



TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE: 9-11 NOVEMBER 2004

The 22nd session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will begin today at the Ashok Hotel in New Delhi, India, to continue deliberations on its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) due to be published in 2007. During the meeting, delegates will discuss, *inter alia*, the scope, content and process for an AR4 Synthesis Report; AR4 products; outreach; the IPCC Programme and Budget for 2005 to 2008; and election procedures. Delegates are also expected to hear progress reports on: Working Group contributions to the AR4; the Special Report on Safeguarding the Ozone Layer and the Global Climate System; the Special Report on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage; the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories; and the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE IPCC

The IPCC was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The purpose of the IPCC is to assess the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant to understanding the risks associated with human-induced climate change. The IPCC does not undertake new research, nor does it monitor climate-related data, but bases its assessments on published and peer-reviewed scientific and technical literature. Its Secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland, and is staffed by both WMO and UNEP.

Since its inception, the IPCC has prepared a series of comprehensive assessments, special reports and technical papers, providing scientific information on climate change to the international community, including policymakers and the general public. This information has played an important role in the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC, which provides the overall global policy framework for addressing climate change, was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994.

The current structure of the IPCC includes three working groups:

- Working Group I addresses the scientific aspects of the climate system and climate change;

- Working Group II addresses the vulnerability of socioeconomic and natural systems to climate change, negative and positive consequences of climate change, and options for adapting to it; and
- Working Group III addresses options for limiting greenhouse gas emissions and otherwise mitigating climate change.

The IPCC also has a Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI). The TFI oversees the IPCC National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Programme (NGGIP), which aims to develop and refine an internationally-agreed methodology and software for the calculation and reporting of national greenhouse gas emissions and removals, and to encourage the use of this methodology by countries participating in the IPCC and by UNFCCC signatories.

KEY IPCC PRODUCTS: The IPCC completed its initial comprehensive assessments of climate change in the First Assessment Report (FAR) in 1990 and the Second Assessment Report (SAR) in 1995. In 1994, it prepared technical guidelines for assessing greenhouse gas inventories and subsequently revised these in 1996. The UNFCCC's 1997 Kyoto Protocol reaffirmed the use of the guidelines for preparing national greenhouse gas inventories by Parties to the UNFCCC and, in the future, by Parties to the Protocol.

The IPCC's Third Assessment Report (TAR) was completed by the Panel in 2001. It addresses policy-relevant scientific, technical, and socioeconomic dimensions of climate change. It concentrates on findings since 1995 and pays attention to both regional and global scales. The TAR is composed of a comprehensive assessment from the three IPCC Working Groups, a summary for policymakers (SPM) and a technical summary of each Working Group report, and a Synthesis Report. The comprehensive assessments, Synthesis Report and SPMs were subject to extensive peer review from experts and governments. The TAR Synthesis Report is written in a non-technical style aimed at policymakers and includes an SPM. It addresses nine policy-relevant questions identified by the IPCC based on submissions by governments.

SEVENTEENTH SESSION: Discussions on the TAR concluded at IPCC-17 and IPCC-18. At IPCC-17, held from 4-6 April 2001, in Nairobi, Kenya, participants accepted the actions of the three IPCC Working Groups with regard to adopting their contributions to the TAR. They considered progress on the TAR Synthesis Report, and discussed in depth the future of the IPCC. Participants also approved the



preparation of a technical paper on the links between biological diversity and climate change, and considered a proposal for a special report on climate change and sustainable development.

EIGHTEENTH SESSION: IPCC-18 was held from 24-29 September 2001, in London, UK. Participants reviewed and adopted the TAR's SPM and Synthesis Report and made decisions to: retain the IPCC's three Working Groups, maintain the TFI, and keep the size of the IPCC Bureau at 30 members; adopt the IPCC work programme and budget for 2002-2004; and endorse a scoping paper for the Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biological Diversity and endorse in principle the preparation of a technical paper on climate change and sustainable development. They also accepted a work programme on Good Practice Guidance on Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), and authorized further work on developing definitions for degradation and devegetation and the preparation of scoping papers for work requested by the UNFCCC.

NINETEENTH SESSION: Beginning at its nineteenth session, the IPCC Plenary embarked on work towards the next assessment report. At IPCC-19, held from 17-20 April 2002, in Geneva, participants decided, *inter alia*, on a draft workplan for developing definitions for degradation of forest and devegetation of other vegetation types, methodological options to inventory and report on emissions resulting from these activities, and elements of the procedure for agreeing on NGGIP products. They also decided: on the timing of the AR4; to hold a workshop on geological and oceanic carbon separation, capture and storage; to draft a scoping paper on climate change and water; and to hold an expert meeting on climate change and development.

TWENTIETH SESSION: IPCC-20 was held from 19-21 February 2003, in Paris, France. Participants agreed on a work plan for two expert "scoping meetings" on how to progress and structure the AR4 and discussed a framework and set of criteria for establishing priorities for special reports, methodology reports and technical papers for the period of the fourth assessment. They also decided to hold a high-level scientific meeting to survey the processes affecting carbon stocks and human influences upon them and to produce a special report on safeguarding the ozone layer and the global climate system.

TWENTY-FIRST SESSION: At IPCC-21, held from 3-7 November 2003, in Vienna, Austria, participants reviewed the outlines of the proposed Working Group contributions to the AR4 and the Chair's proposal for a synthesis report for the AR4. They agreed that a technical paper on climate change and water should be completed in 2007, discussed terms of reference for a document on the AR4 product set, and reviewed the report of the IPCC expert meeting on processes affecting terrestrial carbon stocks and human influences upon them. The Panel approved the terms of reference for the revision of the Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and agreed on a revised mandate and name for the Task Group on Scenarios for Climate and Impact Analysis (now TGICA).

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

CLIVAR/PAGES/IPCC WORKSHOP ON A "MULTI-MILLENNIA PERSPECTIVE ON DROUGHT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE": This workshop was held from 18-21 November 2003, in Tucson, US, to discuss new ideas, observations, analyses and theories about

drought, and to highlight ways of improving understanding, analysis approaches and predictive capabilities. The focus of discussions was on North America and Northern Africa using drought-related paleoclimatic data and research.

UNFCCC COP-9: The ninth Conference of the Parties (COP-9) to the UNFCCC, was held from 1-12 December 2003, in Milan, Italy. Among other things, Parties to the UNFCCC considered the IPCC TAR, focusing on two agenda items, namely: scientific, technical, and socioeconomic aspects of impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change; and scientific, technical and socioeconomic aspects of mitigation. Discussions reflected differing views on how to advance the agenda items. Parties adopted conclusions requesting the UNFCCC Secretariat to organize a workshop on each of the new agenda items during the twentieth session of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The COP requested SBSTA to report on its work at COP-11.

IPCC WORKSHOP ON DESCRIBING SCIENTIFIC UNCERTAINTIES IN CLIMATE CHANGE TO SUPPORT ANALYSIS OF RISK AND OF OPTIONS:

This workshop was held from 11-13 May 2004, in Maynooth, Ireland, to discuss the theme of "uncertainty and risk." Participants considered: examples of how information on uncertainties is taken into account by users of IPCC assessments; new developments in techniques for characterizing and describing uncertainties; the extent to which different techniques for dealing with uncertainty in different disciplines can be harmonized in the AR4; and the treatment of uncertainty in the TAR.

TWENTIETH SESSIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE UNFCCC: At SB-20, held from 16-25 June 2004, in Bonn, Germany, the UNFCCC's SBSTA held two in-session workshops to advance discussions on the IPCC TAR findings. The first workshop addressed the scientific, technical and socioeconomic aspects of impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change. The second dealt with the scientific, technical and socioeconomic aspects of mitigation. Parties then addressed these items in contact groups and adopted conclusions on each agenda item.

IPCC WORKING GROUP I WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE SENSITIVITY: This workshop was held from 26-29 July 2004, in Paris, France. Participants evaluated a range of climate model results to relate different climate sensitivity estimates to differences in descriptions of physical processes. They also reviewed relationships between climate sensitivity and other model features. Participants considered how current, historical and paleoclimatic data can aid the determination of the likely range of climate sensitivity and analyzed the interpretation and limits of the climate sensitivity concept.

IPCC EXPERT MEETING ON INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, TRANSFER AND DIFFUSION: At this meeting, held from 21-23 September 2004, in Tokyo, Japan, participants discussed: key drivers of industrial technology development, transfer, deployment and diffusion to be addressed in the AR4; the conceptual framework of the assessment; and access to industrial information networks relevant for the scientific assessment of climate change mitigation and improving the use of publicly available data sources from industry in the AR4.