

REPORT OF THE 59TH SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU

Electronic session, 13-14 October 2020

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr Hoesung Lee, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), welcomed the members of the Bureau and government representatives.

In a brief opening statement he noted that this was the second session of the Bureau to be held virtually in the difficult situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The work of the IPCC was continuing nevertheless and he expressed the hope that this meeting would advance the IPCC work programme.

He thanked the Secretariat for the preparations and Bureau members and government representatives for the comments and support.

The Chair invited the Secretary of the IPCC, Mr Abdalah Mokssit, to present the meeting guidelines. The Secretary took the floor and explained the guidelines for presenting agenda items, handling comments, using the Zoom chat, and making interventions.

The Chair presented the provisional and annotated agendas (BUR-LIX/Doc. 1, BUR-LIX/Doc. 1, Add. 1) and invited the Secretary to report requests for items under Any Other Business received by the Secretariat.

The Secretary said that Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III, had requested an item to report on the work of the Informal Group on Publications, and Germany had requested information on the implementation of the Gender Policy and Implementation Plan, a discussion on a possible additional session of the Bureau before the 53rd Session of the IPCC and sought information on the participation of World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Germany requested information on the differences between the revised documents posted in the Bureau Portal and previous versions.

The Secretary said that the request for a discussion on the next Bureau session may be dealt with under other agenda item 5, but if there was still a need for information it could be accommodated under Any Other Business.

The Secretary reported that the current session was being attended by representatives of the WMO, UNEP and UNFCCC. Revisions to meeting documents carry a footnote explaining what the changes are in response to other requests by Jim Skea and Germany for additional agenda items, the Secretary said that they will be accommodated under Any Other Matters.

Mr Andreas Fischlin, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, asked whether the copy of Zoom chats to be put in the Bureau portal would filter out private chats. The Secretary said that the chat facility should only be used for technical problems and there would be no confidentiality.

Brazil requested to make a statement on the joint IPCC/IPBES workshop to be held in December.

Mr Andy Reisinger, Vice-Chair of Working Group III, requested time to be allocated for discussion of the Progress Reports to allow a discussion on the Synthesis Report. The Chair said that there would be live discussions on the Progress Reports.

The United Republic of Tanzania asked if there could be some flexibility in the use of the chat facility in case some participants encountered technical difficulties in accessing the conference. The Secretary said participants were encouraged not to use the chat except for signalling technical problems.

France asked to change the organization of work on the second day and start with consideration of the Progress Reports (agenda items 7.1 to 7.7) to be followed by consideration of agenda item 4 on Secretariat staffing, roles and requirements.

Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, asked for a discussion under Any Other Business of the technical challenges facing developing countries and how they could be assisted in the light of the virtual meetings being held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of Working Group II, asked for a discussion of synthesis activities going beyond the IPCC, such as the recent WMO initiative and one now under preparation by UNEP. He said the IPCC needed a systematic approach on how to integrate these activities into its work.

The Secretary summarized the five requests for Any Other Business:

- Report on the Informal Group on Publications
- Gender
- Scientific synthesis activities
- Participation of developing countries in virtual meetings
- Statement on the IPCC/IPBES workshop

The Chair said these would be dealt with under Any Other Business.

The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda with these additional items, and revised the Proposed Organization of Work with the change in order on the second day of the Progress Reports and agenda item on Secretariat staffing roles and requirements.

The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda as contained in document BUR-LIX/Doc.1. The Agenda is attached as Annex 1.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE BUREAU

The Chair invited the Secretary to introduce this agenda item.

The Secretary, recalled that the Draft Report of the 58th Session of the Bureau contained in document BUR-LIX/Doc. 4 was open for comments on the Bureau Portal in advance of the 59th Session of the Bureau (BUR-59).

The Bureau approved the draft report of the 58th Session of the IPCC Bureau (BUR-58) with an amendment by the United Republic of Tanzania to agenda item 8.5 Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments (TG-Data), clarifying that TG-Data Co-Chairs must report according to Article 6.1 of its Terms of Reference (TOR).

3. REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING IPCC WORK

The Chair highlighted the contents of BUR-LIX/Doc. 3 and invited the Secretariat to present the document. The Legal Officer of the IPCC, Jennifer Lew Schneider, presented the summary of the document and comments received before the meeting. She noted that comments were received from the Co-Chair of Working Group II; Germany; Switzerland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The summary noted that the Principles Governing IPCC Work contain information about the IPCC's role, organization, participation, and procedures. The Principles stipulate that they shall be reviewed

at least every five years and amended as appropriate. Accordingly, during the 52nd Session of the IPCC, in February 2020, in Paris, France, the IPCC initiated a discussion about the Review of Principles. Following an informal consultation and the presentation of its outcomes to the Plenary, the Panel requested the Secretariat to produce “a summary of the views of Member countries based on the discussions on the Review of the Principles during the 52nd Session of the IPCC and the informal consultation” and to request the Bureau to consider this summary prepared by the Secretariat and to make recommendations regarding the review of the Principles, as appropriate, for consideration of the Panel at the 53rd Session of the IPCC (IPCC-53).

Per the request of the Panel, the Bureau at its 58th Session, held virtually as an electronic session, considered the summary prepared by the Secretariat, and contained in document BUR-LVIII/Doc. 3. During the 58th Session of the Bureau, the views presented covered many similar elements for consideration to those of the 52nd Session of the IPCC, as well as proposing new elements. As noted in the document BUR-LIX/Doc. 3, many comments emphasized that more time was needed to work on a Review, and that this was a starting point for discussions. Document BUR-LIX/Doc. 3 set out a summary of the views and recommendations; additionally, the Secretariat sought to account for all the views expressed by grouping them broadly into four areas: first, there were different views on whether and how a Review is to take place; secondly, possible approaches to ensure a focus on conducting a Review; thirdly, new elements were recommended for Review; and fourthly, the possible ways of conducting the Review. Document BUR-LIX/Doc. 3 also included as an Annex the summary of views from BUR-LVIII/Doc. 3.

The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the summary, and opened the floor for comments.

Mr Eduardo Calvo Buendia, Co-Chair of the TFI; Mr Andreas Fischlin Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Greg Flato, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Mr Ramon Pichs-Madruga, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Andy Reisinger, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Sergey Semenov, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Kiyoto Tanabe, Co-Chair of the TFI; Ms Diana Ürge-Vorsatz, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, France, Germany, Norway, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America took the floor.

Participants thanked the Secretariat for the summary document and presentation and discussed the content of the document, with many questioning if it was sufficiently discussed, and raising the concern that the summary was a mixture of many elements including Principles and Procedures, as well as ToRs, but that it was neither comprehensive nor complete. The view was expressed that there was an imbalance towards a group or a view, with specific items not reflected thus creating a bias towards recent views, while some participants expressed that the elements were starting points for contact groups at the Plenary. It was noted that the summary presented some elements, such as the need for in-person meetings, but these were offset by concerns expressed for the need to start a review as soon as possible. Some pointed out that elements needed to be added or corrected, that there was clearly additional work to be done, and that there should be a distinction between scientific and technical elements as opposed to organizational elements, while others noted that all issues should be considered by the Panel as a package, with all views taken into account with a working arrangement at the Plenary to further deal with this.

It was remarked that there were elements related to the work of the Bureau and that the Bureau can comment on the existing principles and procedures in as much as they relate to the work of the assessment and elements the Bureau is mandated to work on, such as issues of publications, the functioning of Technical Support Units (TSUs), and data agreements with third parties. Some emphasized that a virtual setting might require postponement of certain elements for a better outcome, with some supporting an in-person discussion. A further observation was made that the

changes made in the last years may have given rise to inconsistencies that could be addressed through support of the Secretariat, without having to make changes but making some things more accessible and usable.

One Bureau Member raised the importance of looking at the quorum for approval. Some participants expressed concern that the TSUs have too much influence on reports, while others disagreed and highlighted the balanced work of the TSUs.

Many participants emphasized the importance of consensus in addressing whether the review should take place. It was noted that for any improvements to the Principles and Procedures, the principles of consensus should remain. Different views were expressed, with some indicating in-person discussions on the review of Principles and Procedures as essential, since the chance for all to heavily contribute was at the heart of IPCC credibility. Further concerns were expressed about opening a discussion so sensitive and integral to the functioning and credibility of the IPCC in a virtual setting, especially as it would be the first time a virtual plenary was being held.

Some discussions focused on the timing of the review, in particular in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that Bureau Members and Panel Members have different views, and a query was raised regarding the requirement of the review every five years under the IPCC Principles, with the Chair confirming that this was correct. Many participants noted the exceptional circumstances with the pandemic, and proposed that this should be taken into account on the timing for review.

Many argued that immediate and critical issues needed to be addressed for the completion of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) cycle, that these needed to be addressed and brought to the Panel. Some argued that the time was not right for a thorough review of the procedures but that certain elements had an impact on the completion of the AR6 cycle and had to be brought to the Panel now, and that it was important to identify what kind of decisions needed to be taken. The challenge of finishing the AR6 cycle was also noted with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, with some participants proposing that the IPCC should concentrate on completion of the cycle, postponing all secondary matters to a later date.

The importance of consensus was also expressed regarding on how the Bureau should deal with all the views. Some participants questioned whether the summary was ready for forwarding to the Panel, with some observing that as the summary did not contain all views and that there was no consensus, that it could not be dealt with at the next Plenary. Some participants sought clarification on recommendations to make to the Panel, as the summary did not set out a clear way forward. Others emphasized that it needed to be put to the Panel for consideration but that it should be clearly noted that the views were not exhaustive and do not constitute consensus across the Bureau, but were only the views of some Bureau Members, and that there was no agreement on a recommended way of how to proceed with the review. Other participants considered that the Bureau had concluded its work on the matter and the document was ready to go to the Panel which has the prerogative of dealing with rules and procedures. Some noted that organizational matters are tasks to be dealt with at the Plenary, that the Panel will decide its agenda and consider the issues when it decides to do so. It was advised that the Secretariat develop some options for discussion at the Plenary that would identify the most crucial points where decisions needed to be taken.

Finally, it was agreed that the Secretariat would revise the summary document before forwarding to the Panel for its consideration, including the compilation of all views and comments made during the Session, with these reflected as well in the draft report. Moreover, considering also the technical challenges and limitations, it was agreed that it would be possible to continue submitting comments on this topic after the Session of the Bureau, the Secretariat confirming that the Portal would be open for 24 hours to allow further comments on the document to be included in the revision, highlighting that any comments provided could be seen by all to give maximum transparency.

The Bureau took note of document BUR-LIX/Doc. 3.

4. SECRETARIAT STAFFING, ROLES AND REQUIREMENTS

The Chair invited the Secretary to present this item. The Secretary made a verbal report and slide presentation.

He recalled that this item had been mandated by a decision of the 52nd Session of the IPCC and the results of the discussion in the Bureau would be presented to the Panel at its next session where business will be discussed.

He showed examples of the work conducted by the Secretariat in 2019 in numerical terms, with only a dozen staff, and how this work interacts with the activities of the TSUs. Demands on the Secretariat have grown in the Sixth Assessment Report cycle, the most intensive in the IPCC's history, and for the first time the IPCC has mounted its own pavilion at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed further challenges.

The Secretary displayed the Functions of the Secretariat which provide the legal basis for its activities and the organizational structure of the Secretariat, a minimal structure in which all take on further tasks in addition to their job descriptions.

The presentation showed how these structures may be adjusted by hiring staff to fill agreed vacancies, aligning the job descriptions of staff, and developing a plan to address evolving demands. The Secretariat is one of the smallest in the U.N. system and is able to complete its work thanks to the support of the TSUs and parent organizations.

The Chair said there was no time for oral discussion. Instead the Secretariat would receive written comments from Bureau members and government representatives in the following 24 hours. It was agreed to provide this 24-hour window for comments on the other agenda item where this was required (agenda item 3: Review of the Principles Governing IPCC Work).

The Bureau took note of the oral report on Secretariat Staffing, Roles and Requirements. The Chair said the Secretariat will record comments from Bureau members and government representatives.

Following the close of the 59th Session of the Bureau, written comments were received from Ms Melinda Tignor, Head of TSU, Working Group II, Mr Roger Fradera, Head of Operations, Working Group II TSU, Germany, Mr Youba Sokona, IPCC Vice-Chair and Ms Thelma Krug, IPCC Vice-Chair.

The comments corrected the numbers of staff in the Working Group II and III TSUs to 12.7 and 10.1 Full-Time Equivalent respectively; requested the Secretariat to identify priorities for this cycle and for the next; suggested asking the Panel for guidance on core business versus supplementary activities; proposed preparing a mapping of tasks and staff available for the Panel's consideration as discussed in the Financial Task Team (FiTT); and called for a review of the staffing of the Secretariat to ensure it is able to handle requirements when operations return to normal, as the volume of IPCC activities have increased while staff numbers have fallen due to retirement; while some of these positions have been filled the current staff continue to work under an excessive burden, and further departures are in prospect; planned upgrades and recruitments should be implemented soon.

5. AR6 STRATEGIC PLANNING SCHEDULE

The Chair invited the Deputy Secretary of the IPCC, Ms Ermira Fida, to present this agenda item.

She said that comments had been received from France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Switzerland and Germany, from Co-Chairs of Working Groups I and III and from a Co-Chair of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Inventories.

The Deputy Secretary presented BUR-LIX/Doc. 5 (previously BUR-LIX/INF. 8, Rev.1, Corr.1), which provides an update to the schedule for the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) to inform the discussion in the Bureau and summarize urgent decisions taken by the Executive Committee (ExCom) since the 58th Session of the Bureau on 19-20 May 2020. She noted the tentative nature of any dates in the next year or so given uncertainty about how the pandemic will develop. The unprecedented impacts of the pandemic around the world has put the ExCom in a position of needing to address urgent issues that require prompt attention by the IPCC between Panel sessions, in line with its mandate.

Changes made between the 58th Session of the Bureau and the 59th Session of the Bureau consist on changes to some milestones for Working Group III and the Synthesis Report as presented in the document. All the changes made so far to the AR6 Working Group contributions in 2020 and the first quarter of 2021 have adjusted the entire schedule by 3-4 months. Further changes involving milestones and deadlines that are in 2021 or 2022 under the original schedule remain under discussion, which now focuses on the timing of milestones beyond the first quarter of 2021, the timing of the approval plenaries, the interaction of these dates among the different Working Groups, the implications for the rest of the Synthesis Report Core Writing Team (CWT) timeline and the extent to which it is now possible to plan for these events 12 months or more ahead given the current state of knowledge.

In fulfilling its mandate of supporting and organizing IPCC Panel sessions the Secretariat has explored several options for the upcoming Plenary session with a view to continuing the work programme, taking into account the operational limitations of virtual plenaries, feedback from some Focal Points, lessons learned from the virtual activities of the Working Groups and other organizations. Through a letter sent to Government Focal Points on 28 September 2020, the Secretariat proposed holding the 53rd Session of the IPCC in a hybrid format in the second week of December, devoted to essential items such as the budget. All other items due for consideration at the 53rd Session would be deferred to the next session. The Secretariat is assessing the feasibility of holding other plenary sessions, considering elements such as timing and the number and agenda items. The Secretariat has developed a draft note on plenary sessions including approval sessions, but this requires further work.

In light of the uncertainties from COVID19, the Secretariat has also identified modalities to engage with the Focal Points, including a newsletter, exchange forum and survey, and is facilitating contacts between the IPCC and UNFCCC presiding officers to coordinate for the timing of the IPCC inputs to UNFCCC process.

The Deputy Secretary then reported and responded to written comments received ahead of the Bureau session on this document.

France had asked (1) about the date envisaged for the end of the AR6 cycle, (2) the role of members of the Panel in the revision of the Strategic Planning Schedule, and (3) recalled on the importance of a rapid transition between the Sixth and Seventh Assessment Report (AR7) cycles so that the second Global Stocktake can benefit from topical input from the IPCC.

She said the Secretariat took note of the third point. The currently envisaged date for the approval of Working Group I (WGI) is July 2021, for Working Group III (WGIII) December 2021, and for Working Group II (WGII) March 2022, with the scoping meeting for the Methodology Report on Short-lived Climate Forcers in 2023. These dates are still tentative and subject to change. On the second point, the Panel should take all the decisions on the Strategic Planning Schedule in a COVID-free world, but in the current situation it was deemed necessary to use ExCom for urgent decisions, in consultation with the Bureau, which are then notified to Focal Points.

Ms Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair of Working Group I, commented that Working Group continues to undertake intense activities to prepare for the Final Government Distribution.

Mr Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III, had called for a greater number of agenda items to be considered at the 53rd Session with the view to learn from it. The Deputy Secretary said that the proposed hybrid format with just one agenda item was the best option to attract consensus. A further session of the Panel was under discussion, and even a session with only one agenda item would provide lessons.

A comment from Mr Kiyoto Tanabe, Co-Chair of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, had indicated an error in the date of a meeting of the Task Force Bureau in November, which has been corrected and a revised document was posted ahead of the meeting.

Switzerland suggested that the IPCC should continue to make use of online formats if in-person meetings are impossible, and that a Session of the Panel should be held as soon as possible to ensure legitimacy and the Secretariat took note of it.

Germany called for more transparency in the decision-making process. She welcomed the newsletter established by the Secretariat and looks forward to making further comments in the mechanisms made available. It was important to identify options for responding to the impact of COVID-19 and to increase the involvement of governments in decision-making on the schedule changes if they go beyond 3-4 months. She urged the Bureaus of WGII and WGIII to amend the review periods for the Second Order Draft that currently runs from December 2020 through March 2021 with an overlap of two weeks to allow for full engagement of the various ministries and agencies. The Strategic Planning Schedule in Annex 3 to the document shows a further one-month delay in the Working Group II approval plenary to March 2022, while the text says no changes have been made since the 58th Session of the Bureau.

Germany asked how the hybrid meeting would be conducted and which agenda items will be considered in writing and which ones in virtual mode and sought information on the host of WGI approval session. She said every effort should be made to avoid impacts on the AR7 cycle. She called for holding elections for the A7 Bureau as early as possible in 2022 to allow for kick off the next cycle as planned in 2022. She also suggested to revise the document from “INF” to “Doc” given that the Bureau will decide on it.

The Deputy Secretary said that no further changes had been agreed by the ExCom to the Strategic Planning Schedule referred to decisions on milestones up the first quarter of 2021; anything after that is tentative and may be changed. The conduct of hybrid Plenary session was set out in a letter dated 28 September to Focal Points: the Chair will open the meeting in writing, invite the Financial Task Team (FiTT) to meet, and based on the recommendations of the FiTT the Secretariat will prepare and submit a decision document in writing. The letter also sets out the nomination and registration process to participate in the meeting. Responding to other comments from Germany, she said the hybrid meeting will consider the budget and be conducted in both written and electronic formats. Other agenda items may be considered at a further Session of the Panel to be held in the first quarter of 2021. Singapore’s offer to host the Working Group I approval plenary stands but the Secretariat is not yet in a position to confirm it. The document was corrected to a “Doc” from an “INF” and reposted as such. The timing of elections for the AR7 Bureau is a matter for the Panel, and would depend on progress in completing the Working Group contributions to AR6.

Germany said the long statement on the portal had been her only opportunity to intervene. She welcomed the newsletter. She thanked the Secretariat and ExCom for thinking about solutions. She said she did not know of any other Focal Points who supported a single-item agenda for the 53rd Session of the IPCC. She did not think it was the correct approach, and noted that the timing of meetings impacts the process. IPCC scientists have transitioned successfully into virtual meetings, and it is to be hoped that the governments will too.

The United Kingdom asked whether its comments had been received.

The Deputy Secretary took note of the concerns raised by Germany. The hybrid format was based on a thorough analysis of the options which were discussed with ExCom and feedback from those governments (not all) that were consulted. A single government objecting to the inclusion of decisions on the agenda of a virtual session was enough to prevent consensus. But there was support for consideration of the budget. Other agenda items will not be lost but considered at another session if governments agree. She apologized for not listing the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. While they were similar to Germany's and the responses to Germany addressed them.

Ms Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner Co-Chair of Working Group II; Ms Diana Ürge-Vorsatz, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Ramón Pichs-Madruga, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Pius Yanda, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Eduardo Calvo Buendía, Co-Chair of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories; Mr Diriba Korecha Dadi, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Edvin Aldrian, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Carlos Méndez, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Roberto Sánchez-Rodríguez, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; France; Germany; Norway; Saudi Arabia; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United Republic of Tanzania, and the United States of America took the floor.

The Secretariat's efforts to improve communications with governments were welcomed, including the newsletter, and efforts to ensure participating through testing ahead of the Bureau session; emphasized the need for involvement of governments on the Strategic Planning Schedule for further changes to those approved so far by the ExCom; said that such consultation is a process in which views must be fed back to all governments so they understand the full range of considerations; highlighted the impact of the schedule on the process including the funding of TSUs and wellbeing of authors; welcomed plans for a further session of the Panel in the first quarter of 2021; said that social dynamics as well as technical considerations along with time zones and capacity building pose challenges in virtual meetings; and highlighted the need for a strategic approach to the schedule where the implications of all changes are considered, and there is interaction with the Panel.

Several urged the consideration of more than one agenda item at the 53rd Session of the IPCC, given that an in-person meeting was unlikely for at least six months and the need to continue to the work of the IPCC, for instance the inclusion of non-controversial items such as progress reports, consideration of the Strategic Planning Schedule where government input is needed, or inclusion of other essential items. Some of these items were relevant to the work of the FiTT affecting planning. It would be valuable to learn from experience in considering items in virtual sessions, and it was important not to overload approval sessions with deferred business items. Others supported a session to be held in the first quarter of 2021 and argued against reopening the decision to limit the 53rd Session to the budget noting the need to take into account the various technical and connectivity constraints faced by different countries and ensure inclusive participation of developing countries, which underpins transparency, inclusiveness and legitimacy. Working Groups have supported inclusivity in virtual lead author meetings by funding connectivity for some participants, and the travel budget could be redirected to such support. Participants from developing countries may face more competing demands on their time than those from developed countries. Facilitators can make a big difference to the inclusivity of virtual meetings. Planning of virtual meetings also needs to take into account the different time zones of participants. A further short delay would be acceptable if that made an in-person meeting possible.

Mr Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, noted that the challenges to holding a virtual meeting are not only technical: approval plenaries typically run for five days or more, with late-night or all-night sessions and many contact groups.

It was suggested reducing the review of the Final Government Distribution of Working Group I to seven from eight weeks to alleviate the burden on authors and that it was necessary to develop guidance for the approval plenary of Working Group I which is the next scheduled plenary session.

The need for careful coordination of schedule changes among Working Groups was highlighted, and the potential for further flexibility in the schedule was noted. Virtual meetings could be facilitated by the provision of virtual “rooms” for informal meetings and contract groups, as has been done in virtual lead author meetings. There was a question whether interpretation would be possible in a virtual meeting.

The Chair thanked Bureau members and Government Representatives for their valuable comments, which addressed three elements: the agenda for the 53rd Session of the IPCC, the feasibility of virtual meetings given the technology and socio-economic constraints, and advice on the Strategic Planning Schedule and decision-making around it.

The Secretary informed participants that the Secretariat has been considering for some months how to save the current cycle and avoid compromising progress. It is clear that an in-person meeting will not be possible for at least six months. The Secretariat has prepared a draft note which is still a work in progress. The ExCom discussed the 53rd Session of the IPCC. The Secretariat has been in contact with the World Health Organization (WHO), and looked at the experiences of the Working Groups, of the WMO and UNEP in organizing their governing body meetings, held discussions with the UNFCCC and consulted with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services on their experiences..

He noted the requests for additional items on the agenda of the 53rd Session of the IPCC, and said that some material from the Bureau such as the progress reports could be transmitted to the Panel. One option is to hold the 53rd Session in December with a single item – the budget – and then resume with another session 53rd (bis) Session in the first quarter of 2021 to deal with the other questions raised in the discussion.

He outlined a possible process for a virtual approval plenary, if it is not possible to hold an in-person meeting by the middle of 2021, subject to technical problems, considerations of inclusiveness and acceptance of the proposal by the Panel. This would be an iterative process between authors and governments in the form of informal or explanatory meetings to consider the draft Summary for Policymakers with a view to reduce the number of comments as much as possible. A pre-plenary held in writing would then consider how to address outstanding comments, creating virtual contact groups to reduce the number of comments in multiple iterations. A hybrid plenary would then take place with virtual contact groups. This would result in a paper from the Co-Chairs or Secretary outlining the comments.

The Deputy Secretary summarized the comments made, noting the wide support for involvement of governments in further revisions of the Strategic Planning Schedule, and that this would be needed for the next Session of the Panel. Challenges to virtual meetings are not only technology, but also around capacity-building and time zones. She noted the need for inclusivity and the benefits of learning by doing. There is a need for a process that gives governments the chance to reflect on what others have submitted. She noted the support for a session of the Panel in the first quarter of 2021, and confirmed that the Zoom platform would allow interpretation for a virtual meeting.

Germany, Norway and Saudi Arabia took the floor.

Questions were raised about the possibility of conveying Working Group progress reports to the Panel the status of the planning note being drafted on approval plenaries; the need for governments to agree any further changes to the agreed schedule; the value of the experience of dealing with additional agenda items at the 53rd Session of the IPCC in December 2020; the possibility of seeking comments from Focal Points on the Strategic Planning Schedule; and the possibility of expanding the agenda of the 53rd Session in December to include some strategic items as an alternative to holding a further 53rd (bis) Session in the first quarter of 2021.

Norway asked for its request for the agenda of the 53rd Session of the IPCC to contain more than one item to be recorded in the report of the Bureau Session.

The Secretary said that while Bureau documents are public, not all Focal Points attend the Bureau. Progress reports could be shared as background documents in the 53rd Session of the IPCC to facilitate discussion of the budget. It was important to allow sufficient time for the preparation of a Session of the Panel and its respective agenda items. The new tools created by the Secretariat – newsletter and exchange platform – would facilitate interaction with the Focal Points and preparation of the Session. It had not been possible to share the draft note with the Bureau as the agenda for the Bureau Session had already been established.

The Chair invited the Bureau to take note of the urgent actions implemented by the ExCom since the 58th Session of the IPCC Bureau regarding the AR6 work programme described in BUR-LVIII /Doc. 5; having considered and advised on the provisional timelines of the AR6 work and provided guidance to the Secretariat, as responsible for refining the strategic planning schedule, noting again that any changes remain tentative, depending on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and the possibility of consideration by the Panel when that is feasible.

Mr Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III, said the text should be changed to refer to the “necessity” rather than “possibility” of consideration by the Panel of AR6 work programme.

Mr Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, said the decision text should “take note” rather than “welcome”.

Germany asked for the fact that its comments on the Synthesis Report had not been discussed to be reflected in the report of the Session.

With these comments, the Bureau took note of the urgent actions implemented by the ExCom since the 58th Session of the IPCC Bureau regarding the AR6 work programme described in BUR-LIX/Doc. 5, having considered and advised on the provisional timelines of the AR6 work and provided guidance to the Secretariat, as responsible for refining the strategic planning schedule, noting again that any changes remain tentative, depending on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity of consideration by the Panel when that is feasible.

The Chair thanked the Bureau and adjourned the Session until the following day.

6. ADMISSION OF OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS

The Chair recalled that this agenda item was open for comments in advance of the Electronic Session and invited the Secretary to introduce the relevant document BUR-LIX/Doc. 2, Rev.1 and summarize the views received in the Bureau Portal.

The Secretary informed the Bureau that since the last Bureau Session, the 58th electronic Session (19-20 May 2020), two organizations had requested IPCC observer status and were included in document BUR-LIX/Doc. 2, Rev. 1: (1) the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and (2) The African Academy of Sciences (AAS). The first organization is already accredited as an observer organization with UNEP and the UNFCCC. Therefore, in accordance with the IPCC Observer Policy, attached in Annex 2 to the BUR-LIX/Doc. 2, Rev. 1, they do not have to submit additional documentation concerning their organization (Rule I.5). The second organization, the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) has submitted additional background documentation to the Secretariat in accordance with Rule II.1. The application of the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI), Hsinchu is still pending.

Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III; Ms Valerie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair of Working Group I and Switzerland submitted comments on the Bureau Portal regarding this agenda item. Support was expressed for the two requests. There was a clarification sought on when the applications would be presented to the Panel, given that the next

plenary would only be discussing the budget. Clarification was provided that the applications would be presented at the next available plenary.

The Chair concluded that the applications of the two organizations (1) the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and (2) The African Academy of Sciences (AAS) that applied for IPCC Observer Status would be presented for a decision for admission at the next available Session of the Panel.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS

7.1 Working Group I Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report

Ms Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair of Working Group I introduced document BUR-LIX/INF. 6. She highlighted that since the 52nd Session of the IPCC, they had been working remotely.

Ms Masson-Delmotte reported that the review period of the Working Group I AR6 Second Order Draft (SOD) was extended by six weeks, which proved successful primarily because about 60% additional comments were received from 60% more reviewers and 60% more countries compared to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) SOD.

The physical WGI Third Lead Author meeting (LAM3) was replaced by 4 weeks of virtual meetings between June and September 2020. There were plenary and break-out group sessions, guidance to authors, Chapter and Coordinating Lead Author meetings and virtual coffee breaks. These meetings focussed on revisions based on review comments, coordination across Working Groups. Revisions on the Summary of Policy Makers (SPM) and Technical Summary (TS) were ongoing. The contribution and support by Working Group I TSU members towards the success of the virtual meetings was gratefully acknowledged as well as Working Group I Vice-chairs for playing coordination roles across Working Groups. An online writeshop on the SPM and TS revisions would be organized.

The work of Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments (TG-Data) was recognized as very important to Working Group I in terms of transparency, and availability of data and code underlying key elements of the WGI AR6. During the final government review, Working Group I would like to conduct a user testing by IPCC Focal points in an endeavour to improve the accessibility of the Interactive Atlas and build the guidance material from user experience.

On communications, Ms Masson-Delmotte informed the Bureau about a new infographic related to the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5) on the IPCC website. Two new staff members who would work on communication and outreach activities were appointed. Work on climate outreach was ongoing, particularly in relation to authors' experiences in engaging diverse audiences in the regional context. These outreaches would potentially improve training provided to authors. Work on info-design to develop visuals for the AR6 SPM.

Pre-LAM surveys were conducted to assess the capacity for authors to contribute to the work. About 90% of the respondents indicated either neutral or good or excellent experience, more than 80% indicated that the adjusted timelines helps them, about 50% indicated that the situation was difficult, while about 30% indicated that the work was very difficult. Furthermore, more than half of the author team disclosed that they were tired and exhausted. Notwithstanding the relative lack of inclusivity in virtual meetings, which is to a large extent related to differences in time zones across the globe and the need for online meeting training and facilitators, about 60% of the respondents indicated that the AR6 could be concluded without holding a physical LAM.

Ms Masson-Delmotte emphasized the importance of the endorsement of their revised timelines by all relevant stakeholders, particularly the timing of the final government review period, which was proposed to be reduced from eight to seven weeks, and the approval Session. Extending the schedule beyond the revised timelines would not be feasible for a number of reasons. She noted with concern the suggested dates of the approval session of the WGI AR6, which were determined without consulting WGI Bureau members.

The Bureau was invited to request the IPCC Secretariat to work with the ExCom to develop proposals for the Panel's consideration on how to operate the approval of the WGI AR6 SPM either virtually or in a hybrid mode or physically, and the necessary conditions for the feasibility of each proposal.

Ms Masson-Delmonte concluded by suggesting informal Question and Answers (Q&A) sessions at the start of the government review period in order to explain key concepts and figures. Furthermore, to foster a broad participation in the final government review process, she suggested a IPCC Focal Point event about 4 – 6 weeks prior to the final government review period, to enable the sharing of information on best practices.

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the session were submitted by Andy Reisinger, Vice-chair of Working Group III; Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; Germany; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania. Amongst the comments, there was a query related to the review comments by IPCC Bureau members.

In response, Ms Masson-Delmonte mentioned that scientific supervision of the IPCC Assessment work is within the mandate of the IPCC Bureau and they ensure transparency. Bureau members submit review comments in a written form to the individual chapter teams. As an exception, Bureau members who are Review Editors in a given chapter do not comment on their chapters to avoid a conflict of interests.

During the online 59th Session of the Bureau, France took the floor. The suggestion to reduce the final government review period to 7 weeks was supported. The IPCC Secretariat was encouraged to work with the Working Group I to explore possibilities of holding a virtual Approval Session and to submit proposals to governments in a consultative manner.

The Chair of IPCC commended Working Group Bureau members, authors and TSU for their remarkable work.

The Bureau took note of the progress report.

7.2 Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report

Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II (WGII) introduced the document BUR-LIX/INF. 5. She informed the Bureau that they undertook a series of virtual pre-SOD activities from 17 – 28 August 2020, which gave authors opportunities to reconnect with each other and discuss some topics which require cross-chapter coordination. More than 250 people from over 50 countries participated in the Working Group II virtual activities. There was a concern regarding the limitation of some global south authors to access virtual meetings, some which are aimed at discussing vital issues such as the global to regional Atlas, the SPM and TS. Another virtual meeting was held to discuss high-level Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). To foster cross-WG collaboration, some Working Group I and III experts participated in the Working Group II virtual meetings. An accredited psychologist gave a presentation on mental health and well-being in the midst of the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic.

Ms Roberts reported that their next deliverable was the SOD which would be submitted to the TSU by 6 November 2020 ahead of the expert and government review period from 4 December 2020 – 29 January 2021. The drafts would also include the SPM, TS and two annexes (i.e. the Atlas and the Glossary).

Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of Working Group II added that the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact negatively on the Working Group II community, particularly their authors, Bureaux and TSU. Notwithstanding, the four-months extension was warmly welcome by the authors who accepted to continue playing their respective roles.

The Working Group II TSU was working closely with their WGI, WGIII, TFI and SYR counterparts, and the IPCC Secretariat in the revision of the Strategic Planning Schedule. Working Group II consulted their authors, Review Editors, Bureaux and IPCC Executive Committee on this matter. Proposed alternative timelines for the cut-off date of accepted papers, the final government distribution and review of the SPM, the delivery of the final draft of the WGII AR6 and the IPCC approval/adoption Session were presented.

Mr Pörtner reported that the proposed IPCC/IPBES Co-sponsored Workshop on Climate Change and Biodiversity, which was to be held on 12 – 14 May 2020 in London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would be held virtually on 14 – 17 December 2020. The outcome of the co-sponsored workshop was expected to inform the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UNFCCC COP 26. An outreach event would be organized in London around mid-2021.

Mr Pörtner concluded by thanking the Working Group II TSU for their enormous work under very difficult Covid-19 related conditions and the WGII Vice-chairs for their support and advice.

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the session were submitted by Andy Reisinger, Vice-chair of Working Group III; Germany; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and the United Republic of Tanzania. Clarity was sought on the revised WGII timelines.

In response, under the prevailing Covid-19 situation, Working Group II suggested that the timing and structure of the LAMs would be at the discretion of the respective Working Group Bureaux, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Brazil; Germany; Norway and the United Republic of Tanzania took the floor.

Concerns were raised about the perceived lack of provision for participation government representatives in the co-sponsored workshop and that no opportunity would be provided to governments to review the proceedings of the workshop before they finally get published. On the other hand, one government representative noted that the preparations of the co-sponsored workshop were fully consistent with IPCC procedures. Requests were made to invite government representatives to participate in the co-sponsored workshop and that the proceedings be submitted for government review if they would be published as an IPCC and IPBES document. It was noted that the proceedings of the IPCC/IPBES Co-sponsored Workshop should not be treated like an approved IPCC document. It was also mentioned a disclaimer that the proceedings were not approved by the IPCC would not be enough, particularly if the contents are attributed to the IPCC by the media, IPBES CBD and the UNFCCC COP.

In response, Mr Pörtner welcomed the suggestions and requests made, which would be submitted to the workshop Scientific Steering Committee for their consideration. He acknowledged the concern that the workshop proceedings should not be considered as an official IPCC and IPBES report. The proceedings would be submitted for internal and external review, similar to the review process of the Biodiversity and Pandemics workshop report.

The Bureau took note of the progress report.

7.3 Working Group III Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report

Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III (WGIII) presented the document BUR-LIX/INF. 1 through a recorded video. He mentioned the evaluation report of the Working Group III virtual LAM3 which was held in April 2020. The thorough evaluation report was sent to IPCC Focal Points while its summary was submitted as an article for the World Economic Forum.

Working Group III authors continued to work on the chapters of their AR6. The WGIII TSU and their Bureaux were focussing on the WGIII SPM, TS, FAQs and figures. Some Graphic Consultants were appointed to help with the drawing of certain figures.

Mr Skea mentioned that there was a huge amount of work across the three IPCC Working Groups. They had in-depth consultations with Working Group I on hand-over issues, particularly scenarios, which are led by Messrs Andy Reisinger and Jan Fuglestedt, Vice-Chairs of Working Group III and Working Group I, respectively. Regarding the intended cross-Working Group AR6 Glossary, some discussions about key terms were ongoing with some relevance for some aspects of the structured expert dialogues with UNFCCC over the second periodic review.

Owing to the prevalence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the WGIII SOD could regrettably not be submitted around mid-October 2020 because that would compromise the scientific quality of the draft report and the degree of inclusiveness. The submission of the SOD was deferred to mid-January 2021. Consequently, the approval Session of the Working Group III AR6 would not take place before the UNFCCC COP26, tentatively scheduled for November 2021. There were ongoing discussions with the government of Italy for them to possibly host a physical LAM4 sometime in April 2021.

Working Group III continued to contribute to the work of the TG-Data. As part of their stakeholder engagement, there were some consultations with Environmental NGOs and Business during the First Order Draft (FOD) review. Something similar would be done during the review of the SOD with a possible extension to governments, probably in the form of consultation sessions analogous to the set of lunch-time informal presentations commonly made during approval sessions of IPCC reports.

Mr Skea concluded his video presentation by mentioning the enormous involvement of Working Group III Co-Chairs, their Bureaux members and authors in teleconferences, presenting IPCC products and findings which have already been approved, as part of communications and outreach activities.

Mr Priyadarshi Shukla, Co-Chair of Working Group III added that their TSUs are operating from two countries, one based in London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the other in Ahmedabad, India. This experimental arrangement has proved to be considerably successful.

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the session were submitted by Mr Andy Reisinger, Vice-chair of Working Group III; Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; Germany; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania. One question related to the implementation of the FAIR¹ data principles in the Working Group III context.

In response, Mr Skea mentioned that Working Group III TSU staff were working closely with authors to get the FAIR data principles implemented. Data and code underlying certain WGIII AR6 figures, Technical Summary and Summary for Policy Makers would be curated at one of the Data Distribution Centres, the Centre for Environmental Data Analysis (CEDA) based in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and final source data would be made available to the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) based in the United States of America.

Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania took the floor.

The unprecedented cross-WG collaboration, the thorough evaluation of the virtual LAMs, and the cooperation of the dual TSUs were applauded. It was suggested that a comprehensive report on the feasibility of operating multi-location TSUs for the same Working Group could be submitted to the Panel to inform the preparation of the next assessment cycle. The proposal to have informal consultation sessions for IPCC Focal Points prior to the approval Session of the report was supported.

Mr Jim Skea mentioned that the consultation sessions for IPCC Focal Points would need to be painstakingly designed. One plausible option would be to have two sessions in a day, an earlier

¹ findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable

session targeting Eastern Hemisphere participants and a later session for the Western Hemisphere. There would be need for caution to prevent unauthorized access to the sessions.

The Bureau took note of the progress report.

7.4 Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report

The Chair presented the progress report contained in the document BUR-LIX/INF. 2. He mentioned the replacement of four Review Editors after the initial approved Synthesis Report (SYR) Core Writing Team (CWT). He also introduced Ms Noemie Leprince-Ringuet who was appointed as the Head of the SYR TSU and selected from among four final candidates who were interviewed for the position. The interview panel comprised the Chair of the IPCC and Deputy Ministers representing the two Korean Ministries that are overseeing the funding for the SYR TSU and the climate agenda. Ms Leprince-Ringuet started working on 1st July 2020.

The SYR preliminary virtual activities whose objective was to lay a foundation for a productive first CWT meeting (CWT-), tentatively scheduled for the last week of January 2021, included a series of informal virtual dialogues with the CWT in September 2020. The main aim of the informal dialogues was for the IPCC Chair to welcome the CWT members and get to understand their perspective of the AR6 SYR as framed in the outline which was approved at the 52nd Session of the IPCC. Around early October 2020, after the submission of the document BUR-LIX/INF. 2, a second round of informal virtual meetings was organized by the SYR TSU. The second informal dialogues involved a group of high-level decision-makers in various sectors who interacted with the CWT members in an endeavour to foster mutual learning on the realities, challenges as well as enabling conditions and opportunities foreseen by the stakeholders towards a net-zero transition. The panel of speakers was kept small in order to foster a frank exchange between them and the CWT members while ensuring an adequate representation of constituencies, relevant sectors and geographies. The SYR TSU was organizing more informal dialogues in order to further build a foundation and a team spirit for the SYR, to explore options for maximizing the policy relevance of the SYR and to establish a common understanding by the CWT of the approved outline in advance of CWT-1. The informal dialogues would be scheduled taking into consideration the authors' other commitments and heavy schedules.

The Chair also reported that the SYR TSU engage in IPCC Working Groups' activities to familiarize itself with their AR6 contents. The SYR TSU was invited to observe the Working Group I pre-LAM activities which were held in July 2020 and Working Group II pre-SOD virtual activities held in August 2020. The SYR TSU was working on a uniform mechanism for the CWT to interact with the Working Groups after the CWT-1.

Following the changes in Working Groups' AR6 timelines in response to the Covid-19 outbreak, the SYR TSU took into consideration the approved SYR production schedule and the revised Working Groups' timelines and consulted their Working Group and TFI counterparts to prepare a proposal for the SYR revised schedule. The proposal, which included a postponement of the CWT-1 to the week of 25 – 31 January 2021, was submitted for the consideration of the IPCC Executive Committee at its 83rd meeting. The proposal was approved by the IPCC Executive Committee at its 84th meeting. Further requisite changes in the SYR approved timeline beyond CWT-1 were still to be determined. According to the Strategic Planning Schedule presented in document BUR-LIX/INF. 8, the tentative approval date for the AR6 SYR was around the fourth quarter in 2022.

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the Session were submitted by Mr Andy Reisinger, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Ms Carolina Vera, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Ms Valerie Masson-Delmonte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; Germany; Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Most comments welcomed the appointment of Ms Noemie Leprince-Ringuet as the Head of the SYR TSU. The offer by the government of Switzerland to host the SYR Approval Plenary was mentioned. There were queries about the informal dialogues and their outcomes, and the involvement of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) in the informal sessions. Questions about the role of the SSC in

the SYR preparation and in dealing with cross-cutting issues, timelines for their meetings were raised and whether the composition of the CWT includes SSC members.

The Chair thanked the Government of Switzerland for offering to host and provide funding for the approval Session of the AR6 SYR to be held in Geneva, Switzerland. In response to the queries received through the Bureau portal, he informed the Bureau that high-level proceedings of the informal dialogues would be shared with the SYR SSC in its first meeting. The SSC role is to support the development of the SYR to ensure its scientific quality and integrity. Section Facilitators of the SYR are to ensure the completion of the report to a high standard and its delivery in a timely manner. The Chair, Vice-Chairs, Working Group Co-Chairs and Section Facilitators would play a leading role in the drafting of the SYR SPM, with advices from the SYR SSC members. The CWT was expected to familiarize itself with the available AR6 draft reports for all Working Groups and formulate a common vision for the SYR. During the CWT-1, the first discussion on cross-cutting issues would be held. Afterwards, the CWT would be encouraged to participate in the expert review of the AR6 drafts and to engage with the Working Group processes in a uniform way through a mechanism that the SYR TSU was expected to lay out in consultation with their Working Group counterparts. The composition of the CWT includes the experts who were approved during the BUR-58 and some 'Ex-officio members' who include the IPCC Chair, three IPCC Vice-Chairs, Working Group Co-Chairs, IPCC Secretary and Heads of TSUs. The Bureau agreement would be sought if requests are made to include additional TSU staff in the CWT and to invite experts to serve in the extended CWT. The full SYR TSU would be broadly similar to the structure of the Working Group TSUs albeit smaller. At the time of BUR-59, the SYR TSU had two permanent staff (i.e. the Head of TSU and a person in charge of administration) and two university professors who act as advisors.

Mr Eduardo Calvo, Co-Chair of the TFI; Mr Jan Fuglestvedt, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Ms Valerie Masson-Delmonte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Mr Ramón Pichs-Madruga, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner Co-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Roberto Sánchez-Rodríguez, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Mr Andy Reisinger, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Ms Diana Ürge-Vorsatz, Vice-Chair of Working Group III; Ms Carolina Vera, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; France; Germany; Norway and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland took the floor.

It was emphasized that the SYR should be based on the approved outline. There were questions about the involvement of TFI Co-Chairs as SYR SSC members. A request was made to include Ms Sarah Connors, Working Group I Head of Science in the CWT. A similar request was made to include the Working Group II TSU Science Leads. It was suggested that the CWT could participate in the internal review of the Working Group I revised chapter drafts which would take place from 30 November – 12 December 2020. It was noted that the SYR could potentially benefit from the established cross-Working Group collaboration. Suggestions were made to develop TORs of the SYR SSC noting that it should start its work asap. There were suggestions that it could be involved in the design and planning stages of the SYR instead of evaluating how well the SYR synthesizes the AR6 findings across the Working Groups. There were views that the SSC would play the advisory role.

The Chair clarified that TFI Co-Chairs would be part of the SYR SSC. The CWT would be consulted to find out their availability to participate in the internal review of the Working Group I internal drafts. The SSC would function as a steering group to ensure that the SYR drafts are truly a result of synthesizing the Working Group reports. The first meeting of the SSC would be convened at the appropriate time early in the process.

The Bureau took note of the SYR progress report.

7.5 Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories

Mr Kiyoto Tanabe, Co-Chair of the TFI introduced the progress report contained in the document BUR-LIX/INF. 3. He reported that upgrading the Inventory Software and Emissions Factor Database were ongoing. These tools were attracting increasingly more interest from the UNFCCC community,

particularly in the context of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement. The Editorial Board for Emission Factor Database held a virtual meeting in September 2020.

The preliminary analytical work on the Short-lived Climate Forcers (SLCFs) was progressing well under the leadership of the TFI TSU in collaboration with relevant external stakeholders. The overall schedule for the preliminary work was revised, including two expert meetings which were postponed to 2021. The timelines would be further considered by the Task Force Bureau through a virtual meeting around November 2020. The end of the AR6 would be important for the TFI SLCF's work because the outline of the new Methodology Report should be prepared during the current cycle. This would involve a dedicated Scoping Meeting and an IPCC Plenary Session to approve the outline of the Methodology Report on SLCF. A request was made to take this into consideration when revising the overall IPCC Strategic Planning Schedule. Germany clarified that decision Decision IPCC-XLIX-7 does not give any indication that the scoping meeting and the approval of the outline would take place during the current assessment cycle

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the session were submitted by Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II, Germany and Switzerland. These comments were noted by Mr Tanabe.

Norway suggested to include the scoping and approval session of the SLCF Methodology Report outline was supported and to continue with the discussion through online meetings.

The Bureau took note of the TFI progress report.

7.6 Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments

Mr David Huard, Co-Chair of the Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments (TG-Data) introduced the document BUR-LIX/INF. 7 through a recorded video presentation. He informed the Bureau that the Task Group was holding its annual meeting, which would include three virtual plenary sessions and Sub-group meetings. The objectives of the meetings would be to submit the final version of the FAIR Data Guidelines, to provide a timeline and effort estimate for final data archival and start archiving datasets for Working Group II, to discuss potential Data Distribution Centre (DDC) contributions from Japan and other possible partners, and plan outreach activities.

The final data archival process would involve a number of steps including: submission of data and metadata by authors to the TSU; checking the data and metadata before they are standardized and sent to the DDC at CEDA, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for a further round of checks; and review of the near-final version of the data and metadata before the final archival. The process would be followed by Working Groups I and II. A simplified version would be applied by Working Group III. All three DDCs (DKRZ², Germany; CEDA, United Kingdom; and CIESIN, United States of America) archive source data. DKRZ will do a bulk of the work to archive CMIP³⁶ data. The timeline for archiving the CMIP data has been agreed with the Working Group I TSU. Additional requests for archival had been made, particularly for the Working Group I Interactive Atlas data.

Mr Huard mentioned that a gap analysis demonstrating what could be done with additional resources was carried out in order to attract new investments at the DDC. Discussions were ongoing with the governments of Australia and Japan who would be potential partners for the existing DDC. The two governments have shown interest in supporting access to global data and regional and local data archival. Uncertainties regarding current DDC resources in the future were identified.

Webpages and legacy material from TGICA⁴ were under review. Capacity building efforts were planned, particularly in relation to enhancing the access to key AR6 datasets such as the Working Group I Interactive Atlas data and the Working Group III Greenhouse Gas Emission Scenarios and

² Deutsches Klimarechenzentrum

³ Coupled Model Intercomparison Project

⁴ Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis

the final data which will be hosted at the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland DDC. The outreach activities will be undertaken in 2021 either in virtual format or physically.

Comments received through the Bureau portal prior to the session were submitted by Andreas Fischlin, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Greg Flato, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Valerie Masson-Delmonte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Germany; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania. A number of issues were raised including, the suggested amendment of Article 6.1 which states that “TG-DATA is accountable to the Bureau and reports through the IPCC Bureau to the Panel” which is admittedly ambiguous on who actually presents the TG-Data reports to the Panel; the removal of one Working Group I Vice-Chair who was ineligible to be a member of TG-Data, and means to impose him either through the amended Article 3.2. which states that “3.2 Members will be selected from nominations of experts solicited by the IPCC Secretariat from governments and observer organizations. IPCC Bureau Members can also nominate additional experts as appropriate” or by amending the TORs as was suggested by the IPCC Legal Officer who noted that the TORs in their current form would not allow for his TG-Data membership; the close liaison with the Co-Chairs or their representatives and participation of WG representatives in the work of TG-Data; and reaching out a broader community of potential data users (incl. higher education professionals and students, users in the private and public sectors), to consider the development of an online course system.

In response to some of the comments Mr Sebastian Vicuna, TG-Data Co-Chair requested the Bureau to provide guidance on how they would be presenting their progress reports. There was an agreement by the Bureau that TG-Data Co-Chairs should continue presenting the Task Group’s progress reports to the Bureau regularly and to the Panel, not regularly. Mr Vicuna gratefully welcomed the suggestions on how to conduct the outreach activities using online course systems such as MOOC⁵ or SPOC⁶ or micro-learning approaches available on smartphones. There was ongoing work to prepare comprehensive estimates of resources required by the DDC which would be made available as soon as its ready.

Mr Mxolisi Shongwe from the IPCC Secretariat provided responses to comments on procedural matters. Regarding the close collaboration with Working Groups, he mentioned that TG-Data Co-Chairs consulted Working Group Co-Chairs during the preparation of the workplan. There are three Working Group I, two Working Group II and one Working Group I TSU staff who are Ex-Officio members and participate fully in TG-Data activities. There were two people who were neither TSU nor DDC staff inconsistent with Article 3.5 of the TORs, when the issue was raised at BUR-58, including one Working Group I Vice-Chair. Regarding the amended Article 3.2, Mr Shongwe reminded the Bureau about the discussion which is captured on pages 13 -15 of the [report of the 49th Session of the IPCC](#). In particular, he mentioned that some governments objected to the proposal to have Bureau members nominate and select TG-Data members citing a possible conflict of interest and a scenario whereby the Bureau would act as a jury and a judge. It was suggested at the 49th Session of the IPCC (IPCC-49) that TG-Data Co-chairs could be advised to invite members of the scientific community to contribute to the work of the Task Group and possibly submit a request for specific expertise to the Panel in future if the needs are identified. This suggestion was not supported by other governments and was therefore not considered further by the Panel. Instead, the Panel decided to amend Article 3.2 as shown in paragraph 2 of [Decision IPCC-XLIX-6](#) after establishing a Contact Group to resolve the matter. The Panel was assured that the amendment of the TORs was not meant to select Bureau Members to be members of TG-Data. After the amendment of the TORs all Bureau members were invited to select TG-Data members to fill the gaps in expertise which were identified at the 56th Session of the IPCC Bureau when the TG-Data was constituted. All the experts who were nominated by Bureau members were invited to join the Task Group. The process of selecting additional TG-Data members in order to fill gaps in expertise was concluded at the 57th Session of the IPCC Bureau in Singapore in October 2019.

⁵ Massive Open Online Course

⁶ Small Private Online Course

Andreas Fischlin, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Greg Flato, Vice-Chair of Working Group I; Valerie Masson-Delmonte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II; Germany; United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America took the floor.

There was an objection to amend Article 6.1 of the TORs. It was resolved that the TG-Data Co-Chairs would continue to report to the Panel but not regularly. One Working Group I Vice-Chair who had been wrongly submitted as member of TG-Data despite being ineligible mentioned that his involvement was as a result of a “misunderstanding” of Article 3.5 of the TORs but not a “violation” because it was not intentional. He further mentioned that it would be valuable if the Working Group Co-Chairs and/or TG-Data Co-Chairs could invite experts to participate in the Task Group meetings. Working Group I Co-Chair insisted that she wanted the Working Group I Vice-Chair to serve as a member of the TG-Data and mentioned that the IPCC Legal Officer advised her that the Panel could amend the TORs to allow for the participation of other experts in the TG-Data. Noteworthy however, in her submission to the Panel at IPCC-49, she mentioned that Bureau members would not be selected to serve as members of TG-Data. Clarity was sought on how the capacity building activities would be undertaken by the Task Group in 2021, particularly their funding and how they would develop the Guidance Material. There was a question regarding the sustainability of the Working Group I Interactive Atlas.

In his response, Mr Shongwe informed the Bureau that the earlier proposal made at BUR-58 to amend Article 6.1 would help to make it very clear and eliminate ambiguities. He reiterated that the TORs in their current form prohibit Bureau members to serve as members of the TG-Data. He requested the Bureau to allow the Secretariat to present a proposal to the Panel to amend the TORs in a manner that would allow the TG-Data Co-Chairs to invite experts to contribute to the work of the Task Group and/or attend their meetings, in a similar way to Article 4.4 of the [TGICA mandate](#). Under the current TORs, it would be inappropriate for the TG-Data Co-Chairs to be misled to invite people without an explicit mandate from the Panel judging from the fact that a similar idea was not supported by the governments at IPCC-49.

The request to amend the TORs was not supported by some Bureau members.

Mr Vicuna responded that more details on the resource requirements for their outreach and capacity building activities would be discussed during the Task Group’s virtual meeting in October 2020. The initial plan was to hold five regional workshops in developing countries in 2021 which could be physically attended by about 10 participants and allow more virtual participation. The Guidance Material which was prepared by TGICA would be updated and published on the IPCC website.

The Bureau took note of the progress report.

7.7 Communications and outreach activities

The Chair invited Mr Jonathan Lynn, Senior Communications Manager, to present the Progress Report on Communications and Outreach, document INF. 4, Rev.1. The Secretariat had previously posted a video introduction to the item on the Bureau portal.

Written comments were received from Ms Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of Working Group II; France; Germany and Switzerland.

Mr Lynn reported that since the 58th Session of the Bureau in May, the communications team has continued to raise the visibility of the IPCC. Some press releases informed the public about changes to the schedule of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Attention was also drawn to the long-term work of the IPCC with a statement by the Chair marking the 30th anniversary of the First Assessment Report in 1990.

Despite the pandemic, the communications team continues to run a rich programme of outreach activities in virtual format, with events organized with partners or contributing speakers to conferences and webinars.

In September members of the Communications Action Team and other communications specialists in the TSUs and Secretariat met with external communications experts for the third time, resulting in many ideas for strengthening our communications work, especially outreach around AR6.

Work continues to advance on the preparation of communications materials based on the three special reports, under the authority of the respective Co-Chairs, for outreach events in Africa, as discussed at the 57th Session of the Bureau a year ago.

The communications team is also planning a visual arts outreach activity for young people early in 2021. A series of outreach events about AR6 targeting young audiences in different regions of the world will be held. To promote engagement, young people will be invited to submit art work which after screening will be posted on a website. The Working Groups will have the opportunity, but not obligation, to draw on these artworks for their communications materials. The initiative including the website will be managed by the UN Foundation under the Memorandum of Understanding on communications support between the UN Foundation and IPCC, so that there are no direct legal or reputational risks for the IPCC.

During the COVID-19 pandemic there is greater reliance on social media to raise the IPCC's visibility. Thanks to greater use of animated graphics and video big increases in the number of people following us on social media are being seen, with the number of followers on Twitter topping 220,000 in the week of the Bureau Session.

The number of followers on Facebook jumped by 50% in September to 120,000, helped by the launch during the UN General Assembly of Facebook's own Climate Science Information Center. These pages display key findings of the IPCC and other international climate science bodies, and link directly to the IPCC and other organizations' respective websites. The communications team reviewed the findings that Facebook is presenting for accuracy and provided speakers for their launch.

Mr Lynn acknowledged with thanks the financial and in-kind contributions of the UN Foundation for the IPCC's communications work, under the MoU.

Regarding the comments received ahead of the meeting:

Co-Chair Ms Debra Roberts noted the report.

France asked for more information about the contacts with Facebook regarding their climate science pages. A description of the interaction was posted on the Bureau portal.

Germany also referred to the contacts with Facebook and outreach activities with think-tanks, stressing the need for outreach to be based on information in the approved reports and to refrain from statements that could be interpreted as endorsements, which would jeopardize the IPCC's neutrality. A reply was posted confirming that this is indeed the communications team's approach.

Switzerland expressed thanks for the IPCC's information work including the new newsletter for IPCC Focal Points.

In a comment on the Working Group III progress report, United Republic of Tanzania asked for information about the Working Group III AR6 communication strategy. Information about where that could be found – in an annex to the communication and outreach progress report to the 58th session was posted on the Bureau portal.

The Chair opened the report for comments.

France welcomed the introduction of the newsletter for IPCC Focal Points.

Japan reported on its planned outreach activities.

The Bureau took note of the progress report.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Secretariat noted that the following items were brought up for discussion under Any Other Business:

- Report from the informal group on publications from Mr Jim Skea Co-Chair of Working Group III.
- Discussion on a systematic way of dealing with or handling of synthesis activities that go beyond the IPCC.
- Update on IPCC IPBES workshop scheduled for December 2020.
- Progress on the IPCC Gender Policy and Implementation plan.
- Discussion on ways and means by which developing countries can be more involved during these times when we are using more virtual interactions to ensure that there is a balance of views.

8.1 Report from the informal group on publications

Mr Jim Skea, Co-Chair of Working Group III, made a brief oral report on the progress made by the informal group which was set up during the 57th Session of the Bureau to provide advice to the Secretariat, parent organizations and IPCC Bureau on the processes for managing publications of IPCC reports. He noted that the group has made slow progress as COVID-19 took over. The group has now speeded up its work and will be able to present some of its findings at the next meeting of the Bureau if the agenda will allow.

He informed the Bureau that the group intends to present a set of options that crystalizes the issues instead of recommendations.

He further noted that some of the issues discussed so far that have never been resolved by the IPCC have contributed to the slow rate of printed publications for the Special Reports. This poses challenges on how to handle the Error Protocol.

Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II, added that a deadline should be put for translations

The Chair invited the Bureau to take note of the report.

8.2 Systematic way of dealing with or handling of synthesis activities that go beyond the IPCC

Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of Working Group II, informed the Bureau of the synthesis activities being carried out by the parent organizations which include findings from IPCC Assessment Reports. He noted that there has been arbitrary selection of contributors and that there seems to be no formalized process of doing this and governments are not involved. He wondered to what extent this is in line with IPCC procedures. IPBES also may have some similar concerns.

He suggested that IPCC needs a position especially because the IPCC logo is being used on these reports. He said the IPCC needs to negotiate with the parent organizations on a formalized process on how to transfer IPCC findings to any other activities. He thought the Bureau and the Panel need to be informed of these.

The Chair took note of the suggestion and added that these be taken up further by Bureau and EXCOM to find the most appropriate way to handle these issues.

8.3 Update on IPCC IPBES workshop

Under this Agenda Item, Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of Working Group II, made further clarification in response to discussions in Agenda item 7.2. He said according to both IPCC and IPBES procedures, the meeting is for experts and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has not made any exception to this. When asked by individual governments to attend, IPBES has responded that this was not possible as this is an expert meeting and it would only set precedence that may not be fair to other governments.

Mr Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of Working Group II, provided further clarifications regarding the discussions that took place under Agenda Item 7.2 where Brazil, Germany, Norway and the Republic of Tanzania took the floor.

Bureau Members were reminded of the objection raised during the 52nd Session of the IPCC regarding this co-sponsored Workshop based on the following concerns:

- No clear provision for government participation in this workshop adding that a disclaimer that the product did not undergo a full IPCC review process is not enough
- There is no review process on the part of governments and so using the IPCC and IPBES names which are intergovernmental organizations is not appropriate.

There was a further request for governments to be part of the workshop and the workshop proceedings should undergo a government review.

It was noted that the plans for the workshop are fully compliant with IPCC procedures and processes. It was further noted that this was not a full IPCC product, rather a workshop report which will have a disclaimer as is the case with all reports from co-sponsored workshops and Expert Meetings.

8.4 Update on Gender Policy and Implementation plan

Germany said that they have read the report of the previous session and noted that as part of the Gender Policy and Implementation plan, a Gender Action Team will be established. Germany wanted a progress report on this subject. She noted the lack of and asked if an update could be included in the next issue of the newsletter or a separate conversation to Focal Points.

The Chair thanked Germany and invited the Secretariat to take note of the request from Germany.

8.5 Means to improve developing country participation in virtual sessions to ensure a balance of views

Mr Taha Zatari, Vice-Chair of Working Group II said due to lack of time this item could be postponed to the next meeting of the Bureau.

The Chair said it will be reflected in the next bureau meeting.

9. PLACE AND DATE FOR THE 60TH SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU

The Chair invited the Secretary to introduce this item.

The Secretary highlighted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic it seems that it wouldn't be possible to have an in-person meeting in the next six months and therefore the 60th Session of the Bureau is planned to take place virtually one month before the 53rd (bis) Session.

Ms Valerie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair of Working Group I; Ms Diana Ürge-Vorsatz, Vice-Chair of Working Group III as well Germany; Norway and the United States of America took the floor.

Views were expressed on the need to consider the different time zones when organizing virtual sessions. Suggestions were also made to explore the usage of the chat and break-out rooms features in Zoom for future meetings. Others proposed that the chat feature could be useful if limited to only expressing support and agreement, but not for longer statements. Some suggested to hold the next Bureau Session earlier than the proposed time.

The Secretary highlighted that the Secretariat would explore the possibility of when it would be feasible to hold the next Bureau Session emphasizing the need for sufficient time available for the meeting preparations.

10. CLOSING OF THE SESSION

The Chair declared the session closed at 06.00 p.m.

IPCC BUREAU – FIFTY-NINTH SESSION
Electronic Session, 13 – 14 October 2020

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(16.IX.2020)
Agenda Item: 1
ENGLISH ONLY

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**
- 2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE BUREAU**
- 3. REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING IPCC WORK**
- 4. SECRETARIAT STAFFING, ROLES AND REQUIREMENTS**
- 5. AR6 STRATEGIC PLANNING SCHEDULE**
- 6. ADMISSION OF OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS**
- 7. PROGRESS REPORTS**
 - 7.1 Working Group I Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report
 - 7.2 Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report
 - 7.3 Working Group III Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report
 - 7.4 Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report
 - 7.5 Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories
 - 7.6 Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments
 - 7.7 Communications and outreach activities
- 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 9. PLACE AND DATE FOR THE 60TH SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU**
- 10. CLOSING OF THE SESSION**

PROVISIONAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 59th SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU
Electronic session, 13 – 14 October 2020

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