

**AR5 Synthesis Report Scoping Meeting
Liege, Belgium, 25-27 August 2010**

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ENGLISH ONLY

KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM GOVERNMENT COMMENTS

Summary of Governments submissions on the Scope of the SYR

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

Summary of Government Submissions on the Scope of the SYR

Note:

This summary is based on the information provided in Doc.AR5/SYR-SCOP/INF.2 (IPCC Member Government submissions in July 2010). Together with the full set of comments, this summary will help guide participants at the SYR Scoping Meeting (25-27 August, 2010) to improve the scope of the SYR in relation to especially key policy-relevant questions and concerns.

Executive Summary of Comments:

On assessment methodologies:

- Full recognition of IPCC rules and procedures in the SYR
- The assessment methodology must be precisely mentioned
- Clearly describe change in scenario assumptions
- Gaps in knowledge and where there is high uncertainty must be clearly identified
- There should be traceability in the conclusions

On the outline:

- More detailed outline needed for four areas
- Explain implications for policymaking of uncertainties as well as differences in nature of uncertainties (e.g. human factors)
- Explicit treatment of Article 2 and Key Vulnerabilities; showing knowledge evolution
- Include robust findings and key uncertainties
- Integration of regional information in SYR
- Be clearer about the time frame of short/medium/long-term
- Use non-technical language
- Topics iii and iv need to be coordinated to avoid duplication

SCOPE OF THE SYNTHESIS REPORT (SYR)

1 General Comments

1.1 Timing, Management and Implementation

- There should be transparency in developing the text; a quality management system is required, e.g. an independent quality assurance manager could be used, and a new QA/QC system could be approved by the Panel.
- There should be full traceability in the conclusions; TSU for SYR must be very careful with cross-checking and there should be a well-coordinated glossary.
- More time needed in the schedule to finalize the document – 5 months is not enough.

- Should not consider new material between approval of WG reports and SYR approval; however there may be exceptional cases of critical new information arising in the year between the WGI and SYR reports. A dedicated expert meeting could be called to consider such exceptional cases.
- SYR TSU to manage the process.
- Good guidance needed from the SYR TSU and the Chair to steer the author team although boundaries will constantly need to be renegotiated during the writing process.
- Topics iii and iv need to be coordinated to avoid duplication.
- One government suggested that the outline now being developed should be regarded as a notional outline, and consider possible adjustment at an appropriate point in the assessment cycle.

1.2 Frequently ask questions (FAQs)

- Many countries requested an FAQ section in the SYR. Some suggestions were: specifically designed FAQs (to bring a fresh integrated perspective) and depending on whether they are needed to address the policy relevant topics/questions submitted by governments, more FAQs with illustrated answers, and including all or some of the FAQs from the Working Group reports.
- The language should be simple and easy to understand for non-specialists (applies to all parts of the SYR).

1.3 General comments on length, language, graphics, etc.

- Several governments suggested the same length as for AR4 SYR or shorter.
- Many suggested to include newly designed synthesis graphics and tables.
- Many asked that authors avoid technical language in the SYR, as well as in the chapter titles as set out in the scoping process to facilitate interpretation of AR5 for the general public (For example, do not use technical language in the outline such as “the Solution Space”).

1.4 General Comments on the outline:

- The policy-relevant topics/ questions submitted by governments and compiled in document AR5-SCOP/INF.1 remain a valuable source of input to the scoping of the SYR. (*These comments are being made available to SYR Scoping Meeting participants in an electronic form*).
- Most governments agree with the proposed structure of approximately 4 main topics, rather than questions.
- More detailed outline needed for the 4 areas, or add detailed questions under each of the topics to guide the author team.
- Explain implications for policymaking of uncertainties as well as differences in nature of uncertainties (e.g. human factors).
- Explicit treatment of Article 2 (including 2 and 1.5 degrees target) and Key Vulnerabilities.
- Particular emphasis on equity and sustainable development aspects.
- Show knowledge evolution in IPCC, e.g. reasons for concern.
- Possible separate section or method of highlighting robust findings and key uncertainties for all sections of the SYR.
- Be clearer about the time frame of short/medium/long-term.
- Many are concerned about the overlaps between sections iii and iv, and request further clarification/ distinction between the two.

- SYR should provide us with a full picture of the new society describing not only the expected changes on different sectors but also an integrated view of our every day life, including economy, consumption, leisure patterns, socio-cultural aspects, etc. Interactions among climate change (adaptation and mitigation) options and anthropogenic climate change drivers should be underlined in the SYR.

On the treatment of regional information:

- Effective integration of regional information in SYR, while not making SYR too long.
- SYR authors need careful guidance in order to build on and yet not duplicate the content of Part B of the WGII report.
- Options proposed for treatment of regional information: include regional information in all sections; or presentation of results by geographical region.

On the assessment methodology:

- The assessment methodology must be precisely mentioned.
- There was also a suggestion to put the technical details or explanations in the annex.
- Policymakers should clearly understand the specifications and limitations of scientific issues.
- The statements in at least the SYR SPM should specify robustness in terms of probability, amount of evidence or level of expert agreement, as opposed to confidence statements (less transparent to the reader).
- Clearly describe change in scenario assumptions, “Representative Concentration Pathways” (RCPs) and consequences/changes due to shift from the Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (SRES) scenarios (maybe in a technical annex).
- Include the full range of impacts in the SYR – high to low risk impacts.

i. Observed Changes and their Causes

On Observed Changes:

- Separate out causes from changes.
- Need brief outline of our fundamental understanding of the climate system.
- Include a very clear description of how attribution studies are conducted.

On Causes:

- Refer to “likely causes” instead of “causes”.
- Discuss all relevant drivers of change (socio-economic, behavior, etc.), not only those related to Climate Change and greenhouse gases (GHGs).
- Discuss observed internal variability.

ii. Future Changes (in the Short and Long-term)

Topics to include:

- Include medium-term, as well as short and long-term future changes.
- Should cover full range of impacts including positive impacts.
- Discuss robust findings and key uncertainties.
- The probability of abrupt or irreversible changes for different RCPs should be contemplated in this chapter. Information should be presented in a table showing the impact on society and ecosystems.
- Add clear and coherent regional projections of e.g. extremes, which may form the basis for informed decision-making in the future.
- Address regional climate changes including phenomena like Asian Monsoon (affects more than 1.5 billion people; why not mention temperature, rainfall, extreme events).
- Elaboration of “cost of degraded or lost ecosystem services” at regional level is needed.

Comments/concerns on methodology:

- Important to include the degree of uncertainty.
- A trade-off methodology should be designed to accommodate scientific uncertainty to policy relevant issues in order to assist decision-making.
- Clearly describe change in scenario assumptions, RCPs and consequences/changes.
- Scenarios must reflect in a realistic manner social and economic trends of countries instead of following simplistic extrapolation of past trends.

iii. Response

- “Interactions between adaptation, mitigation and development” listed under iii. clearly overlaps with section iv.
- Address adaptation and mitigation scientifically distinct and then possible synergism, win-win, and trade-offs; but keep adaptation separate from mitigation.
- It is not clearly apparent where the economics of adaptation will be reflected in the SYR.
- More attention should be given to adaptation in this section; Key question: “What adaptation strategies are needed globally to cope with different levels of climate change?”.
- “Responses” is much too large; propose subdividing into 4 sections.
- Include: technological innovation for adaptation.
- Include section on the interaction between climate change policy issues and other global environmental issues, including in the context of sustainable development; and link to UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- Effect of existing climate change related policies (but be clear what is meant/included).
- Outline projected developments of impacts and damages at different mitigation pathways and which of these can be avoided at different levels of costs.
- Role of civil society, private sector, multilevel governance.
- Address the cross-cutting issues of investment and finance – for both adaptation and mitigation – and the role of the private sector.
- Relate findings to main economic sectors.
- Assessment of risk transfer.
- Use language that does not lock in unintended outcomes, e.g. the term “Basket of gases” should be used instead of “Greenhouse gas metrics”.
- Key policy questions could guide the scoping of this section, such as “What mixes of mitigation options (societal, economic and technological) might enable achievement of climate stabilisation levels, taking account of costs and uncertainties?” and “What are the barriers to achieving such goals and how might they be overcome?”.
- Include feedback of climate change on options.

iv. Transitions and Transformation

- Better distinction between topics iii. and iv. (most governments), or combine them.
- Discuss role of private sector, and in investment.
- SYR must assess all gases and sources; therefore call it “Low GHG (or emissions) society” rather than “low carbon society”.
- The investment in R&D should not be only restricted to technological options.
- Also, the analysis of the impact of political, economic and social circumstances on mitigation and adaptation processes would be useful.

3. Additional topics or policy-relevant questions not covered by the four topics above

- Under the “Notes” section, many governments felt that this sentence should be deleted: “The development of material for the future change section and the response section will pick up on and be influenced by outcomes of COP15 of the UNFCCC (Copenhagen, December 2009).”

- Several governments noted that the scope of the SYR should address how to improve climate change knowledge and even one mentioned addressing the role of media in the SYR.
- Describe how climate and socio-economic uncertainties are coupled.

4 Any other comments on issues for consistent treatment across Working Groups

- Need for uniformity such as on reporting of sources, not just consistency across WGs.
- The impact of uncertainties could be a unifying theme throughout all Working Groups.
- Impacts of uncertainties might be demonstrated by results of sensitivity analysis or probabilities.
- Specific persons in each WG could be assigned for the CCTs and for the CCMs in order to facilitate cross-WG communication and to ensure their coherent implementation that is primordial for SYR.