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**FUTURE OF THE IPCC  
Synthesis of Comments**

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

# Some issues related to the future of the IPCC

(Synthesis of comments prepared by the IPCC Secretariat)

## 1. Introduction

This synthesis is based on comments on the Chairman's discussion paper (Annex 2) received by 21 February 2008 from the following 37 governments:

Argentina	The Gambia	Portugal
Australia	Germany	Senegal
Austria	Hungary	Seychelles
Belgium	Iran	Sweden
Benin	Ireland	Switzerland
Canada	Japan	Togo
Chile	Lesotho	Ukraine
China	Madagascar	UK
Dominican Republic	Mauritius	US
Ecuador	Mexico	Uzbekistan
Egypt	The Netherlands	Zambia
Finland	New Zealand	
France	Pakistan	

Submissions were also received from 16 organizations, more than 70 Lead Authors (LAs) from all Working Groups (WGs) and the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI), and from Susan Solomon and Qin Dahe (Co-chairs Working Group 1) and Geoff Love (Vice Chair Working Group 2) in their capacity as members of the IPCC Bureau. A compilation of all submissions is contained in document IPCC-XXVIII/INF.1

While some submissions referred to all aspects of the discussion paper, many did not follow the structure of the paper and primarily addressed main questions of future IPCC outputs, Working Group structure and composition of the IPCC Bureau. Many authors and organizations also offered detailed comments on scientific technical issues for the next assessment round. Comments were also offered on the use of the funds received for the Nobel Peace Prize. They are reflected in the document submitted under item 7.

In the light of the decisions that have to be taken by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Panel this synthesis attempts to summarize comments on main decision items and reflections on the AR4 process.

## 2. Future IPCC outputs

All submissions endorsed the value of IPCC reports and strongly endorsed a continuation of IPCC assessment work. Overwhelming support was expressed for a continuation of comprehensive assessment reports, covering the full range of the physical science basis, impacts and response measures. Most of the government submissions supported current practice to finalize all volumes of a comprehensive assessment report within a relatively short time frame. Most submissions also urged to maintain in principle the rigorous IPCC procedures and the general structure.

### Comprehensive Assessment Reports

Most governments supported to retain the current intervals of 5-6 years between comprehensive assessment reports as this suits the needs of policymakers well. Several governments suggested a slightly longer interval of 7 to 8 years between full assessment reports. In this context interim updates, Special Reports (SRs) and a

Synthesis Report across the SRs were suggested to supplement the less frequent comprehensive assessment reports. A few governments suggested also staggering of WG reports. Almost all governments considered an interval of 10-12 years between comprehensive assessment reports as too long.

Authors expressed more frequently a preference for longer intervals between reports to facilitate consistent coverage and cross referencing of cross-cutting issues in all WG reports such as physical science related issues relevant for changes in hydrology and cryosphere and impacts resulting from any changes. Longer intervals or staggering of reports were also suggested to allow for assessment of impacts, adaptation and vulnerability studies based on new scenarios and models.

### **Synthesis Report**

A Synthesis Report (SYR) was generally considered very useful for decision makers and was seen by some as a key IPCC product. Only few submissions, mainly from authors, questioned the value added, in particular of a very short Synthesis Report. The majority of comments were in favour of a short "AR4 type" SYR (The Fourth Assessment Report Synthesis Report), while others considered the longer "TAR type" (Third Assessment Report) and question and answer SYR more useful. In general the view was expressed that planning of the SYR should be initiated at a much earlier stage in the assessment process in order to arrive at a true integration and synthesis, to enhance cross working group cooperation and improve the coverage of cross cutting matters.

### **Special Reports**

Most governments supported in general the preparation of well targeted and coordinated Special Reports during the first 2-3 years of an assessment cycle, or during the first 4-5 years if a longer assessment cycle was suggested. Most urged careful planning of those SRs to avoid overburdening of the scientific community, and the need to ensure that the results are reflected in the next upcoming AR. Frequently, reference was made to the framework and criteria for establishing priorities for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers, decided by the Panel at its 20<sup>th</sup> Session (Paris, February 2003), and it was suggested to keep them in force. SRs were also seen as means to address certain scientific topics in more cross cutting manner and a number of suggestions for cross WG Special Reports were made. A few submissions specifically discouraged the preparation of SRs and recommended to focus only on ARs.

Topics for Special Reports which were most frequently mentioned were regional assessments of adaptation and mitigation and an update of the 1997 "Special Report on regional impacts of climate change: an assessment of vulnerability"

Other topics include:

- Abrupt changes in the climate system
- Climate change and synergy with other environmental conventions
- Climate change and sustainable development
- Economic aspects of climate change,
- Adaptation, including an assessment of current practice
- Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability of coastal areas, deltas and SIDS and specific regional or sub-regional IAV assessments
- Climate change and oceans;
- Climate change and water supply
- Climate change and health;
- Climate change and disasters;
- Effectiveness of current mitigation measures including emissions trading
- Climate change technology; geo-engineering; renewable energies; energy efficiency; shipping, aviation or more generally transport
- Forests and deforestation; peat;
- Lifestyle and consumption patterns.

### **Technical papers and interim updates**

Several submissions, mainly from governments suggested exploring the possibility of more frequent updates of new knowledge, e.g. similar to the 1992 Supplementary Reports and the 1994 Special Report. An accelerated procedure to allow more frequent “fast track” updates without jeopardizing the assessment quality was suggested in a few submissions, to allow preparation of SRs or updates within one year. Changing the procedures to allowing Technical Papers to cover new knowledge was also proposed.

Several submissions questioned the value added of Technical Papers, in particular considering current procedural restrictions. Some proposals for technical papers were made, but the proposed scope would rather suggest a Special Report and therefore the topics were included in the list above.

## **3. Structure of the IPCC and its Bureau**

### **Mandate of IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces**

While there is in general strong support that the IPCC WGs should cover the current range of issues, a number of suggestions for amending the Working Group mandates were brought forward, in particular with regards to WG 2 and 3 and coverage of issues, including economics.

Several submissions suggested that the scope of the current WG 2 was too broad and offered proposals for changes. They included moving aspects of observed changes to WG 1; moving adaptation to WG 3 which would then cover response strategies in an integrated manner; or to split the current scope of WG 2 into impacts/vulnerability and adaptation. The proposal in the Chairman’s paper to create a new Task Force on Economics was also supported by a number of submissions. A proposal was made to reduce the number of IPCC WGs to 2. In another submission the creation of regional Working Groups and/or Technical Support Units to address current WG 2 and 3 issues was suggested.

Submissions supported the continuation of the TFI. Some suggested converting it into a WG. Proposals for new activities including coverage of natural forcing agents were made.

### **Structure and size of the future IPCC Bureau**

In general the view was expressed to maintain the size of the current Bureau. There was also broad support for a clear defined role of the Vice Chairs, including responsibility for economics of climate change, involvement in cross working group coordination and outreach as suggested in the Chairman’s paper. The point was also made that appropriate expertise is essential for all positions in the Bureau.

Depending on proposals made for changing the mandate of the WGs, suggestions were also made to increase the number of Bureau members up to 34, or to decrease it respectively. It was also noted that enhanced role of Bureau members as representatives of their regions could improve coverage of regional matters.

## **4. Regional matters, scenarios, sustainable development, economics and other cross cutting issues**

### **Regional coverage**

Many governments asked for better coverage of regional knowledge in particular related to adaptation and mitigation. However, the WG 2 outline used in the TAR and AR4 and which covered sectors and regions in different chapters and sections was not necessarily be seen as the best solution, because of duplication of material and the risk of inconsistencies. The more extensive use of non English literature and relevant grey literature was encouraged in this context. Regional Workshops and expert meetings were considered as useful tools to deepen coverage of regional matters and facilitate access to local knowledge, not necessarily covered in English language literature. Regional meetings were also suggested as means to help to overcome language barriers. Regional SRs on that matter were suggested by several governments (see also under SRs). Some expressed caution to extend regional coverage much beyond the AR4 approach.

## **Economics of climate change**

While there was broad agreement that economics of climate change need to be covered more extensively in the next assessment, diverging views were expressed on how to achieve that. They range from support for a SR on economics, designation of a Vive chair and/or establishment of a Task Group on Economics to foster consistent coverage of economics in the WG reports. Suggestions were also made to cover economics in one dedicated volume of the next assessment report, similar to the scope of the Second Assessment Report, Working Group 3 Report.

## **Climate change and sustainable development**

General support was also expressed to address in more detail the implications of climate change for sustainable development but suggestions range from a SR, broader coverage of all relevant literature, to caution against going beyond the type of coverage done in previous assessment rounds.

## **New scenarios**

Several comments were made about the process of developing new scenarios. Attention was drawn to the timeline for the preparation of new scenarios and the requirement that they should be available on time for enabling research results based on them to be included the next IPCC assessment round. Some comments were also made that, for some aspects of scenario developments, a stronger oversight and catalyzing role of the IPCC may be required.

## **Cross cutting matters**

Most governments and authors support a stronger cross working group integration and interaction, not just limited to a few cross-cutting issues. A number of suggestions were offered, including making draft chapters available to all authors, start an assessment process with a series of cross WG expert meetings to facilitate future cross WG interaction, appoint more cross WG Lead Authors (LAs) with a stronger coordinating role. The establishment of dedicated task groups and appointing a vice chair to assist in addressing cross-cutting matters were also supported. WG 1 Co-chairs expressed caution against the latter proposals as this would compromise the well established leadership role of WG Co-chairs.

## **Other scientific technical issues**

Authors and organizations offered very detailed comments about gaps in knowledge and the focus of the next assessment round. A few highlights of scientific technical topics are listed in the annex to this paper, but considering the detailed nature of many submissions, it is recommended to consider the detailed scientific technical comments in the course of the scoping of any future IPCC assessment work.

## **5. Organizational and other matters**

### **Selection of authors**

Making the selection of authors broader and more transparent was suggested frequently and the involvement of new and younger authors was specifically encouraged. Regional balance should be further improved and the number of engineers and economists increased. A formal training package for new authors is suggested to explain the IPCC procedures.

### **Cooperation with other environmental conventions and UN Bodies**

Better cooperation with other relevant assessment bodies and multilateral environmental agreements was suggested, starting early in the process to establish the current state of knowledge, ongoing policy development and upcoming information needs and to allow addressing synergies and tradeoffs with other environmental objectives more effectively. Biodiversity, desertification and air pollution were frequently mentioned in that context.

Workshops or expert meetings with relevant United Nations bodies and international programmes such as World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), International Geosphere Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and International Human Dimensions Programme (IHDP) to address research needs and encourage projects such

as Assessment of Impacts and Adaptation to Climate Change (AIACC) were seen as suitable instruments<sup>1</sup> to stimulate further research without violating the IPCC mandate. The AIACC project was mentioned as a positive example.

### **Secretariat and TSUs**

A strengthening of the Secretariat was supported by most comments. Some suggested that it has to go further than suggested in the Chairman's paper. The point was also made that TSUs should be equipped to serve also the developing country co-chairs and to address regional issues. Enhanced participation of developing country scientists in TSUs work was encouraged.

### **Outreach**

In general outreach activities were considered very important but comments on outreach cover a wide range from enhancing it further and carrying out also capacity building and education activities, while others call for a more cautious approach not going beyond the IPCC mandate. The point was made that the main focus of the IPCC outreach activities should be governments. The proposal was also made to use the Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Change Analysis (TGICA) for producing animated graphics and further disseminating AR4 material<sup>2</sup>.

### **Various other suggestions**

A number of comments were made on the travel system and several submissions supported business class tickets for participants and authors, while others expressed caution considering the budgetary implications of such a decision. Comments were also made about the carbon footprint of IPCC activities and it was proposed to further minimize travel by applying new technologies (e.g. video conferencing via internet). Suggestions were also made to evaluate methodologies for calculating carbon offset and apply them, and the appropriateness of holding meetings at luxury venues was questioned.

## **6. Conclusions**

In the light of comments received, the Panel at its 28<sup>th</sup> Session may wish to consider the following action:

1. Decide on number and mandate of the IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces, including the possible creation of a new WG or Task Force;
2. Decide on size and structure of the IPCC Bureau, and any specific role associated with certain positions, e.g. of Vice-Chairs;
3. Decide on the duration of the next assessment cycle;
4. Consider and decide on budgetary implications of a strengthening the Secretariat, changing travel procedures and any workshops or expert meetings suggested in submissions;
5. Set up task groups to address issues on which decisions may have to be taken at upcoming sessions. Subject to the consideration at IPCC-28, this may include a review of IPCC procedures with respect to allowing fast track updates.

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<sup>1</sup> A meeting with WCRP,IGBP and GCOS was held in November 2007 ; a similar meeting with IHDP and overall ESSP is planned in April 2008

<sup>2</sup> This has already been agreed between the Secretariat and TGICA.

**Selected scientific topics raised in submissions**

Regional aspects of Climate Change (including modeling, impact studies).

New emission scenarios as a basis for future simulations.

Improve quantification of risk: higher-impact lower-probability outcomes as important as lower-impact higher-probability outcomes.

Interaction and feedback mechanisms within the climate system.

Extreme events.

Dynamics of ice caps.

Sea level rise.

Irreversible and abrupt climate changes.

Advanced studies of “stabilization scenarios”; Multi-gas equivalence.

CO<sub>2</sub> cycle, including evolution of natural sinks with CO<sub>2</sub> atmospheric content.

Influence of development on adaptive capacity.

Quantitative evaluation of social and financial cost of climate changes.

Economic evaluations of damage and adaptation costs.

Social and economic costs of mitigation strategies.

Scientific and technical constraints on production, storage and energy savings without emission of greenhouse gases.

Influence of society organizational aspects on greenhouse gas emissions.

Technology and technology transfer issues.

## **Some issues related to the future of the IPCC**

### 1. A review of the past

With the completion of the Fourth Assessment Report, the IPCC would reach a standing and a record, which clearly distinguishes this organization as a unique scientific enterprise spanning the universe of scientific excellence and influence of knowledge on public policy. Some important lessons and conclusions that can be drawn from the two decades of IPCC's existence are:

The structure of the IPCC and the processes and practices that it has established have proved extremely successful not only in attracting some of the best talent available in the world for carrying out assessments of all aspects of climate change but also in being able to address the needs of policymakers for appropriate information, comprehensive scientific assessments and scientific analysis. The IPCC has also completed a number of methodological reports, including the greenhouse gas inventory guidelines produced by the Task Force on Inventories, that have been used widely especially by the UNFCCC Parties. In combining the efforts of the scientific community with government scrutiny the IPCC has provided a rationale for scientists to respond in all respects for meeting the needs of policymakers. At the same time, the scrutiny and approval by policymakers give the scientific output of the IPCC a credibility and validity that is perhaps unparalleled in any other scientific effort carried out in fields linked with public policy. The principles governing IPCC work clearly lay down the process to be followed in supporting this aspect of IPCC's functioning. It is relevant to observe that the requirements of consensus have been met to a surprising extent, even though there is provision in the principles for recording differences of views<sup>1</sup>.

The focus of the Panel and the comprehensive assessment that it carries out by relying on peer reviewed literature is one of the major strengths of the IPCC, and over a period of time this has certainly motivated researchers both at the individual and institutional levels to undertake research activities that advance the frontiers of knowledge. It is not unusual for researchers to seek and receive research funding on the grounds that their work would feed the requirements of the IPCC. Hence, the work of the Panel has had a major capacity building dimension that should not be minimized.

An important element of IPCC's effectiveness has been its ability to convey its findings to the public through the media and other means. Needless to say media interest in the IPCC's work is a function of the credibility of the organization, but it is clearly the result also of an increasingly proactive outreach strategy to enhance the value, acceptance and effectiveness of the outputs produced by the IPCC.

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<sup>1</sup> The IPCC principles state "in taking decisions, and approving, adopting and accepting reports, the Panel, its Working Groups and any Task Forces shall use all best endeavours to reach consensus. If consensus is judged by the relevant body not possible: (a) for decisions on procedural issues, these shall be decided according to the General Regulations of the WMO; (b) for approval, adoption and acceptance of reports, differing views shall be explained and, upon request, recorded. Differing views on matters of a scientific, technical or socio-economic nature shall, as appropriate in the context, be represented in the scientific, technical or socio-economic document concerned. Differences of views on matters of policy or procedure shall, as appropriate in the context, be recorded in the Report of the Session".

2. Do we need any change?

- 2.1 In view of IPCC's remarkable record of addressing policy relevant issues related to climate change through rigorous scientific assessment, the natural conclusion would be to say that nothing needs to change. But since we are living in a rapidly changing world not only would the IPCC itself need to come up with new approaches for accomplishing its various tasks, but even the needs of the policy community would continue to change appreciably with (1) the spread of knowledge, (2) new perceptions on the impacts of climate change and (3) new opportunities and changing costs of mitigation, but also in the light of changes in the global regime for tackling this challenge. There is, therefore, a continuing need to look at future prospects and possibilities that should provide the basis on which the IPCC itself may consider some modifications and refinements in its functioning.
- 2.2 While considering possible changes it has to be remembered that the Panel has to adhere to the "principles governing IPCC Work" and the procedures contained in the Appendices to those Principles, which have stood the test of time and have been refined through the history of the organization. These principles and procedures should cut across the entire organization and the activities of the IPCC without any distinction or differentiation including the functioning of the Working Groups and Task Forces. However, the products that the IPCC works on could have significant differentiation based on their content and overall purpose.
- 2.3 It is also required that the principles governing the functioning of the IPCC be reviewed at least every five years. The last review was carried out in November 2003. Hence, before the new Bureau takes office it would be essential for a review of the principles to be carried out since it may otherwise not be possible to complete this task before the end of 2008. Hence, it would be essential for a detailed evaluation of the principles to be carried out by a Task Group that could be set up at the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPCC to be held at Budapest.
- 2.4 The IPCC currently carries out its assessment of climate change through the organization of three Working Groups which broadly deal with the following specific areas.
- 2.4.1 Working Group I assesses the physical science aspects of the climate system and climate change.
- 2.4.2 Working Group II assesses the scientific, technical, environmental, economic and social aspects of the impacts of climate change, the vulnerability of various natural and human systems to these impacts and adaptation to climate change.
- 2.4.3 Working Group III assesses all aspects of mitigation of climate change.
- 2.5 Each of the Working Groups has been preparing individual assessments in its respective area of activity. In addition, however, the IPCC also produces a Synthesis Report which derives the knowledge and findings contained in the Working Group Reports and synthesizes this information in a policy relevant manner as the final output from a specific assessment cycle.

2.6 IPCC has also established a credible record of producing special reports, methodology reports and technical papers, which focus on some specific aspects of climate change and related areas.

### 3. Drivers of required change in the future

3.1 This is an appropriate moment to consider the possibility of some changes in the structure of the IPCC and the various outputs that it produces. These changes, if at all should essentially be in the nature of refinements to what has already been established and not necessarily any major departure from either the process by which the IPCC functions or the products that it develops and produces. The factors that require understanding to bring about some change in the future are:

3.1.1 Public perceptions and knowledge related to climate policies: The public is now much better informed about the scientific basis and scientific nature of climate change. There has been an obvious explosion in awareness in recent months brought about by various factors in which the three Working Group Reports of the AR4 have contributed substantially. With this level of awareness, there is now a greater demand for a higher level of policy relevance in the work of the IPCC, which could provide policymakers a robust scientific basis for action.

3.1.2 With the growing awareness about climate change has also come much greater interest in the fundamentals of sustainable development, and larger issues which focus on the depletion and degradation of natural resources and ecosystems across the globe. Future assessments by the IPCC will be required to focus in more concrete ways on various aspects of sustainable development. A shift in the framework to be developed and used at least for the work of Working Groups II and III towards various aspects of sustainable development will, therefore, be warranted, while maintaining the comprehensive nature of IPCC assessments. During the periods when both the Third and the Fourth Assessments were being carried out, considerable emphasis was placed on the connection between climate change and sustainable development. However, the general view of several governments as well as scientists who worked on the two sets of reports is that this subject has not been dealt with adequately. Perhaps this subject needs some analysis attention both in respect of what could have been done in the Third and Fourth Assessment Reports, and what may be important to do in the future.

3.1.3 As a consequence of these changes there would be need to place much greater importance on the economic aspects of climate change. The universal interest in the Stern Review related to the economics of climate change is as much a clear pointer to the demand for information on this subject as it is a clear indicator that the IPCC has not addressed fully this aspect in its assessments. Future assessments would need to focus much more adequately on the economic aspects of climate change, derived largely from the scientific work of Working Groups II and III. It would, therefore, be useful for a small group to carry out an assessment of the Working Group Reports which form part of the Fourth Assessment to identify wherein the economic dimensions of the assessments should have been stronger. A decision on the establishment of such a group could be taken in IPCC-XXVIII.

3.2 Another area where substantial work needs to be done by the research community to provide adequate inputs for the IPCC is in respect of the regional aspects of climate change. Unfortunately, there are several parts of the world where research is almost non-existent when it comes to assessment of local impacts of climate change and where lack of observational data hampers assessment and research. The IPCC by itself cannot address this gap, but there may be need for an initiative similar to the AIACC which could help in promoting more focused research on impacts of climate change in specific regions of the world, particularly involving the developing countries. It may be useful for the IPCC to organize a workshop or expert meeting involving relevant organizations and entities, which could assist in coming up with a desired programme of action which may help to fill the needs of research on impacts of climate change in different parts of the world. The output from such a workshop could then be presented to appropriate organizations that may be able to support a programme of appropriate activities. However, the role of the IPCC in any such initiative should be only that of a facilitator. Such a meeting could also provide some direction on how regional aspects could be covered in greater detail in future IPCC assessment reports.

#### 4. Future outputs of the IPCC

4.1 If the Panel decides to launch a Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), then some refinements and changes may be warranted involving additional work over what has been carried out in the past. The major elements of a Fifth Assessment Report and the cycle of activities to be carried out by the next Bureau of the IPCC should involve:

4.1.1 Three Working Group Reports more or less on the same lines as what was followed in the AR4. The Panel could, of course, bring about specific refinements in the terms of reference of the working groups. For instance, in defining the contents of a particular report a two step procedure may be desirable, in which the first step could develop the main focus and structure of the report and then the contents could be defined precisely. Given the success of the Task Force on Inventories, the TFI should continue to implement its plan for the future of the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Programme as may be approved by the Panel.

4.1.2 Several suggestions have been put forward by the scientific and professional community in recent months, which seem to favour a set of focused special reports rather than a comprehensive assessment of the type that has been produced in the past. If, in keeping with these suggestions, the major part of the output of a cycle of assessments is to be in the nature of special reports, then a comprehensive assessment perhaps would not be required in the usual 5-6 years cycle that has been followed in recent years. In that event, a set of carefully identified special reports could be produced within the 5-6 year timeframe and then a comprehensive assessment carried out every two cycles. But a period spanning two cycles, i.e. 10-12 years seems rather long. It is for the Panel to decide whether the current cycle of 5-6 years for a comprehensive assessment be continued or such an assessment be done over two cycles, with an appropriate number of special reports during the term of each successive Bureau. Even though a comprehensive assessment is a time consuming and large-scale effort, its value is indisputable. My own preference, therefore,

would be for recommending the current system of a comprehensive assessment every 5-6 years, but with special reports on specific subjects to be carried out early in the first three years of the term of a Bureau. These special reports would also provide a useful input for the concurrent comprehensive assessment. For this and other reasons the existing Working Groups structure should be retained even for the purpose of special reports, some of which would be multi-Working Group endeavours in any case. An appropriate coordinating arrangement, perhaps involving a Vice Chair of the IPCC may assist in multi Working Group activities and outputs.

- 4.1.3 As mentioned above there appears to be a widespread demand for production of some special reports during the next cycle. In case a decision is taken to produce a special report on renewables this should be completed well before the closure of inputs for the Working Group III Report of the AR5, because the assessment on renewable energy technologies should form an important part of the Working Group III Report of the AR5. There have been several proposals floating around on topics for special reports such as those dealing with climate change and disasters, impacts and adaptation; climate change and soil quality; etc. The Panel should deliberate on these early in the next cycle of assessment. During the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPCC in Paris in 2002 the framework and set of criteria to be followed for establishing priorities related to Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers for the period of the AR4 were agreed on. It may be desirable to continue with this framework and criteria, unless of course the Panel decides otherwise at some future date.
- 4.1.4 The IPCC should also produce technical papers on specific subjects as is the case with the current effort for producing a technical paper on climate change and water. In the past there have been requests for a special report on sustainable development and climate change. In order to fulfill this felt need there may be some benefit in carrying out a study of the economic of climate change with special emphasis on sustainable development, which would take into account the externalities imposed by the impacts of climate change and how these deviate from sustainable development. Also important is the assessment of mitigation measures in the context of such development. It may be useful to prepare a technical paper on the subject, which would simultaneously help in the scoping of a possible Fifth Assessment Report that could more effectively cover this subject.
- 4.1.5 The innovation of a Synthesis Report which is short and crisp as introduced in the AR4 is perhaps worth pursuing in the AR5 as well. A Synthesis Report would be even more useful even if the assessment cycle concentrates largely on the production of special reports and not a comprehensive assessment as has been followed traditionally. The SYR is by its very nature a policy relevant document, and if policymakers are to make the best use of it, they would necessarily need something brief and simple that is devoid of technical language and concepts. The page limit of 30 pages as specified for the AR4 is perhaps a good framework for production of Synthesis Reports in the future as well.

5. Organizational issues related to the functioning of the next Bureau

5.1 The size of the IPCC Bureau is accepted as being generally right as it exists currently. This can be seen as appropriate because the current size and composition ensures adequate geographical balance as well as functional effectiveness related to the structure of the three Working Groups. However, some changes may help the functioning of the IPCC, which would lead to some minor alterations in the structure of the Bureau. These changes are suggested as follows:

5.1.1 The Bureau should consist of 29 members which would include the Chair, two Vice Chairs and six Co-Chairs of the three Working Groups, and the TFI Co-chairs. It would be essential to ensure that the expertise of the Working Group Vice-Chairs covers subjects that deal with economic and sustainable development issues as well as conventional areas of scientific assessment of climate change. Ideally, a Vice Chair each from both Working Groups II and III could be assigned this responsibility on the basis of expertise. This clearly requires, therefore, that at least one Vice Chair in these two Working Groups respectively should have substantial expertise on economic issues. The balance 18 members of the Bureau should include six members each for the three Working Groups.

5.1.2 The reason for suggesting two Vice-Chairs rather than three is to ensure that the Vice Chairs are provided with specific tasks and responsibilities that would enhance the effectiveness of the IPCC. The two Vice Chairs could assist the Chair effectively by being assigned two groups of responsibilities which need not be bifurcated on a rigid basis. From time to time the Vice Chairs could assist the Chair in outreach activities, particularly by responding to requests for speeches and talks at various events and forums round the world. For specific purposes the Vice Chairs could focus on matters of coordination between different Working Groups, particularly if the proposal to produce outputs in the form of special reports is accepted. There would also be issues related to cross cutting themes where the Vice Chairs could help greatly in adequate treatment of these themes across Working Groups.

5.1.3 Further, there is a need for strengthening the IPCC Secretariat. Given the expansion of activities, including technical assistance for the Task Group on economics, other task groups, and the Vice Chairs, which involve greater coordination with the world outside, the Secretariat requires staffing with one more professional with a scientific background apart from the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. It is expected that the forthcoming years will require a substantial amount of outreach by the IPCC, particularly in the nature of participation in various events and presentations and talks in seminars and conferences etc. As mentioned above the Vice Chairs could assist the Chair in carrying out this function to ensure that the IPCC does not lose appropriate opportunities because of lack of capacity at the top level. Of course, there will be several occasions where other Bureau members could be requested to assist with outreach activities, depending on operational convenience. But all such activities would require support from the Secretariat which is not possible currently due to lack of adequate capacity.

5.1.4 There is also need for some revision of practices and administrative procedures particularly in respect of travel rules applicable to participants in IPCC activities from developing countries and economies in transition. Current procedures have often caused considerable difficulties and hardships, and these need to be changed.

5.1.5 In respect of other practices and procedures, the IPCC has been served well by past tradition and systems, but perhaps some of these need to be discussed before we launch the next cycle of assessments and before the next Bureau comes into office.

## 6. Next steps

6.1 The purpose of this document is essentially to stimulate thinking and come up with a plan for the future of the IPCC. This document will be revised on the basis of submissions to be made by governments and authors of the AR4 as outlined in the covering letter accompanying this document.

6.2 While comments would be very valuable on every section of this preliminary document, in particular comments are invited on:

6.2.1 The issue of a comprehensive assessment during each cycle vs. special reports on a regular basis and a comprehensive assessment every two cycles.

6.2.2 Organizational issues and the structure of the Bureau as well as any changes in procedures and practices in the functioning of the Panel.