

Berlin, 9 April 2014

Dear Sir,

I'm writing with reference to the article *Second Climate Thoughts* that appeared in the online edition of the Wall Street Journal on 6 April. I welcome your conclusion that in future you will treat the IPCC's assessments of climate science with more respect.

However, in that piece you assert that the IPCC "sexed up" the Summary for Policymakers of its recently released Working Group II report on impacts and adaptation, in contrast to the full underlying report. But the evidence in your editorial proves the opposite. Some of the specific examples in your editorial are unrelated to the IPCC. In the other examples you cite, the process worked as it should, with more cautious statements in the summary and many more specifics in the underlying chapters.

One example of material in your editorial that has nothing to do with the IPCC is the "false claims" assigning causation for Typhoon Haiyan to climate change. In fact, the IPCC could not have made this implication, as Haiyan struck the Philippines on November 8, 2013, more than a month after the appearance of the IPCC Working Group I report addressing tropical cyclones. Similarly, the IPCC is not the source of a 2005 claim that global warming would create 50 million climate refugees by 2010. The IPCC did not publish any report in 2005 containing such a finding.

The extra care in crafting the Summary for Policymakers is illustrated in your example with the statement "*Vulnerability is rarely due to a single cause.*" that you quote approvingly as showing the IPCC "toning down the end-is-nigh rhetoric". It is in fact from the Working Group II Summary for Policymakers. On the other hand, the statements you criticize about gender inequality, the role of inequality in perpetuating poverty, and specific requirements for adaptation funding are all in underlying chapters, as required by governments in the approved outline, but not in the Summary for Policymakers.

With a careful look at the evidence you cite in your editorial, it is clear that the IPCC is attentive to the broad readership of the Summary for Policymakers. The IPCC has a mandate, not an agenda, and that is to tell policymakers what is known and not known about the science related to climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation. The IPCC assesses relevant scientific, technical and socio-economic literature to produce information that is policy-relevant, but not policy-prescriptive.

Yours faithfully
Jonathan Lynn
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