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IPCC holds meeting in Addis Ababa to draft Sixth Assessment Report outline

ADDIS ABABA, April 28 – The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will hold a scoping meeting in Addis Ababa on 1–5 May 2017 to draft the outline of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6). The meeting will bring together 200 experts from some 60 countries.

The IPCC decided to produce the AR6 in February 2015. It is due to be completed in the first half of 2022. The meeting in Addis Ababa will draft the outline and indicative coverage of the contents of the three Working Group contributions to the report, which will be released in 2021, for consideration by the IPCC when it next meets in September. A further scoping meeting is planned to draft the outline of the Synthesis Report, which will integrate the three Working Group contributions and the three Special Reports that are being prepared in this assessment cycle.

“With this meeting we are taking a decisive step to advance the work plan of the IPCC. During the AR6 cycle we will see one or more policy-relevant reports released almost every year from 2018 until 2022.” said Hoesung Lee, Chair of the IPCC. “The AR6 Synthesis Report will be delivered in time for the first global stocktake in 2023 by the UNFCCC under the Paris Agreement.”

AR6 will assess scientific findings that have been published since the IPCC’s last comprehensive report, the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), which was completed in 2014. AR5 provided crucial input into the Paris Agreement on climate change adopted in December 2015. The AR5 report findings pointed to the fact that the world has the means to limit global warming and build a more prosperous and sustainable future, but pathways to limit warming to 2°C relative to pre-industrial levels would require substantial emissions reductions over the next few decades.

Prior to the scoping meeting, IPCC Bureau members and authors will present the findings and activities of the Panel in workshops for policymakers, academia, media and students as part of a two-day outreach event on 29–30 April organized by the African Climate Policy Centre of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

“Africa is vulnerable to climate change but various adaptation and mitigation options exist to make society more resilient and create opportunities for a sustainable future,” said Youba Sokona, Vice-Chair of the IPCC. “We hope that these timely events will encourage more scientists from the region to participate in the work of the IPCC during the AR6 cycle.”

The scoping meeting, outreach event and an Expert Meeting on Mitigation, Sustainability and Climate Stabilization Scenarios, taking place on 26-28 April, are hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

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What is the IPCC?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change. It was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1988 to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments concerning climate change, its implications and risks, as well as to put forward adaptation and mitigation strategies. It has 195 member states.

IPCC assessments provide governments, at all levels, with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. IPCC assessments are a key input into the international negotiations to tackle climate change. IPCC reports are drafted and reviewed in several stages, thus guaranteeing objectivity and transparency.

The IPCC assesses the thousands of scientific papers published each year to tell policymakers what we know and don't know about the risks related to climate change. The IPCC identifies where there is agreement in the scientific community, where there are differences of opinion, and where further research is needed. It does not conduct its own research.

To produce its reports, the IPCC mobilizes hundreds of scientists. These scientists and officials are drawn from diverse backgrounds. Only a dozen permanent staff work in the IPCC's Secretariat.

The IPCC has three working groups: Working Group I, dealing with the physical science basis of climate change; Working Group II, dealing with impacts, adaptation and vulnerability; and Working Group III, dealing with the mitigation of climate change. It also has a Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories that develops methodologies for measuring emissions and removals.

IPCC Assessment Reports consist of contributions from each of the three working groups and a Synthesis Report. Special Reports undertake an assessment of cross-disciplinary issues that span more than one working group and are shorter and more focused than the main assessments.

Sixth Assessment Cycle

At its 41st Session in February 2015, the IPCC decided to produce a Sixth Assessment Report (AR6). At its 42nd Session in October 2015 it elected a new Bureau that would oversee the work on this report and Special Reports to be produced in the assessment cycle. At its 43rd Session in April 2016, it decided to produce three Special Reports, and a Methodology Report to update guidelines on national greenhouse gas inventories and the AR6.

The 43rd Session agreed that the AR6 Synthesis Report would be finalized in 2022 in time for the first global stocktake in 2023 by the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) when countries will review progress under the Paris Agreement towards their goal of keeping global warming to well below 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. The three Working Group contributions to AR6 will be finalized in 2021.

In March 2017, the IPCC approved the outlines of the *Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*, and *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*. The two reports are expected to be finalized in September 2019.

In September 2018 the IPCC will also finalize *Global Warming of 1.5°C, an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*. The IPCC will also refine the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* for delivery in 2019.

For more information, including links to the IPCC reports, go to:

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