



**IPCC Synthesis Report
Fourth Assessment Report**

Comments on the Final Government Draft

**GOVERNMENT and ORGANIZATION COMMENTS
– GENERAL (all batches to 7 November 2007) –**

November 7, 2007



WMO

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE



UNEP

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Topic - Batch - Comment	Page	Line	To Page	To Line	Comment
0-A-1	0	0			We are still a bit disappointed. The Syn is not as integrated as it could have been. It does not have much added value compared to the existing 3 SPMs. It appears more as juxtaposition of the WG contributions than as a real synthesis with much added value. This comes in part from the absence of cross-cutting policy-relevant questions to be addressed from the start by the whole AR4 report and SYR. One key element that is needed if one wants to add value to the SYR is to have an update on the TAR "Reasons for Concern" diagram. For the future we need to find more imaginative ways to make a real synthesis. (Government of Belgium)
0-A-2	0	0			Throughout the Synthesis report, wherever emission scenarios are mentioned, include the qualifier "assessed". For example, page 11, line 4 states that "Even under the most stringent mitigation scenarios ...". IPCC can not claim to have assessed the complete range of plausible futures, neither at the lower or upper end, but only a subset, namely the ones currently published. Avoid wherever possible statements like "low" or "lowest" scenarios, and replace by "lower of the assessed" and "lowest assessed". (Government of Germany)
0-A-3	0	0			This draft is weaker than the previous one. During the revision process key elements and many policy relevant information has been lost, in particular in the SPM and in the topics 3 and 5. In our view it is crucial that most of this information will be again included in the final SYR, as well as to be completed by other key elements. (Government of Spain)
0-A-4	0	0			There were a number of examples in the Synthesis Report where only selective bullets were brought up from underlying reports with no apparent rationale for the selection of some bullets over others. This is the danger of using a 'cut and paste' approach to text rather than synthesizing material. Need to ensure criteria or rationale for choosing some bullets over others is made clear in the appropriate spots. See specific examples in comments below. (Government of Canada)
0-A-5	0	0			The U.S. Government notes the significant challenge placed before the core writing team in attempting to synthesize—for both lay and technical audiences—the broad, dense climate change assessments of three very different working groups. For the most part, the authors did an exceptional job of melding myriad perspectives, spanning the full range of physical and social sciences. Building interdisciplinary consensus is the trademark of the IPCC, and once again the IPCC has risen to the task. On the occasions that the U.S. Government does not feel that the draft Synthesis Report reflects a balanced synthesis of key and robust findings, specific line-by-line comments are provided, but in general the efforts of the Synthesis Team are applauded. (Government of United States of America)
0-A-6	0	0			The U.S. Government appreciates the core writing team's efforts to respond to previous comments on the need to adhere to the page limitations specified in the "Report of the 22nd Session of the IPCC"—held in New Delhi, India from November 9-11, 2004. The invitation to participate in the final review of the draft Synthesis Report (6972-07/IPCC/AR4-SYR) includes a statement that this draft conforms to the page constraints once one takes into account the design stage and standard of 900 words per page in the published document. Even applying that algorithm to the current draft, the SPM appears to be ~20% over the prescribed limit. Since the successful negotiation of this document requires that delegates complete line-by-line approval of the SPM and paragraph-by-paragraph approval of the underlying topics during allotted time in Valencia, the U.S. Government requests

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					that authors continue to strive for strict adherence to the plenary approved outline (PAO) page lengths in the final document. (Government of United States of America)
0-A-7	0	0			<p>The U.S. Government again points out problems with adherence to the plenary approved outline (PAO) for the Synthesis Report. The organization of some topic subsections and connections of text therein to topic titles is sometimes very confusing, with a great many subsections not in alignment with the “Annex 3” scoping outline. It is sometimes a stretch to see how the supporting text even addresses the topic.</p> <p>Though the topic titles are verbatim to those in the scoping outline, under some topics it appears as if authors either added entirely new subsections not in the PAO, or did not address the full range of approved sub-elements proposed within topics. As a result, the five topical ‘story lines’ differ substantially from that envisioned.</p> <p>Adherence to an agreed outline facilitates consensus by eliminating biases (or the perception of bias) of contributing authors or reviewers for inclusion of their favorite topics at the expense of other findings. The PAO should not be set aside lightly. In fact, in author responses to Expert and Government Review comments, certain legitimate recommendations were dismissed just because they did not neatly fit within the PAO. The U.S. Government expects the writing team to self-impose the same rigorous standards and weigh very carefully any major additions or subtractions to the PAO topics.</p> <p>Having said that, the U.S. Government acknowledges the need for some flexibility in order to enable a proper synthesis and it does not intend to handcuff the writing team by mandating absolute adherence to the PAO. However, the U.S. Government expects establishment of a ‘high-bar’ for diversions. Moving material from overpopulated topics and force-fitting it into others does not constitute an acceptable criterion for flexibility.</p> <p>The U.S. Government has noted the more challenging diversions from the outline in its specific line-by-line comments. Given that most of the subsections are stand-alone syntheses of issues, the U.S. Government believes its concerns can be addressed by revisiting the PAO and deleting or moving material into the proper topics.</p> <p>(Government of United States of America)</p>
0-A-8	0	0			<p>The treatment of robust findings is still problematic. The truncated reference in the SPM to robust findings is but a throwaway tag line. The section either needs material added or should be eliminated. In fact, shouldn’t these lead the document and be included in the SPM since they are the most important findings of the assessment process? Having an understanding of what we know and what we don’t know is a useful introduction to the material in the rest of the report. In its current state, the description of robust findings is confusing and needs work: What exactly separates them from other findings highlighted in the synthesis? What is their connection to ‘key findings’ and ‘policy relevance’?</p> <p>(Government of United States of America)</p>
0-A-9	0	0			<p>The Synthesis Report is very well-written, and the presentation of key topics and highlights of AR4 findings is clear and streamlined.</p> <p>(World Meteorological Organization)</p>
0-A-10	0	0			<p>The speed of climate science is such that the very regular new findings makes a document like this, which is meant to be a document of record, a little dangerous.</p> <p>(WWF International)</p>
0-A-11	0	0			<p>The report need to clearly summarise the regional information gap to help in future endeavour</p> <p>(Government of India)</p>

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0-A-12	0	0			The IPCC decision mentions that the SYR will have an annex consisting of a "User guide (how to access detailed information on inter alia regions and sectors in the SYR and the underlying Working Group reports)". Where is it? (Government of Belgium)
0-A-13	0	0			The draft Synthesis Report does still not offer enough new information beyond the findings already included in the SPMs of Working Groups I, II and III. This is disappointing and a lost opportunity. From the Austrian perspective the Synthesis Report should build on the material elaborated by the three Working Groups. This should not exclude new ideas developing from a true holistic picture. Such picture should e.g. address the fact that WGs build on the SRES scenarios and that actual emissions are higher compared to those assumed 10 years ago. Topic three might address this issue. Topic 5 does not address the issue of overshooting scenarios at all although we depend with every day of further increasing global emissions more and more on technologies to reduce atmospheric GHG concentrations to a level that prevents impacts that are considered to represent "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system". (Government of Austria)
0-A-14	0	0			The document is concise in its summarisation. A little more information should be included on regional impacts, adaptation and mitigations solutions in particular in the regions of Small Islands. (Government of Trinidad and Tobago)
0-A-15	0	0			SYR should contain relevant policy information as result of a real synthesis of the totality of information contained in all AR 4 WGs documents, not only SPMs. SyR is not a "cut paste" document it has to have an "added value". Due to the audience of the SYR, the information has to be comprehensive, concise and give clear message. On the other hand, as there has been an improvement in the knowledge and in the accuracy since the Third Assessment Report, we should remark in the text those especially relevant figures and data that have been improved such as, for example, the new figure for the updated 100 year trend [0,74 °C]. It can be also helpful to update some figures of the SYR of the TAR in order to reflect the new scientific knowledge like, for example, the "burning ember diagrams" which linked temperature increases and impacts. This exercise will help policymakers to check the evolution of the new findings and gives a continuity on the assessments. (Government of Spain)
0-A-16	0	0			Overall a very concise and well-structured document. (Government of Switzerland)
0-A-17	0	0			One key sentence, like a motto, is strongly needed in this synthesis! I warmly recommend to find a sentence, like a slogan in commercial PR. It may be used, hopefully not perused, by the media and should be like the last-end final ultimate conclusion of the whole report! (Government of Switzerland)
0-A-18	0	0			New Zealand thanks the Synthesis Report TSU and authors for this revision of the draft report. We reiterate our earlier comment: the authors were set a difficult task. The topic papers are well written and do an great job of covering the diverse and complex material in a compact yet clear way. (Government of New Zealand)
0-A-19	0	0			Missing is the issue of the world's population increase and its effect on climate change. (Government of Switzerland)

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0-A-20	0	0			Mexico thanks the IPCC for the hard work put in producing this synthesis report, and welcomes the opportunity to provide comments to it. (Government of Mexico)
0-A-21	0	0			In the Glossary, on page 2 and 3, when defining "Annex I countries" and "Annex II countries", it should be clarified, possibly in parenthesis, that they include "all OECD countries (except for Mexico and the Republic of Korea)". (Government of Mexico)
0-A-22	0	0			In gneral, topics 1 and 2 can be shortened considerably, as they mostly are based on copying and pasting text from the SPMs from the WG reports, which are already available and accessible to the policymakers. This would allow expanding topics 3 as well as 5, which are the ones with more elements of a real synthesis, but which can be strengthened. The same holds accordingly for the respective sections in the SPM. This would also strengthen the cross-cutting issues agreed for the AR4. (Government of Germany)
0-A-23	0	0			In general, this synthesis report contains too much "cut and paste" from previous SPM's and too little synthesis. One suggestion is to use one new diagram to combine some of the information from e.g. 1) Figure SPM.3 Observed "Global anthropogenic GHG emissions" preferably recalculated to CO2-equivalent concentrations in the atmosphere, 2) Figure SPM.7 Projected "mitigation potential by sector in 2030" again converting numbers to CO2-equivalent concentrations in the atmosphere, 3) Table SPM.3 "post-TAR stabilisation scenarios". An illustrative diagram "Global aspirational goal" is attached for inspiration. [TSU Note: Refer to additional material; "1. Global Aspirational Goals"] (Government of Denmark)
0-A-24	0	0			in general, the synthetic character of the Synthesis Report could be improved. In particular, the Synthesis Report should provide an assessment of risks from the point of view of problem solving under uncertainty, as this is what policymakers are dealing with. This holds in particular for the presentation of the relationship between projected impacts and projected emissions for non-mitigation and mitigation scenarios. (Government of Germany)
0-A-25	0	0			General comment: There is still insufficient integration of information from different Working Groups, compared with the TAR SYR. Most of the text has been taken from the very condensed SPMs of the individual working groups. The SYR should make more use of the totality of information available in the underlying reports to answer the questions formulated by the IPCC plenary. While we had asked for the use of new figures for synthesizing information, important text and figures from the previous draft (e.g., Figure SPM-9 on sectoral mitigation potential) are missing in the SYR FGD. (Government of European Community)
0-A-26	0	0			General comment: The revision of the previous draft had very mixed effects on the different topics. While Topics 1 and 2 and, to a lesser degree, Topic 4 have generally improved, the revision lead to the loss of very important information in Topics 3 and 5, and in the SPM. These important key elements for policy makers needs to be brought back even when this increases the overall length of the final product. (Government of European Community)
0-A-27	0	0			General comment. The current version represents a definite improvement of the previous draft, particularly with regard to the quality of some illustrations and the choice of subjects from the 'topics' for inclusion in the SPM. It is well-written in general, except for the reference to topic 6.

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					(Government of Argentina)
0-A-28	0	0			General Comment about the Topics: there are issues concerning Latin America that are omitted and should be included. (Government of Argentina)
0-A-29	0	0			From the viewpoint of agriculture and food security, the whole report highlights the impacts on agriculture and food security concisely. (World Meteorological Organization)
0-A-30	0	0			Don't forget to mention the names of Review Editors in the same way it was done in the WG contributions. (Government of Belgium)
0-A-31	0	0			Correct and well-balanced synthesis. No change required. (Government of Switzerland)
0-A-32	0	0			<p>COMMENTS OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ON THE IPCC AR4</p> <p>The Dominican Republic, through its State Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, congratulates the IPCC for its hard work in preparing the Fourth Assessment Report which has increased to 90% the evidence of man-made climate change, describing its impacts and possible responses, since its Third Assessment Report of 2001.</p> <p>The <i>Summary for Policymakers</i> gives a clear idea of what our planet is undergoing as a result of the increased CO2 emissions over pre-industrial levels. We support the conclusions and recommendations presented in the report.</p> <p>Increased CO2 levels are shown, with a high degree of certainty, to be causing a present and future temperature rise, forcing governments of small island States, such as Hispaniola, which is shared between the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti, to adopt climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and policies.</p> <p>But, as indicated, the mitigation and adaptation will have a high cost which will not be easy to meet in the Non-Annex I Parties, as it will entail an additional cost in the struggle against poverty and the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals.</p> <p>Ernesto Reyna Alcántara Subsecretary of State (Government of Dominican Republic)</p>
0-A-33	0	0			The potential impact on the frequencies of Saharan dust and its potential impacts and adaptation options is undertreated (Government of Egypt)
0-A-34	0	0			The impact of climate change on the River Nile water budget and its prediction is extremely under studied. The River Nile Basin and potential impact on the riparian countries is also under treated

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					(Government of Egypt)
0-A-35	0	0			Potential impacts of the extreme events of heat waves on economics and health are still not clear (Government of Egypt)

Additional material referred to in Formal Government Review Comments

1. Global Aspirational Goals:

Proposal by the Government of Denmark (Refer to Comment 0-A-23)

DRAFT Global Aspirational Goals

