of the AR6 WGIII: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/AR6_WGIII_outlines_P46.pdf