

Our ref.: 5177-21/IPCC/P54

Annex: 1

To designated IPCC Focal Points and  
Ministries of Foreign Affairs  
(if no focal point has been designated)

Geneva, 29 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), I am addressing you on the subject of the Fifty-Fourth Session of the IPCC (IPCC-54) and Fourteenth Session of the Working Group I (WGI-14). These sessions will be held by electronic means from **26 July to 6 August 2021**. It is with great pleasure that I extend the invitation to participate in these sessions, through you, to your Government.

The main agenda items of WGI-14 will be the approval of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the Working Group I contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) and acceptance of the underlying scientific technical assessment. After its conclusion, IPCC-54 will meet to accept the actions taken at the WGI-14 Session.

At the 53<sup>rd</sup> (bis) Session of the IPCC, the Panel adopted Decision [IPCC-LIII\(bis\)-2.2](#) through which it invited the Secretariat to solicit views from IPCC Focal Points and the Bureau for consideration at the 60<sup>th</sup> (bis) Session of the IPCC Bureau regarding challenges and opportunities for participation in IPCC and Working Group sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic and how these challenges may be resolved to promote transparency, inclusiveness and equal participation in virtual sessions. As per the same decision, the Panel requested the Working Group I (WGI) Co-Chairs/WGI Bureau within IPCC rules and procedures to make appropriate arrangements, with the assistance of the IPCC Secretariat, for holding the 14<sup>th</sup> WGI approval session (WGI-14) from 26 July 2021 as stipulated in [IPCC-LIII\(bis\)/Doc. 4, Rev.1](#), considering all options contained in [IPCC-LIII\(bis\)/INF. 10, Rev.1](#) and the guidance and direction from the solicitation mentioned in paragraph 7 therein, reporting back to the Panel intersessionally by correspondence, prior to IPCC-54.

Following the consultation conducted with IPCC Focal Points through the Consultation Paper, (Letter 5160-21/IPCC/AR6) on the Roadmap to IPCC-54 and WGI-14 Session, the Secretariat has received 15 written responses<sup>1</sup> and has taken note of the feedback and views received. We thank you very much for your positive and constructive feedback which is taken into account in making the arrangements for the IPCC-54 and WGI-14 including the development of a Guidance document which is attached to this letter. The Guidance document provides elements and other details of the Sessions including a detailed provisional schedule, which we committed to share with you ahead of the session. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts made by all delegates in the face of the exceptional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic with the view to ensure that the IPCC work continues in a timely manner while addressing the challenges faced and capitalizing on opportunities arising from electronic meetings.

Further information about the organization of IPCC-54 and WGI-14 Sessions, including the provisional agendas and meeting documents, will be made available on the IPCC website [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch).

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<sup>1</sup> All the responses received have been made available on the IPCC Focal Point Portal.

Confidential pre-session documents will be provided under the “documents” menu in the registration portal: <https://apps.ipcc.ch/register>.

Simultaneous interpretation in the official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) will be provided during the plenary sessions. All documentation will be in English only.

You are hereby cordially invited to nominate representative(s) of your Government to the Sessions. Allow me to recall that the participation of delegates with appropriate expertise is vital for the success of these meetings. Please transmit your nominations, with the name and affiliation of the participant, **no later than Monday 19 July 2021**. These nominations should be sent to the Secretary of the IPCC, c/o World Meteorological Organization, P.O. Box 2300, 7bis Avenue de la Paix, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, or attached to an email message addressed to [ipcc-sec@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc-sec@wmo.int). **Nominations should be made on official letterhead**, as nominations by simple e-mail will not be accepted.

Please pre-register each designated participant, no later than **Thursday 22 July 2021**, at the following website: <https://apps.ipcc.ch/register>, using the unique credentials sent to all Focal Points in advance of the previous session. Thank you to indicate the Head of the delegation and the Alternate Head of the delegation during pre-registration. Please inform the Secretariat if there have been changes to the name of the Focal Point. The details for the Zoom meeting will be sent after the deadline of 22 July 2021.

Delegates to the IPCC-54 and WGI-14 are considered to be on mission and fully dedicated to the work of the sessions. Their institutions or departments are requested not to expect them to undertake other work during the sessions, even if they are working from home or the office. Please note that some of the meetings are scheduled to occur outside normal working hours, and institutional arrangements to facilitate the participation of delegates during these specific hours can be envisaged (e.g. access to offices outside normal work hours, etc). We urge that delegates be supported to face any potential participation challenges (e.g. access to a venue with back up electricity and internet access).

Please note that, as recommended by the IPCC Conflict of Interest Committee, in order to prevent situations in which a conflict of interest may arise, individuals directly involved in or leading the preparation of IPCC reports should avoid being in a position to approve, adopt, or accept on behalf of any government the text in which he/she was directly involved.

Please ensure your connectivity arrangements enable you to attend the entire meeting. For representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, if this is not the case, please get in touch with the IPCC Secretariat at [ipcc-sec@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc-sec@wmo.int) no later than **Friday 9 July 2021**.

**Also, please note that WMO/IPCC shall not be held responsible for any health problems or accidents that the participants may have. Participants shall make their own arrangements for life, health and other forms of insurance as they consider appropriate. Participants should ensure to have their insurance card or certificate, with international coverage, with them when travelling.**

A copy of this letter is being sent for information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Permanent Representatives from your country to the World Meteorological Organization and to the United Nations Environment Programme.

Yours sincerely,



(Abdalah Mokssit)  
Secretary of the IPCC

**ipcc**

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON  
climate change



**54<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPCC, and  
14<sup>th</sup> Session of Working Group I  
Electronic Sessions  
from 26 July to 6 August 2021**

**GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

# Guidance Document for IPCC-54 and WGI-14

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Context and purpose

The IPCC Panel, at its 53<sup>rd</sup> (bis) Session, adopted [Decision IPCC-LIII\(bis\)-2.2](#) through which it invited the Secretariat to solicit views from IPCC Focal Points and the Bureau for consideration at the 60<sup>th</sup> (bis) Session of the IPCC Bureau regarding challenges and opportunities for participation in IPCC and Working Group sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic and how these challenges may be resolved to promote transparency, inclusiveness and equal participation in virtual sessions. As per the same decision, the Panel requested the Working Group I (WGI) Co-Chairs/WGI Bureau within IPCC rules and procedures to make appropriate arrangements, with the assistance of the IPCC Secretariat, for holding the 14<sup>th</sup> WGI approval session (WGI-14) from 26 July 2021 as stipulated in IPCC-LIII(bis)/Doc.4,Rev.1, considering all options contained in IPCC-LIII(bis)/INF.10, Rev.1 and the guidance and direction from the solicitation mentioned in paragraph 7 therein, reporting back to the Panel intersessionally by correspondence, prior to the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPCC (IPCC-54).

This document is prepared in response to the request from the Panel to consider the new challenges of an approval process with remote participation. It reflects the feedback and views solicited from the IPCC Bureau at its 60<sup>th</sup> (bis) Session and through the Consultation Paper with IPCC Panel members on the Roadmap to IPCC-54 and WGI-14. It sets out the modalities of the IPCC-54/WGI-14 Sessions in light of the necessity to convene these in a virtual setting, recognizing the current exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic under which preparation of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) is taking place.

Participant information to join the IPCC-54 and WGI-14 Sessions is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

## 1.2 Essential considerations

Preparation and planning for IPCC-54/WGI-14 has been guided by the following essential considerations:

1. An extension of the WGI session from one week to two is needed to conduct the work of the approval amidst the needs and constraints of a virtual meeting, while continuing to adhere to IPCC Principles and procedures, and values of openness, transparency, inclusiveness and equitable participation.
2. Approval will be in alignment with [Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC Work](#), including with regard to consensus, and where “approval” of IPCC Summaries for Policymakers (SPM) signifies that the material has been subject to detailed, line-by-line discussion and agreement.
3. Modalities for participation follow the practices and principles of in-person meetings with specific measures implemented to support participation in virtual meetings.
4. Organization and scheduling of meetings will be based on the best effort to ensure that no region benefits or is affected disproportionately.

5. IPCC meetings and events are professional, respectful and harassment-free environments for all participants.

## 2. IPCC-54/WGI-14 schedule

IPCC-54/WGI-14 will take place in virtual format from Monday 26 July to Friday 06 August 2021. The schedule is provided in [Appendix 2](#) and is developed with the following considerations:

1. **The daily schedule is established ahead of the session** to support participants making arrangements to attend the session.
2. **Scheduling is arranged to take time zones into account** considering that participants are located in most countries of the world.
3. **Strict timekeeping** will be employed to provide clarity on what is happening when, and to respect the time participants plan to engage in the approval session. Each session will start from the section on the schedule regardless of where work stopped in the previous session.
4. **Contingency plans** for the scheduling of additional sessions are being developed and, if absolutely necessary, will be announced during the meeting by the Co-Chairs.

### 2.1 Best practices for virtual meetings

1. Participants will remain muted and off video unless chairing the session or making an intervention. Participants are encouraged to switch on their videos when making interventions.
2. Delegates will request the floor by using the raise hand function and will be invited to intervene in turn by those chairing the meeting. Delegations from Observer Organizations can be given the floor in accordance with IPCC procedures.
3. Delegations should make interventions through one primary representative per session (Plenary, Contact Group, or Huddle).
4. The chat function will solely be used by the Technical Support Unit or Secretariat to provide logistical information, or in case participants need to flag technical difficulties. Written remarks in the chat function will not be included as formal interventions.

### 2.2 Addressing connectivity Issues

In case of a connectivity problem during a Plenary Session Contact Group/Huddle, the participant can flag the issue to the Secretariat and the following protocol is used to log the issue and submit the participant's intervention in writing. The participant immediately reports the cause and time (session) of the connectivity issues to the Secretariat by sending an email to [ipcc-help@ipcc.ch](mailto:ipcc-help@ipcc.ch).

1. If an oral intervention was planned, the delegate also submits the intervention in writing to the same email address ([ipcc-help@ipcc.ch](mailto:ipcc-help@ipcc.ch)).
2. The helpdesk will log the issue and acknowledge receipt.

3. Helpdesk will forward the written intervention to the Chair(s) for the Session.
4. (In case there is disruption of the internet services, delegates can contact the Secretariat on the phone (+ 41 79 429 6516).
5. The intervention is read out loud (maximum 3 minutes) by the Chair(s) of the Session to inform all participants.

## 2.3 Decision making

The [Principles governing IPCC work](#), along with all relevant and applicable appendices and annexes shall continue to apply in full, subject to consideration of any virtual practice that would be exceptionally required to conduct the virtual session.

For purposes of clarity, decisions will be taken in alignment with IPCC Principles and Procedures as to consensus, with reference to Principle 10, that in taking decisions, the Panel, its Working Groups and any Task Forces shall use all best endeavours to reach consensus. If consensus is judged by the relevant body not possible: (a) for decisions on procedural issues, these shall be decided according to the General Regulations of the WMO; (b) for approval, adoption and acceptance of reports, differing views shall be explained and, upon request, recorded. Differing views on matters of a scientific, technical or socio-economic nature shall, as appropriate in the context, be represented in the scientific, technical or socio-economic document concerned. Differences of views on matters of policy or procedure shall, as appropriate in the context, be recorded in the Report of the Session.

This process will also be followed in the virtual setting.

## 2.4 Communications

Following approval of the SPM and acceptance of the report, the SPM, press release and other communications materials will be made available to registered media under embargo to prepare their stories in advance of the release of the report at 10:00 CET on 9 August, when the report is presented at a press conference.

Delegates are requested not to publish or discuss details of the SPM or report before the start of the press conference. Governments preparing their own media activities at the same time as the IPCC press conference may also register for the embargoed materials provided they agree to respect the embargo.

The report will be presented by the Co-Chairs at the press conference which will also be held virtually. Accredited media will be able to participate remotely and ask questions. The press conference will also be live-streamed. Following the press conference, the Chair, Co-Chairs, other Bureau members and report authors will be available for media interviews.

Focal points are encouraged to organize media briefings and outreach activities following the release of the report. They are invited to contact the IPCC communications team for assistance in organizing such activities.

## 3. WGI-14 SPM approval session

[Appendix A of the Principles Governing IPCC work](#) states that "approval of the SPM at the Session of the Working Group, signifies that it is consistent with the factual material contained in the full scientific, technical and socio-economic Assessment or Special Report accepted by the Working Group. Coordinating Lead Authors should be consulted in order to ensure that the SPM is fully consistent with the findings in the main report."

### 3.1 Organization of work

#### 3.1.1 Modalities

The modalities of the approval session replicate those used in in-person approval plenaries. Additional guidance material related to informal group meetings is provided in [Appendix 3](#).

1. **The draft of the SPM** (a clean draft and a draft showing tracked changes since the Final Government Draft review) will be made available to participants 48 hours ahead of the start of the Session.
2. **All sessions will be held as pre-scheduled virtual meetings.** No more than two scheduled sessions (Plenary and Contact Group) will be run in parallel.
3. **Simultaneous interpretation** will be available in all UN languages solely in the Plenary Sessions, in keeping with the usual practice.
4. **At the start of the approval Plenary Sessions, WGI Co-Chairs will introduce the final draft SPM for approval** with opening explanatory remarks, including how the draft has been revised since the review of the Final Government Distribution draft SPM. Approval will be sought for each headline, approving first the supporting statements, then the respective headline statement.
5. **The text under discussion will be shown on the screen** during Plenary Sessions and Contact Groups.
6. **Oral interventions** will be invited by the Co-Chairs of the session, participants will 'raise their flag' (using the raise hand function) to intervene. For equitable participation, interventions should be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes to provide the context for any requested revision. Co-Chairs will urge participants to keep to time.
7. **Written interventions** can only be submitted if 1) a connectivity problem is recorded (see [Section 2.2](#)), or 2) as described in step 1.1 of the approval process (see [Section 3.2](#)).
8. **Line-by-line approval** will be undertaken with text shared on-screen using a colour-coding approach: yellow text is being considered for approval, green text has been approved, purple text is under discussion in a Contact Group or Huddle.
9. **The SPM drafting team will consider all comments and suggestions** made by delegates and provide proposed revisions on Paper Smart in advance of its next consideration by the Panel in Plenary Session, at the time indicated in the schedule.

10. **Contact Groups** will be scheduled at pre-determined times to clarify concepts and advance consensus. Contact Group times are notional and may be adapted if necessary to make maximum use of available time. Contact groups will be chaired by Government delegates and/or Bureau members.
11. **When a Contact Group reaches a consensus**, the Panel members who participated in this Contact Group are expected to adhere to past practice to accept the outcomes of this Contact Group when they are reported in Plenary
12. **Huddles** may be held as informal break out groups of the Plenary Session to reach agreement on wording for specific text, as called for by the Plenary Session Co-Chairs. Huddles will be chaired by Bureau members.
13. **Informal discussions** amongst Government delegates are facilitated through the provision of contact information of all participants in the Sessions on Paper Smart.

Plenary Sessions and Contact Groups will be scheduled as virtual meetings. Huddles may occur as a break out group in a Plenary Session, or as a separate meeting with dedicated connection details. Information on access to each meeting will be kept up-to-date, together with information on what part of the SPM is under discussion, on the landing page of Paper Smart.

### 3.1.2 Information on progress and session documents

Paper Smart will include information related to the Session:

1. **A brief daily summary** of the topics discussed on the previous day, including information on which documents are available, and information on the day's schedule (which topics will be discussed in Plenary/Contact Group/Huddle) will be provided by the WGI TSU on Paper Smart.
2. **Progress will be monitored** of the SPM approved content relative to the remaining time available in the Session.
3. **Revised text/content will be available** at predefined times set in the Session schedule on Paper Smart ahead of the next Plenary Session.
4. **Document management.** All relevant documentation will be available to delegates on Paper Smart.

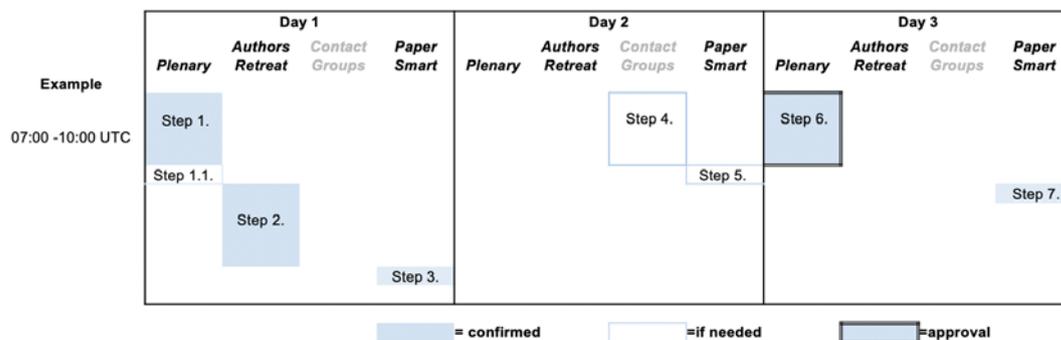
## 3.2 Approval process

The approval process is undertaken in seven possible steps (as outlined below) considering how the schedule for the WGI-14 Session has been developed around packages of Headline Statements and their supporting bullets, including Tables and Figures, where appropriate. This is referred to as a Headline Statement (HS) package in the following. The specificities related to the approval of Figures are provided in [Appendix 4](#).

For each package the following scheduled steps are taken over the course of set days, as illustrated in Figure 1.

1. HS package presented to Plenary Session (3hrs). Government comments are gathered on each supporting statement, Figure, and Table, then finally on the Headline Statement. If more focused discussions with government representatives are needed to facilitate reaching consensus, a Contact Group or Huddle can be scheduled. If specific bullets have very minor comments the substance can be considered ready for approval in Step 6.
  - 1.1. To ensure that the session does not over-run, written submissions will be accepted should time run out to hear all planned interventions (raised flags). Delegations will be able to submit their interventions immediately following the end of the Plenary Session (during the 1-hour interval before the authors meet). Interventions should be submitted through the Head of delegation/Alternate Head of delegation directly on Paper Smart. The TSU will assemble all submissions and provide them to authors for their consideration. The submissions will be visible to all participants on Paper Smart for transparency.
2. After the first Plenary, authors retreat with Bureau and TSU representatives to work (3hrs) on responding to all comments.
3. A document explaining the outcome of the author discussions is posted on Paper Smart.
4. If further focused discussions are needed, a Contact Group is held, (maximum of 3hrs) at the allocated tentative time in the schedule.
5. A document explaining the outcome of the Contact Group is then posted on Paper Smart.
6. HS package presented in Plenary Session for approval. At the Chair's discretion, a Huddle may be launched in parallel with the Plenary Session to resolve issues that cannot be dealt with in Plenary in a timely manner.
7. The approved text, figure and / or table is uploaded to Paper Smart.

Figure 1: Schematic of approval steps for a HS package. The package is colour coded so it is clearly visible in the schedule. Each step described above is illustrated. Scheduled steps are coloured, tentative (or possible) steps are just outlined to indicate when they would occur.



## 4. IPCC-54 session

The IPCC-54 Session will be opened by the Chair of the IPCC on 26 July, 2021 followed by a short opening ceremony before the adoption of the agenda of the Session and consideration of the standing agenda items before handing over to the WGI Co-Chairs for running the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of Working Group I for the approval of the SPM of the WGI contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6).

The Chair of IPCC will reconvene the IPCC-54 Session on 6 August to review the report of the WGI-14 Session in accordance with Principle 10 of the Principles Governing IPCC Work and formally accept it. The Panel will be invited to consider any pending items, if any before the closing of the session.

# Appendix 1 - General information for participants

## A1.1 Registration

1. Governments and Observer Organizations are kindly invited to transmit nominations of their representatives, with the name and affiliation of the participant to the Secretary of the IPCC, c/o World Meteorological Organization, P.O. Box 2300, 7bis Avenue de la Paix, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, or attached to an email message addressed to [ipcc-sec@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc-sec@wmo.int) by **Monday 19 July 2021**.
2. All nominations should be made on **official letterhead**, as nominations by simple email will not be accepted.
3. Each designated participant has to be pre-registered by IPCC Focal Points at the following website: <https://apps.ipcc.ch/register>, using the unique credentials sent to all Focal Points in advance of the previous session.
4. The pre-registration portal will remain open for pre-registering participants until **Thursday 22 July 2021**.
5. While registering participants, Governments and Observer Organizations will be asked to indicate the Head of Delegation, Alternate Head of Delegation and normal delegation. Access to certain features (e.g. submission of comments and written submission) in Paper Smart will be restricted to Heads of Delegation and their alternates.

## A1.2 Attendance

1. The Session will take place using the virtual video conferencing tool Zoom.
2. The Session will be open to all registered delegates. However, the number of participants from Member Countries and Observer Organizations may be limited, depending on the total number of registered delegates.
3. Virtual attendance will be checked against the registered delegates and access will only be possible for participants who have been registered.

## A1.3 Ground rules for attending the online session

1. The participants will be invited to join the meeting using the **updated Zoom Client**, which can be downloaded from [here](#) or via the Paper Smart portal.
2. Participants will be able to connect to the Zoom sessions 30 minutes ahead of the scheduled start time.
3. Meeting details will be sent to registered delegates ahead of the meeting and participants will be asked not to share the connection information.
4. Connection details will be sent using the following format:

*Delegates:* <country name> - Full name of participant

*Participants from Observer Organizations:* <Observer Organization Name / abbreviation> - Full name of participant

*Bureau members:* Full name of the Bureau members

*TSU:* <TSU> - Full name

*Authors:* <Chapter #> Author Name

*Secretariat:* Secretariat – Full Name

5. All connections will be checked against the registered list of participants. Please note that you will not be able to attend the virtual meeting if we cannot identify you.
6. Participants will be invited to join the Session at least 10 minutes in advance to make sure your connection is stable, and your speaker and microphone are working.

## Appendix 2 - Draft schedule

The draft schedule is shown in UTC times in Figure A2.1.

The draft schedule is designed to support comprehensive and efficient approval of the SPM, based on the Final Government Draft and analysis of the FGD review comments received. An updated schedule will be provided, if needed.

This schedule has been based on a detailed time zone analysis of all countries in the world, and with consideration of the location of the drafting author teams. This is the reason why the SPM is not addressed in a strictly sequential manner in the schedule. The schedule also takes into account the working hours of the WGI Co-Chairs, WGI TSU and Secretariat that will be located in Geneva and Paris. The schedule is lighter on Friday 30 July and Saturday 31 July to allow time for rest as part of the weekend.

Scheduled times to hold Contact Groups are available for each HS package should these be needed (shown with coloured outline). Contingency plans for additional Plenary Sessions and Contact Groups are also included (shown with grey dotted outlines).

The colour coding in the schedule refers to Headline Statement (HS) package being considered, together with the number of related supporting bullets, figures and tables, based on the Final Government Draft SPM, as shown by the following legend:

Headline	Supporting Bullets	Figure and Tables	
HS1	8	Figure SPM.2	
HS2	4	Figure SPM.1	
HS3	5	Figure SPM.3	
HS4	5		
Box1		Figure SPM.4	
HS5	3	Table SPM.1	
HS6	5	Figure SPM.5	Figure SPM.6
HS7	5		
HS8	3	Figure SPM.7	
HS9	4	Figure SPM.8	
HS10	4		
HS11	6	Figure SPM.9	
HS12	5		
HS13	9	Figure SPM.10	Table SPM.2
HS14	4		
Intro			
Section Intros			

Figure A2.2 shows the start time for each day and the time this corresponds to in all regions of the world.



UTC	MON 02 AUG				TUE 03 AUG				WED 04 AUG				THU 05 AUG				FRI 06 AUG			
	Plenary	Authors' work	Contact Groups	Paper-smart	Plenary	Authors' work	Contact Groups	Paper-smart	Plenary	Authors' work	Contact Groups	Paper-smart	Plenary	Authors' work	Contact Groups	Paper-smart	Plenary	Authors' work	Contact Groups	Paper-smart
04-05	HS7+10		HS4+14	HS6	HS8		HS7+10	HS5				HS7+10								
05-06																				
06-07					HS13			HS6						Section Introductions						
07-08																				
08-09		HS7+10		HS4+14			HS7+10													
09-10	HS9+12		HS6		HS2		HS9+12	HS4+14		HS2		HS2		HS2						P54 close
10-11																				
11-12								HS9+12						Section Introductions						
12-13																				
13-14		HS9+12		HS6		HS2	HS9+12				HS2									
14-15														Introduction						
15-16																				
16-17																				
17-18																				
18-19																				
19-20																				
20-21																				
21-22																				
22-23																				
23-00																				
00-01																				
01-02																				
02-03																				
03-04																				

Figure A2.2 - Daily start times around the world (produced with <https://24timezones.com/#/map>)

04:00 UTC start (5 times)



09:00 UTC start (4 times)



14:00 UTC start (6 times)



19:00 UTC start (5 times)



14:00 UTC start (6 times)

19:00 UTC start (5 times)

## Appendix 3 - Facilitating parallel discussions during approval/adoption sessions

This Appendix is designed to serve as a source of information and guidance for facilitators on the conduct of informal group settings during sessions of the IPCC, its Working Groups or Task Forces for the approval of Summaries for Policy Makers or the adoption of Methodologies Reports or of Synthesis Reports.

This note is based on [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work](#), past practice and lessons learnt.

### A3.1 Forums during IPCC approval and adoption sessions

Deliberations during approval or adoption of IPCC reports mainly take place in plenary meetings of Working Group and IPCC Sessions. Plenary meetings are the forums for discussion and decision-making by IPCC member countries. They are open to participation by all IPCC member countries, admitted observer organizations, members of the IPCC Bureau, the IPCC Secretariat and the TSUs. Members of the press and media may attend the opening plenary. Plenary meetings are conducted with interpretation into the six UN languages, or in English if agreed by the IPCC member countries.

It is common practice in the IPCC to defer in-depth discussions on parts of texts of the report that may be challenging to reach consensus on in the larger plenary session, to smaller, group setting as decided by the Chair(s) of a plenary session. The discussions in these settings are conducted in English, and may include:

- “Contact groups” to consider specific sections or paragraphs. Contact groups are usually chaired by two country representatives, or a country representative and Bureau member. Their date, time and venue are announced in the plenary room and on the Paper Smart system.
- “Huddles” are smaller and more informal than contact groups and address more specific issues. Usually they take place at the margins of the venue and are facilitated by an IPCC Vice Chair or Working Group Vice Chair.

The conclusions of the Contact Groups and Huddles are endorsed by the participants of those meetings when reported back to Plenary.

The formats of smaller groups are implemented as appropriate and transitions between them are fluid. The establishment of such groups strives to strike an acceptable balance between the need for efficiency and the imperative of procedural equity and transparency.

## A3.2 Purpose and settings of small group discussions

Small group discussions support the plenary discussions within their specific mandate as determined by the Chair (s), seeking the resolution of the issue under discussion within the time allocated by the Chair(s). Such groups do not take decisions or adopt/approve text; they make proposals which the plenary is invited to consider and adopt/approve, though accepted practice is that participating delegations do not raise objections to consensus results from that Contact group.

Consultations in smaller group settings, sometimes held in parallel to a plenary, are often more efficient to produce agreeable text or options of text than the plenary. They provide an opportunity for government delegates to bring their concerns and suggestions to the attention of the authors of a report and often make specific text proposals. The authors consider these and may amend the text if the amendment is consistent with the scientific assessment contained in the underlying chapters.

## A3.3 Facilitators

Facilitator(s) of Contact Groups are usually invited by the Chair(s) of the plenary session. Where two facilitators are proposed to co-chair a group, efforts are made to achieve regional and gender balance. Facilitators may include:

- IPCC Vice Chairs
- IPCC Working Group Vice Chairs
- Representatives of IPCC Member countries

A facilitator is obliged to be impartial. He or she participates in the capacity of the chair(s) and does not simultaneously act in the interest of an IPCC member country or an author team. He or she may request the assistance of the plenary chair(s) with resolving any difficulties that may have arisen during the deliberations. The mandate of facilitator(s) ends with completion of the group's work or the expiry of scheduled time.

The facilitator(s) should take particular care to ensure that the requirements of transparency, legitimacy and inclusiveness are met. In particular, the facilitator should clearly define the mandate of the group and facilitate the participation of a broad representation of member countries to support the consensus-building process. It is also important for the legitimacy of the process that the results of any smaller group meeting be reported to the plenary so that member countries who were not in the smaller group have an opportunity to consider the outcomes. The facilitator has the following tasks:

- Preside at the meetings, declare its opening and closing, keeping it to the time allocated by the plenary Chair(s).
- Remind participants of the mandate of the group as given by the Working Group or IPCC plenary session chair.
- Control the proceedings and maintain order thereat
  - Set the context and ground rules.
  - Keep the meeting focused on one item at a time.
  - Regulate the flow of discussion, accord the right to speak.

- Maintain the highest standards of professionalism and collegiality and ensure an ambience of mutual respect and understanding.
  - Intervene decisively and provide direction to the meeting if needed.
- Protect the integrity of the IPCC process
  - Ensure that IPCC meetings and events are professional, respectful and harassment-free environments for all participants.
  - Ensure that the debate is fact-based.
  - Recognizing the scientific expertise of the authors and avoiding undue questioning of the scientific content of the report and undue pressure on authors.
- Check for agreement in order to present a clear outcome to the chair of the plenary meeting.

To enable an efficient and effective discussion, the facilitator may propose to the group:

- A structure of the discussion.
- The closure of the list of speakers.
- A limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers.
- The suspension or adjournment of a meeting to refer the issue back to the plenary chair(s) within the time window allocated to the group.

# Appendix 4 - Specificities on the approval of SPM Figures

As opposed to approving text, approving a figure requires an additional step that can take a significant amount of time: the design work or, in other words, the implementation of agreed changes. For the sake of quality and reducing the risk of errors, it will not be possible to change the figure drastically or explore new visual solutions during the Session. The objective is for the delegates and the authors to resolve any major issues that would be a barrier in conveying the intent of the figure clearly and, with the help of WGI TSU design team, identify reasonable design refinements to address those issues. This guidance describes the framework and tools for approving the WGI SPM figures in this context.

Figure captions will be considered alongside the Figures and will be approved line-by-line once the Figure has been approved.

## A3.1 Facilitating discussion and co-design of figures

Some **key design concepts** for figures have been used to facilitate the co-design process by SPM authors and the WGI TSU design team, as well as with delegates who have participated in informal activities organized by the WG TSU to discuss the figure drafts. To foster the same level of co-design efficiency during the approval session, delegates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these concepts as follows:

- **The intent** is the message(s) that the figure is designed for to communicate to the reader. It is conveyed by the visual presentation of the data and should be immediately apparent to readers when they look at the figure. The intent of each figure is explicitly provided as the figure title.
- **Hierarchy of information** is what and in which way the data (e.g. which variables) is organized in the figure (e.g. in panels) to clearly communicate the intent.
- **The visual narrative** is the layout of the information to clearly understand the hierarchy of information and the intent of the figure. Design and cognitive principles, color and typography, layout and annotations are used to make this as clear as possible for the reader.

These concepts are used to identify and resolve any **visual barriers** in the figure that prevent readers from understanding the intent of the figure.

## A4.2 Approval of figures during WGI-14

Figures are addressed in four steps during the approval process:

### 1. Presentation in Plenary Session

Figures will be addressed alongside the headline statement in which they are being called out. They will be briefly presented via the template described [below](#). Delegates will then be invited to provide comments. In that respect, WGI encourages delegates to use the key design concepts in order to efficiently structure the discussion and comments on figures.

### 2. Addressing Plenary Session comments

WGI Co-Chairs will decide one of the two following options based on the comments received.

- Option 1: figures that received minor comments or for which common views were reflected will go to the authors and design team. The proposed changes as well as the rationale for comments that could not be integrated will be reported in the figure approval template and submitted to Paper Smart right after the authors' background session.
- Option 2: figures for which different views have been voiced during the Plenary Session will be placed in a Contact Group. Government representatives will be invited to discuss the figure together, with authors and the WGI TSU design team providing further clarifications. Delegates are encouraged to join the discussion to co-design and improve the figure. The figure approval template will be shared on screen during the discussion and agreed changes will be reported simultaneously on the document. The Contact Group will end by summarizing the agreed changes listed on the figure approval template and the document will be subsequently uploaded to Paper Smart.

### 3. Design work

The design team will implement the changes as stated in the figure approval template. The updated figure will be uploaded on Paper Smart. Since some changes will require more design work than others (see section 'type of changes'), a more detailed estimation of time will be provided by the design team after the Contact Group.

### 4. Approval

The updated figure will be made available on Paper Smart and presented for approval on the next corresponding Plenary Session.

## A4.3 Type of revisions to figures

The time required to update the figure (i.e. the design work) will vary depending on the type of changes resulting from the plenary/contact group discussions and comments. Any change should be agreed with this workload in mind as it will have an impact on when the updated figure will be uploaded on Paper Smart. Changes can therefore be categorised as:

- **Minor change** - Those changes are expected to be **quickly implemented**. For example:

- Updating annotations and labels (as long as within the word limit and space available, and as long as this does not impact overall design/layout);
  - Tweaks in color (as long as this does not impact changes in all the other figures);
  - Space adjustments (for instance adjusting the position of elements)
- **Major change** - Those changes are expected to **take time to implement**. Not all major changes are possible or feasible due to time constraints, availability of correctly formatted data, limitations of the graphical software, etc. Major changes include:
    - Updating data or add a variable (in most of the figures a change in the data set or a change in one data point means to re-design/replot the panel)
    - Layout (changing the placement of design assets on the page impacts the overall figure)
    - Length of annotations (if space available is exceeded)
    - Design of pictograms and icons
    - Additional elements on the diagrams

### A4.3 The figure approval template

In order to have an on-screen editable document and report all agreed changes, each figure will be laid out into a *Figure approval template*. The document will be organised as a table, showing each individual panel or figure section on the left column and allowing to report agreed design changes on the right column in track change mode. Any text element in the figure will be reported in the document to allow live editing in track change mode. This document acts as the official reference for reporting figure updates on Paper Smart and for the design work.

Below is an example based on FGD Figure SPM.1 panel a):

