

# ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

**AR5 Synthesis Report Scoping Meeting  
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## **CHAIRMAN'S VISION PAPER ON THE AR5 SYNTHESIS REPORT**

(Submitted by the IPCC Chairman)

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## Chairman's Vision paper on the AR5 Synthesis Report

### 1 Preamble

- 1.1 This vision paper has been drafted as guidance for the participants of the SYR Scoping Meeting, and has to be considered in conjunction with other documents provided for the meeting. The contents and areas of emphasis in this paper draw on the extremely valuable and extensive comments received from governments. The material in this paper is also based on previous experience and practices followed for production of the Synthesis Report right from the First Assessment Report to the Fourth.

### 2. Structure and format

- 2.1 The experience with previous versions of the SYR suggests that:
- The length of the full report should be less than 50 pages for it to be effective, relevant and readable for an audience of policymakers who would essentially benefit from this document. Similarly, the Summary for Policy Makers should not exceed 10 pages. In addition, the SYR should carry the other appendices generally provided which include:
    - User guide and access to more detailed information
    - Glossary
    - Acronyms, chemical symbols; scientific units; country groupings
    - List of authors
    - List of Reviewers and Review Editors
    - Index
    - List of all publications of the IPCC
    - Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers
- 2.2 In the above list of annexures, the possible inclusion of FAQs is a subject that needs to be discussed in the Scoping Meeting and included in the final report of the meeting for consideration by the Plenary.
- 2.3 The topics to be included in the SYR have been provided as the outcome of the AR5 Scoping meeting (Venice, 13-17 July 2009) and noted by 31<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session. These are as provided in AR5/SYR-SCOP/Doc.4 of the material submitted to the Scoping Meeting. In essence, these topics include:
- Observed changes and their causes
  - Future changes (in the short and long term)
  - Response
  - Transitions and transformation
- 2.4 It is entirely open to the Scoping Meeting to specify sub-topics under these broad topic headings. If there are strong and compelling reason to suggest any modification to these topics themselves the meeting could also come up with a view in this regard. However, for all practical purposes the meeting should work within the framework of the four topics agreed on. Several governments did suggest sub-topics or sections under each topic, and the meeting could come up with these on a precise and constructive basis.
- ### 3. Issues of emphasis and priorities
- 3.1 For several logical reasons and on the basis of government comments received there is reason for emphasis and an overriding level of attention to be provided to:
- Article 2 of the UNFCCC – Since the Scoping Meeting is to be preceded by a Cross Working Group meeting on Article 2, output from that meeting would be available at least in draft form for the Scoping Meeting itself.

- Reasons for concern – This is a subject which was covered in the SYR for both the TAR as well as the AR4, but there is continuing interest in dealing with the subject in sufficient depth.
  - Characterization of uncertainties – This subject needs to be dealt with as consistently as possible across the three working groups. Documentation on a meeting recently held on the subject will be available to the participants to provide a perspective on how the treatment of uncertainties can take place effectively across working groups.
  - Treatment of scenarios, particularly representative concentration pathways (RCPs), their underlying assumptions and characterization.
- 3.2 The meeting should also come up with any other areas of emphasis or priority that must dominate the thrust of the SYR and the manner in which these would be incorporated in the report.

#### **4. Contents and material to be presented**

- 4.1 The contents of the SYR as required under IPCC procedures should be derived from the material contained in the three Working Group reports as well as the Special Reports under preparation on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation; and Managing the Risk of Extreme Events & Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation. Since under a decision of the Panel, working on the SYR is being initiated relatively early, it is important to ensure a two way flow between the design of the SYR and the contents of the Working Group reports. To a large extent this has already happened in the approved outlines of the Working Group reports and the preliminary structure of the SYR. However, there is scope for continuing refinement of the contents and elaboration of subjects in the Working Group outlines by which the policy relevance material to be included in the SYR can be reflected in all the documents which would form part of the AR5.
- 4.2 The Cross Cutting Themes (CCTs) identified for consideration in the AR5 have been described in detail in AR5/SYR-SCOP/INF.3. However, it is entirely possible that the Scoping Meeting may come up with modifications of these CCTs or additions to them as may be considered necessary. However, any departure from the CCTs already identified should be explained carefully through appropriate description of the reasoning and rationale for doing so.
- 4.3 The dominant view of governments, which can be seen as distinct from similar comments received for the AR4, highlights the importance of this SYR covering societal aspects, economic dimensions, as well as equity aspects in the material to be presented. In this context it would be useful to remind the participants of the meeting of the original UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution No.43 which forms the charter of the IPCC, which stated that the UNGA “Endorses the action of the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme in jointly establishing an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to provide internationally coordinated scientific assessments of the magnitude, timing and potential environmental and socio-economic impact of climate change and realistic response strategies, and expresses appreciation for the work already initiated by the Panel.”
- 4.4 The important part of this resolution is a very clear inclusion of the term “reasonable response strategies”. The reasonableness of response strategies that would be included essentially fit under the title of transitions and transformation included in the SYR structure. These would necessarily require proper treatment of the societal and economic aspects of each different response strategies.

## **5. Audience to be addressed**

- 5.1 The audience of the SYR goes beyond the scientific community and since this is by far the most important policy relevant document in any assessment, it has to be of interest to governments, business and industry, civil society and all stakeholders. Comments received from governments have also pointed to the importance of the role of the private sector. Another issue that was brought out, presumably in the context of transitions and transformation is to consider “low GHG society” rather than “low carbon society”. This implies attention to all major GHGs. Here again it would be important to go back to the original UNGA resolution which clearly specified, “calls upon Governments and intergovernmental organizations to collaborate in making every effort to prevent detrimental effects on climate and activities which affect the ecological balance, and also calls upon non-governmental organizations, industry and other productive sectors to play their due role.”

## **6. Process for preparation of the SYR and possible time table**

- 6.1 The Panel in recent plenary sessions has clearly emphasized early treatment and preparation of the SYR. It is also desirable to ensure that the gap between the preparation and release of the WG-I report and the completion of the SYR should not be unduly long. In the case of the AR4, the WG-I report was completed on February 1, 2007, and the SYR in November 17, 2007. Hence the gap between completion of these two documents was barely ten months. For the AR5 the Panel at its 31<sup>st</sup> Session decided that the SYR should be finalized 12 months after completion of the WG-I report. Preparation of the SYR would be facilitated considerably by the early establishment of the Technical Support Unit (TSU) for this purpose. The meeting should also consider the two alternative time schedules for taking up and completing the work of the AR5. Based on the recommendations of the Scoping Meeting, the Panel can then take a decision at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Session to be held in Busan, Korea in October 2010. The outcome of the Scoping Meeting would be prepared by a drafting team, which is expected to complete this work by the morning of Saturday, August 28, 2010.