



IPCC Synthesis Reports

Procedures · History · Format

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ipcc
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change



SYNTHESIS REPORTS – Definition (1)

“Synthesis Reports” synthesise and integrate materials contained within the Assessment Reports and Special Reports and are written in a non-technical style suitable for policymakers and address a broad-range of policy-relevant but policy-neutral questions.

SYNTHESIS REPORTS – Definition (2)

They are composed of two sections as follows:

- (a) Summary for Policymakers and
- (b) a longer report

SYR PROCESS

- Step 1** Writing team prepares draft
- Step 2** Simultaneous expert/government review (8 weeks)
- Step 3** Revision of draft
- Step 4** Submission to governments and organisations
8 weeks before Panel Session
- Step 5** Panel consideration of SYR
 - Provisional approval of SPM line by line
 - Review and adoption of longer report section by section
 - Revisions by authors as required
 - Adoption and approval by Panel

SYR WRITING TEAM

- **Core writing team lead by IPCC Chair**
4-6 LAs and 1 Co-chair from each WG and Vice-chairs responsible for X-cut
- **Extended writing teams (optional)**
1-2 LAs per chapter from each WG
- **Bureau members (+other experts) act as Review Editors**

HISTORY – FAR SYR

- 10 pages synthesis drafted by IPCC Chair
- In the course of the adoption text was reduced considerably to an “**Overview**” not to be read in isolation but in context of
 - 4 SPMs
 - 3 WG contributions
- The Overview and four SPMs published in 1992, along with 1992 IPCC Supplement.

HISTORY – SAR SYR

- Resolution of WMO Executive Council (July 1992) and UNFCCC information needs
- Address scientific technical information relevant to interpreting **Article 2 of the UNFCCC**
- Published together with 3 WG SPMs

HISTORY – TAR SYR

- **UNFCCC COP-3 (1997) requested SBSTA** to “give further consideration to issues related to the work of the IPCC and to formulate policy relevant questions which should be addressed in the TAR”.
- **9 questions considered and adopted by IPCC-15, Costa Rica, April 1999**
- **IPCC-14, Vienna, Nov 1998 adopted SYR procedures**

TAR SYR

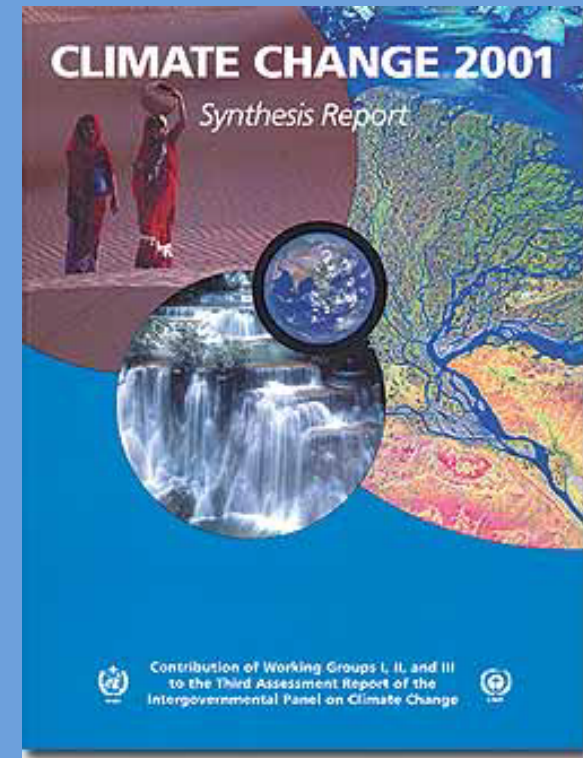
structure and publication

TAR Volume 4

- SYR
- SPM and TS of WG reports
- 400 pages, 6 languages

SYR stand alone

- English only, 184 pages

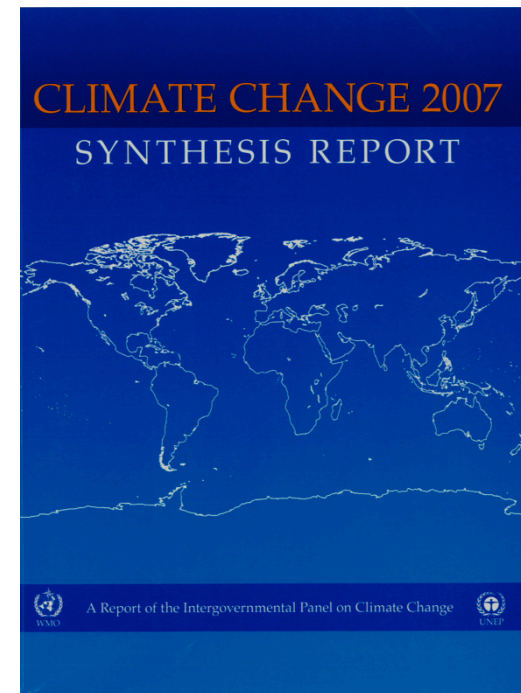


AR4 Synthesis Report Topics

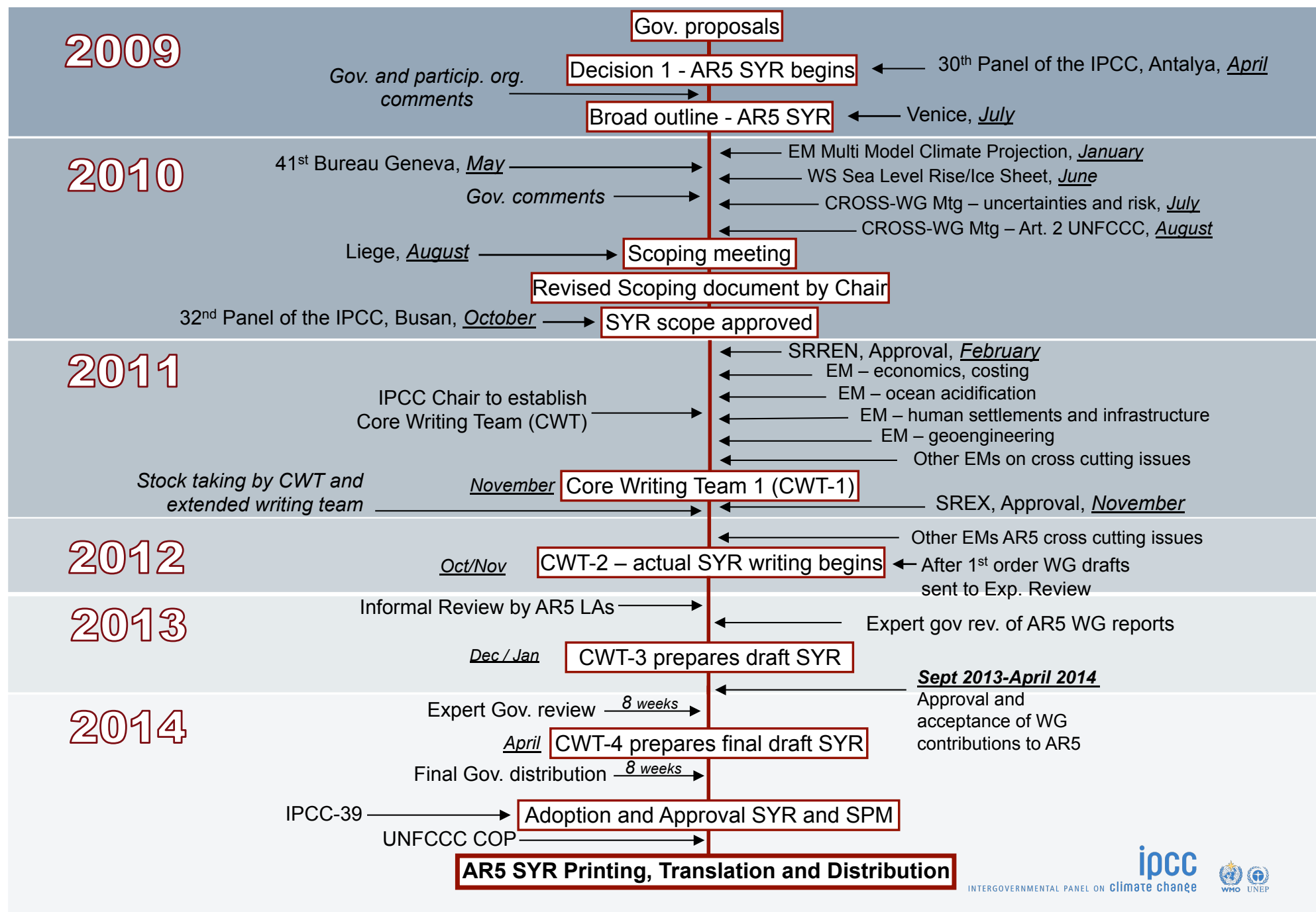
- TOPIC 1** Observed changes in climate and their effects
- TOPIC 2** Causes of change
- TOPIC 3** Climate change and its impacts in the near and long term under different scenarios
- TOPIC 4** Adaptation and mitigation options and responses, and the inter-relationship with sustainable development, at global and regional levels
- TOPIC 5** The long-term perspective: scientific and socio-economic aspects relevant to adaptation and mitigation, consistent with the objectives and provisions of the Convention, and in the context of sustainable development
- TOPIC 6** Robust findings, key uncertainties

AR4 SYR timeline

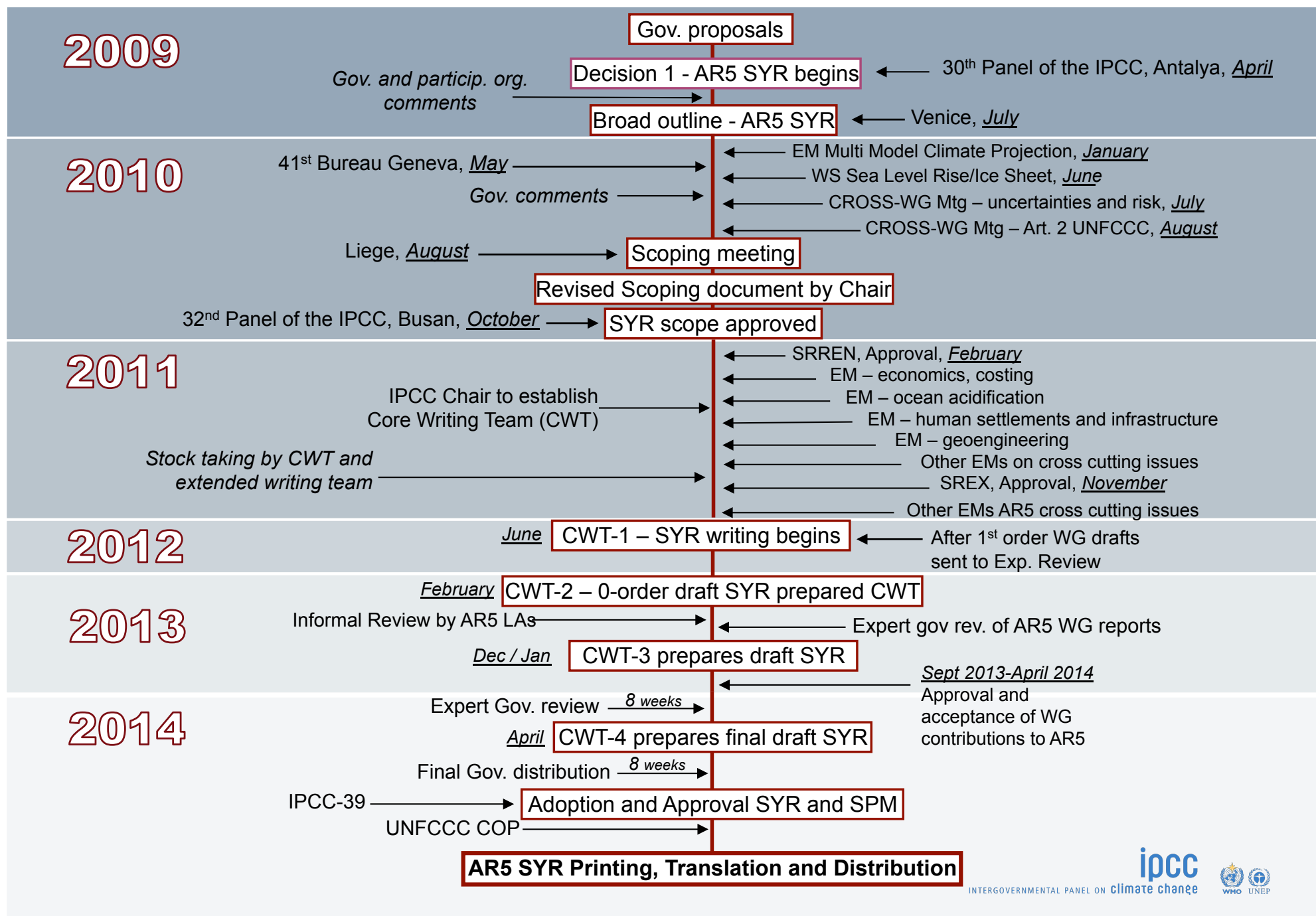
- **Nov 2004 – IPCC-22** Decision on scope and outline
- **Aug 2006 – CWT 1**
- **Feb 2007 – CWT 2**
- **Feb-May 2007 – Approval of WG Reports**
- **May 2007 – short CWT 2bis**
- **July-Aug 2007 – CWT 3**
- **Nov 2007 – Adoption approval SYR by IPCC-27 (Valencia)**



SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR AR5 (option 1)



SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR AR5 (option 2)



Key messages from government comments

General comments

- Transparent process, comprehensive documentation → QA/QC
- Full traceability of the conclusions
- The assessment methodology must be clear in advance e.g. emphasis on high risk or full range?
- Use non-technical easy to understand language
- Develop new integrated graphics and tables

Structure and outline

- Provide more detailed outline and guidance to CWT
- Leave flexibility to CWT to decide, based on new knowledge, how to best structure information
- Add robust findings and key uncertainties
- Integrate regional information – more guidance on how and to which extent
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- More clarity on topics iii and iv needed

AR4 SYR Topic 1

Observed changes in climate and their effects

- 1.1 Observations of climate change**
- 1.2 Observed effects of climate changes**
- 1.3 Consistency of changes in physical and biological systems with warming**
- 1.4 Some aspects of climate have not been observed to change**

AR4 SYR Topic 2

Causes of change

- 2.1 Emissions of long-lived GHGs**
- 2.2 Drivers of climate change**
- 2.3 Climate sensitivity and feedbacks**
- 2.4 Attribution of climate change**

Special attention to ARTICLE 2 of the UNFCCC

- Explicit treatment of Art. 2 and key vulnerabilities
 - Separate topic or throughout SYR ?
- Show knowledge evolution and reasons for concern
- Address 2°C and 1,5°C

Methodological aspects

- Be clear on time frames – short/medium/long
- Describe changes in scenario assumptions and implications
- Explain implications for policymaking of uncertainties as well as differences in nature of uncertainties (e.g. human factors)
- Amount of evidence or expert agreement as opposed to confidence statements

TOPIC I

Observed Changes and their Causes

- Observed changes in climate, natural and human systems
- Effects of changes
- Attribution and linkages
- Drivers of change

Comments on Topic I

- Fundamental understanding of climate system (here or in Annex)
- Observed changes and drivers (all including internal variability)
- Respective contributions and linkages of drivers
- Effects on natural and humans systems
- Critical changes and implications for other systems e.g. Arctic and SLR
- Explain attribution studies
- Add costs of changes

TOPIC II

Future Changes (short and long-term)

- Future drivers and future changes (CC related and other causes)
- Key risks (framed around representative scenarios)
- The wider context – including sustainable development
- Reasons for concern

Comments on Topic II

- Include medium-term changes
- Scenario assumptions and future drivers
- Full range of impacts, also positive ones
- Abrupt and irreversible changes, tipping points
- Reasons for concern including societal issues
- Regional projections and phenomena
- Costs of degraded ecosystems

TOPIC III

Response

- Risk Management and framing of response
- Reduction of scientific uncertainty to assist decision-making
- Effect of existing climate-related policies
- Co-benefits, externalities;
- Bottom-up/top-down Integration
- R&D to expand technology options
- Equity and sustainable development dimensions
- Interactions - adaptation, mitigation, development.

Comments on Topic III

- Clear distinction from topic iv
- Treat adaptation and mitigation separately and then address synergies and trade-offs
- More on adaptation, technology and economics
- Interaction of cc policies with other policy goals, environmental issues and MDGs
- Role of civil society, multi-level governance, private sector, investment and finance
- Risk transfer

TOPIC IV

Transitions and Transformation

- Pace and scale of adaptation and mitigation
- Equity dimensions over different time and space scales
- Development pathways including a global transition to a climate-resilient, low carbon society
- Behavioral and societal changes
- Benefits and costs (including co-benefits)
- Governance and institutional arrangements
- Investment needs
- Development issues
- Climate and security

Comments on Topic IV

- Dynamical interaction of responses
- Address optimal basket of gases, not just low carbon society
- Investment in R&D not only restricted to technology
- Behaviour, production and consumption
- Difference between 2 and 1,5 degrees
- Impacts of different mitigation pathways