

ipcc

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

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REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT BY THE INTER ACADEMY COUNCIL

Compilation of comments received from Governments

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

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**Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures, Report by the InterAcademy Council
Compilation of comments received from Governments**

(Submitted by the IPCC Secretariat)

After 1st October 2010 the following submissions were received by Governments. Comments are by alphabetical order of country:

- Belgium
- Finland
- Italy
- New Zealand
- United Kingdom

REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

report by the InterAcademy Council

Belgian general views and views on a selected number of recommendations

Belgium welcomes very much the occasion to submit its views on the report of the InterAcademy Council on the IPCC review in answer to the invitation by the IPCC Secretary of 3 September 2010.

We first of all thank the IAC for preparing the review of process and procedures of the IPCC. Because of time constraints, we focus for the time being on what we find crucial to enable the IPCC to continue delivering the authoritative and policy relevant assessments for which it is mandated.

General

As noted by the IAC Review Committee, the world has changed considerably since the creation of the IPCC. The amount of literature that needs to be taken into account has increased enormously and the understanding that climate change is a major issue for the society and the environment in the 21st century and beyond. These changes require continued adaptation of the management, procedures, and practices of the IPCC.

The IAC report did not review the science assessed by the IPCC, but it highlighted that the key findings of the AR4 remain unaffected by any procedural shortcomings that were identified

We would also like to express our renewed confidence in the key conclusions from past IPCC assessments and ongoing work.

We are convinced that this review is an extremely useful document that should be carefully considered by the Panel at its next session in Busan and thereafter and used as a basis to improve strengthen the existing rules and procedures and apply them more rigorously, and to improve the overall management and governance structure of the IPCC.

Fast start

The improvements that we would like to see in the management and procedures of the IPCC require short, medium, and long term changes. It is essential for us that the Panel efficiently starts immediately the consideration and implementation of changes, on the basis of the IAC recommendations as well as on the other analyses (such as the one by PBL: Dutch Government Report) on the way that the IPCC needs to adapt in order to meet new challenges and continue to deliver high quality scientific assessments.

We recognize that some of the recommendations are yet being partly implemented very recently. Short term changes require decisions at P32. Others could be decided upon in the

Bussan plenary and implemented soon while there are also recommendations that need careful consideration and discussions on the exact way to implement them.

Avoiding conflicts of interest

Very important to us is to avoid any (perception) conflict of interests. Therefore we insist that discussion on the recommendations should not be chaired by persons that currently have responsibilities within the IPCC (including Bureau members). An option could be to devote this task to an open-ended (with no definite time limit or composition) and transparent Contact Group that would at least during the Bussan meeting replace a Plenary during normal work hours, so that translation would be available for the key discussions. This CG should be established as early as possible during the Bussan Plenary and would be chaired by one co-chair from a developing country and one from an industrialized country, considering the involvement of top UN representatives or past Bureau members. The mandate, terms of references, some timeframes and the way of interacting with the Chair, and after the Bussan meeting, the way of reporting to the plenary, should be established by this Plenary 32. According to the issues to deal with, the CG could have thereafter sub-working groups that could meet outside the normal plenary hours. It is indeed essential that the CG has a great number of individuals who are very knowledgeable about the IPCC, its history, and its processes and procedures.

Extra plenary

For a fast implementation as many recommendations as possible, an additional IPCC meeting, focussing on this might be needed for example back to back to the planned WG 3 plenary.

Participation by members of the IAC Review Committee

It is crucial that the Plenary is well informed on the review by one or more members of the IAC Review Committee and that the results of the review are presented during the plenary, when translation is available, to avoid any misunderstanding (since the report is only available in English).

Views UNEP, WMO and UN

The review report was prepared in time for the 32nd Session of the IPCC in October 2010 and for consideration by the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary General of WMO. We would like to be informed, during P32, on how the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary General of WMO envisage dealing with the IAC recommendations.

The following considerations emphasize the changes that we regard as crucial to enable the IPCC to continue delivering the authoritative and policy relevant assessments for which it is mandated.

Management

Executive director

We note the recommendation of the IAC to create a position of Executive Director to lead the secretariat. Our view is that, with or without this change, there are a number of requirements for the head of the secretariat:

- It is essential to ensure excellent cooperation between the secretariat and the other components of the IPCC, including the Chair of the IPCC and the Members of the Bureau (in particular the WG co-chairs).
- The definition of the duties of the members of the secretariat, and in particular of the leader(s), need to be clear, distinct and compatible with the functions of the other leading individuals. Duplication of leading roles should be avoided, in particular within the secretariat. An audit (for example based on ISO 9000) of the present secretariat could be helpful in identifying the definition of roles of each and the processes and procedures to apply for quality management.

We suggest that if an Executive Director is appointed his/her key duties are mainly management, including management of the implementation of a communication strategy. The qualifications of the selected person should be in agreement with the definition of his/her duties.

Executive Committee

The key issue is to define exactly the roles of each person or body involved in the work of the IPCC. An Executive Committee should have a mandate that is different from that of the Bureau, the chair, and other members of the Bureau. Our view is that its key function could be to contribute to the coordination between Working Groups, to help the Chair and the secretariat on key operational and strategic issues, within the framework of the decisions taken by the Panel.

An Executive Committee could be formed on the basis of the current informal e-team, which includes the IPCC Vice Chairs, as well as others mentioned by the IAC. As a first step in this direction, we suggest to establish written rules for the e-team, including a definition of its mandate and the requirement that minutes of meetings are provided to the Panel.

Duration of the mandates

A balance must be found between two objectives: one is to integrate new ideas, expertise or methods; the other is to ensure continuity and keep the core of the experience acquired during past work. An option could be to limit key mandates to one term while allowing an expert that has been active in the IPCC to hold a different position.

Procedures

Grey literature

We welcome the current approach used for the SRENN report in the way grey literature is handled and can agree entirely with the IAC proposal.

Review Editors

We welcome the recommendations of the IAC in view of continuing improvement of the "Quality Control" within IPCC activities. We agree that the role of the Review Editors should be expanded, with clearly defined rules and tasks to be defined by the Panel. We note that these activities may require additional financing, by the IPCC trust fund to facilitate the participation of developing countries and for the members to fund e.g. review editors who would spend much more time reviewing, would be involved from the very beginning of the assessment process and might need assistance.

Uncertainty

In line with the recommendation of the IAC, we suggest that the IPCC needs to reflect on the rules regarding treatment of uncertainty and understanding levels, in view of harmonizing their application in the working groups and to ensure that they are effectively and efficiently used.

Strategy to deal with errors found after publications

We suggest establishing a contact address for communication of suspected errors as was for example done in the Netherlands during their review of the regional chapters. Rules to process material submitted through this process should be developed as well as procedures to publish errata in the case of errors in approved SPMs.

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IAC Review of the IPCC processes and procedures

Comments submitted by Finland

Background to comments

These comments have been discussed and accepted at the national IPCC working group meeting on 1st October 2010. The Working Group consists of representatives of the ministries and research community. Thus, providing insight both from decision making needs and science world.

General comments on the IAC Review

The review is a valuable document. The IAC is accurate in finding the IPCC processes and procedures that could be improved. The review also contains practical reform suggestions (“Recommendations”). It is imperative that reforms are well planned. On the other hand it is vital that reforms are initiated without any delay in an energetic manner. The IAC Review and the political interest on IPCC should be utilized to speed up necessary reforms in the IPCC work.

List of reforms Finland considers important and urgent

- It is utmost urgent to decide on practical implementation of the IAC recommendations as soon as possible to recover the reputation of the IPCC. If critical decisions can not be made in Busan, at least a clear roadmap ahead should be agreed.
- The management structure of IPCC. It is essential to establish the post of an Executive Director to improve the operational management of the IPCC. The director should have excellent international managerial skills with good understanding of IPCC science. However, it is impossible to find a director whose expertise would cover all of the IPCC WG substance areas. There is also a need to clarify the roles of IPCC chair and the Executive Director. The IPCC chair should act as a chairman of the board, and the Executive Director should be responsible for operational management. The roles of WMO president and Secretary General could be used as an analogous example. The limit of the terms of both the Director and the IPCC chair could be limited to 8 years in a synchronous manner, which would allow certain overlap.
- One should keep in mind, that the founding organizations WMO and UNEP and their executive bodies should play an important role in the selection process of the Director and also in the implementation of the IAC recommendations.
- Due to increasing amount of review comments it is crucial that the review process is strengthened. Finland supports the IAC recommendation that “IPCC should encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority to ensure that reviewers’ comments are adequately considered by the authors and that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the report”. The Review Editors should be sufficiently facilitated with resources (e.g. Assistant Review Editors) and guidance to carry out their tasks.

- More effort should be put into achieving internal consistency between WG reports. As IAC pointed out all WGs could use the qualitative level-of-understanding scale. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate.
- More precise rules for describing uncertainties have new implications, when IPCC reports are used as support for policy decisions. As this may lead to new controversies and to new questions on the objectivity of all IPCC work, it is recommended that the role of IPCC as a body created to collect and present science-based knowledge is defined more explicitly and precisely to exclude policy advice not directly supported by scientific evidence. While the participation of scientist in formulating policies taking into account both science and other considerations is valuable, such activities should not be taken by IPCC.
- Professional communication is essential for the future success and for the public image of the IPCC. Finland supports IAC recommendation that “IPCC should complete and implement a communications strategy that emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders, and which includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately”. We therefore welcome the proposal to establish a properly resourced communication unit attached to the Secretariat. This unit should serve as a facilitator of IPCC communication in close partnership with the TSUs and relevant scientific experts.
- IPCC should refrain from political statements. The core function of IPCC is to produce relevant scientific material, which serves as a basis for political decisions. Political statements by the IPCC related persons would weaken the scientific credibility of the work.

Other points for consideration

- Recommendations of IAC have different level of urgency. A practical approach would be to move quickly forward with reforms that could be implemented in the preparation of AR5.
- The IPCC work is characterized by voluntary participation of world’s leading experts. Therefore the views of the research community should be carefully taken into account in reforms affecting the work of authors e.g. by surveying views of current and earlier IPCC authors.

IAC Review of the IPCC processes and procedures **Submission by Italy**

Italy welcomes the opportunity to submit its views on the *InterAcademy Council (IAC) Review of the IPCC Processes and Procedures* finalized and presented on August 30, 2010.

General Comments:

First of all, Italy would like to thank the *InterAcademy Council* for an excellent review of the IPCC rules and procedures. The *IAC Review* is a valuable and accurate document in analyzing and suggesting improvements in the IPCC processes and procedures. This document includes **twenty-two Recommendations**, which are considered practical suggestions of improvement.

In general, Italy supports all these IAC Recommendations, which should be implemented according an agreed plan by the Panel with some short-term actions and some long-term actions.

IPCC should follow what is stated clearly at **page 55 in the IAC Review**: *“Most of the Committee’s recommendations can be implemented during the fifth assessment process and should be considered at the upcoming Plenary. These include recommendations to strengthen, modify, or enforce IPCC procedures, including the treatment of gray literature, the full range of views, uncertainty, and the review process. Recommendations that may require discussion at several Plenary sessions, but that could be implemented in the course of the fifth assessment, include those related to management, communications, and conflict of interest. Because the fifth assessment is already underway, it may be too late to establish a more transparent scoping process and criteria for selecting authors.”*

Detailed comments:

Modernizing the management structure

Italy considers the establishment of an **Executive Committee** and of an **Executive Director** as adequate ways to improve the management structure of IPCC. We support this Executive Committee *“to act on behalf of IPCC between Plenary Sessions and which could include the IPCC Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs, the senior member of the Secretariat, and 3 independent members, including some from outside of the climate community.”* The Executive Committee should be in charge the administration/management of IPCC, while the IPCC Bureau members should be in charge all scientific/technical issues.

We support the role of this Executive Director, which should have excellent international managerial skills with good general scientific background in climate science. We also support the redefinition by the IPCC of the **responsibilities of key Secretariat positions** both, which could improve efficiency.

We consider essential the development and adoption of a **“rigorous conflict of interest policy that applies to all individuals directly involved in the preparation of IPCC reports, including senior IPCC leadership (IPCC Chair and Vice Chairs), authors with responsibilities for report content (i.e., Working Group Co-chairs, Coordinating Lead Authors, and Lead Authors), Review Editors, and technical staff directly involved in report preparation (e.g., staff of Technical Support Units and the IPCC Secretariat).”**

We consider not essential for the improvement of the whole IPCC process keeping the limitation of terms for IPCC Chair to one assessment cycle, on the other hand we support the limitation to one term for all Working Group Co-chairs.

Strengthening the review process

We consider the work of **Review Editors** essential to the review process. This role of Review Editor should be more publicized at the start of a new assessment cycle. We need to take always excellent scientists, which also could be lead authors of previous reports.

In addition, the IPCC should develop an **adequate procedure to correct detected errors and inaccuracies in reports**. This will make a big step forward comparing to the past dealing with these issues in the past. This procedure needs to make a better usage of web-sites, errata and any other form of scientific communication.

Characterizing and communicating uncertainties

We support that all Working Groups make a full usage of the **same “qualitative level-of-understanding scale in their Summary for Policy Makers and Technical Summary, as suggested in IPCC’s uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate.”** Also we agree on the conditional usage of quantitative probabilities only when there is sufficient evidence.

Developing an effective communications strategy

We strongly support the implementation of an **efficient communications strategy “that emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders, and which includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately.”** **We consider essential to define in a clear way who can speak respectively on behalf of IPCC process, procedures and on the scientific outcomes.**

Increasing transparency

We strongly support a **more transparent IPCC process** in all different activities: selection of participants for scoping meetings, selection of the Bureau members, selections of the Authors/Review Editors of the reports. For example, the procedures of selection of Authors/Review Editors of AR5 report should be made public on the IPCC web-site, despite their differences among the Working Groups. The documents with the selection procedures and statistics have been finalized by each WG Bureau in May 2010 at the end of the selection process, and they should be integrated with some more information and made public on the IPCC web-site.

The IPCC should apply an established and public formal set of criteria and processes for **selecting Bureau Members and Authors Review Editors** such as: scientific excellence, teamwork skills, communication skills, gender and regional balance. The scientific excellence of the Bureau Members candidates and Authors/Review Editors candidates should be based on *H Index*, and these indexes of the selected scientists should be public on the IPCC web-site.

Finally the Authors with the help of Review Editors should *“explicitly document that a range of scientific viewpoints has been considered”*.

Clarifying the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed sources

IPCC already had quite adequate procedures for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature (*“Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work”*), which need to be strengthened enforced among the Authors of the reports. IPCC could develop *“more specific guidance on how to evaluate such information, adding guidelines on what types of literature are unacceptable, and ensuring that unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature is appropriately flagged in the report”*.

Finally, the activities among the different Working Groups authors in revising the different chapters of the assessment reports should be reinforced.

Engaging the best regional experts

We support the strengthening of efforts to engage local experts and experts from countries outside of the region in the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report. These combined efforts could provide a broad coverage of different regional knowledge but always applying the IPCC procedures for the usage of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed sources.

Expediting approval of the Summary for Policy Makers

We can support possible agreed efforts in making more efficient the approval process of the SPMs in the Plenary Sessions.

Finally, we propose some ideas on how to approach the IAC recommendations.

At the *IPCC 32nd Plenary Session* (Busan, Republic of Korea) the Panel could establish a **Task Force** for discussing in details the *IAC Review* and the possible implementations of the recommendations. This Task Force should give priorities to implementations that can be important for the AR5 process and also should analyze the different financial implications of the implementations. The Task Force will most probably continue its work after the *IPCC 32nd Plenary Session* and can provide outcomes to any next IPCC Session.

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS
THE REVIEW OF THE IPCC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES:
REPORT BY THE INTERACADEMY COUNCIL

Provided by
New Zealand
32nd IPCC Plenary, Busan, 11-14 October 2010

Preliminary New Zealand comments on the Review of the IPCC by the InterAcademy Council

Preamble

New Zealand is grateful to the InterAcademy Council and its Committee to Review the IPCC for the work they have put in and the care and attention they have shown, and we congratulate them for a thorough and useful review.

We welcome the opportunity that the review provides to further strengthen the IPCC and enhance its work.

We broadly support the findings of the review and recommendations that it makes, and offer below proposals for the implementation of the recommendations.

General comments

- New Zealand is grateful to the InterAcademy Council (IAC) and its Committee to Review the IPCC for the work they have put in and the care and attention they have shown, and we congratulate them for a thorough and useful Review
(For convenience we refer below to the recommendations of the Committee to Review the IPCC of the InterAcademy Council as ‘recommendations of the IAC’.)
- The Review identifies a number of weaknesses and makes useful recommendations to strengthen and modernise the institutional arrangements and improve the functioning of the IPCC
- The recommendations will assist the IPCC both to accommodate future advances in scientific understanding and to meet the evolving needs of policy makers
- It is critical that the IPCC retains its wide respect as the source of robust, independent, accurate and reliable advice to governments and the wider public on the science and economics of climate change
- To retain that respect we believe it is important that this Plenary acts swiftly and effectively on the recommendations of the IAC
- At the same time, care must be taken to ensure the very many good features of the IPCC are not put at risk as its structure and procedures are updated.

Procedure for responding to the recommendations of the Review

- It is important that the IPCC is seen to deal promptly, fairly, and transparently with the recommendations of the IAC
- We make below eight proposals for responding to the various recommendations.

- To ensure the recommendations of the IAC are dealt with appropriately and seen to be dealt with appropriately:
 - Adequate time must be provided at the Busan Plenary to address the recommendations
 - [Those recommendations relating to the executive of the IPCC might best be addressed in a session or sessions with an independent chair]
- Some of the recommendations are straightforward and refer to issues that either have been already dealt with or that can be dealt with at the Busan Plenary without extensive debate (e.g. proposals 4, 6, 7 and 8 below)
- Other recommendations however have more complex implications and either require more information than is available now or more consideration than it is practical to give them in Busan. We suggest these recommendations be passed to Task Groups to develop practical options for implementation that can be considered by a future Plenary (e.g. proposals 1, 2, 3, and 5 below)
- New Zealand has a number of suggestions for consideration by the Task Groups, and these are listed in the Appendix to this document
- The options considered by the Task Groups should include but not be limited by the recommendations of the IAC
- We follow below the structure for the recommendations used by the IAC in its 'Summary of Recommendations' (Review Chapter 5).

Recommendations on the IPCC management structure

The IAC recommendations:

- *The IPCC should establish an Executive Committee to act on its behalf between Plenary sessions. The membership of the Committee should include the IPCC Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs, the senior member of the Secretariat, and 3 independent members, including some from outside of the climate community. Members would be elected by the Plenary and serve until their successors are in place*
- *The IPCC should elect an Executive Director to lead the Secretariat and handle day-to-day operations of the organization. The term of this senior scientist should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment*
- *The IPCC should redefine the responsibilities of key Secretariat positions both to improve efficiency and to allow for any future senior appointments*
- *The IPCC should develop and adopt a rigorous conflict of interest policy that applies to all individuals directly involved in the preparation of IPCC reports, including senior IPCC leadership (IPCC Chair and Vice Chairs), authors with responsibilities for report content (i.e., Working Group Co-chairs, Coordinating Lead Authors, and Lead Authors), Review Editors, and technical staff directly involved in report preparation (e.g., staff of Technical Support Units and the IPCC Secretariat)*
- *The term of the IPCC Chair should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment*
- *The terms of the Working Group Co-chairs should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment*

Discussion of the recommendations:

Establishment of an Executive Committee

- This recommendation formalises and extends the current practice of Executive Team meetings. It provides an opportunity to establish a formal mandate and a focus on its role to enhance consistent actions and ensure smooth running of the IPCC
- The IAC suggests the Committee would “...act on issues—such as approving minor corrections to published reports, approving modest alterations in the scope of an ongoing assessment, ensuring effective communication—and any other task specifically delegated by the Panel.”
- The mandate will define the extent to which the Committee is acting on behalf of governments; the extent to which it is acting on behalf of authors; the extent to which it is acting on behalf of the Secretariat and staff of the Technical Support Units (TSUs); and it will define the division of responsibilities between the Committee and the Executive Director (should Plenary agree to the appointment of an Executive Director)
- The complexity of these issues indicates that the membership, role and mandate of the proposed Executive Committee needs further consideration. We propose the formation of an intersessional Task Group on the IPCC Management Structure
- We expect the Task Group to solicit and consider suggestions from all IPCC Members and to report on these suggestions, along with preferred options, to the next IPCC Plenary
- The New Zealand suggestions for consideration by the Task Group cover membership (e.g. the Committee should include the IPCC Vice Chairs), procedures (e.g. meetings should be primarily virtual meetings to limit additional costs, and the meeting agenda and decisions public) and mandate (particularly its relation to the Bureau).

Appointment of an Executive Director

- This recommendation also needs further consideration, and this should be undertaken by the same intersessional Task Group on the IPCC Management Structure.
- The New Zealand suggestions for consideration by the Task Group bear on why we propose that this recommendation be agreed to only in principle, and why it requires further consideration. We therefore note some of these suggestions here:
 - While we would expect the Executive Director to have a substantial science background, we would see the role as primarily a management one, and the priority skills and experience required would be senior management ones
 - It should be clear that the senior IPCC scientist is the Chair, and the role of the Executive Director is to ensure that the decisions of the Chair (and decisions of the Plenary, the Bureau, and any Executive Committee, which will be expressed through the Chair) are implemented
 - The IPCC Vice-Chairs are elected to act on behalf of the Chair when necessary. We do not feel the IAC is correct in proposing this as a role for the Executive Director
 - We are unclear why the management position of Executive Director should be filled by election. An appointment under normal UN processes would appear to be a more satisfactory option.

Responsibilities of key Secretariat positions

- It is appropriate that Secretariat positions be re-evaluated from time to time to ensure they are appropriate for the changing demands on the organisation, and the formation of a Task Group on the IPCC Management Structure provides a good opportunity for this.

Conflict of interest policy

- A rigorous conflict of interest policy is essential for a modern organisation
- It is appropriate that this policy is developed by a Task Group.

The term of the IPCC Chair should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment and

The terms of the Working Group Co-chairs should be limited to the timeframe of one assessment

- The existing rules are clear that the Chair and Co-Chairs are elected for a term that covers the period of a single assessment
- We understand the intention is to assert that no Chair or Co-Chair should be elected for a second or subsequent term
- Successive Assessment Reports should be independent, but there is a large amount of valuable institutional knowledge around processes built up during an assessment. The Appendix includes suggestions for the Task Group on how this knowledge might be made available to a following assessment.

PROPOSAL 1:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Agrees in principle with the recommendations of the IAC:***
 - **To establish an Executive Committee**
 - **To appoint an Executive Director**
- ***Accepts the recommendations of the IAC:***
 - **To redefine the responsibilities of key Secretariat positions**
 - **To develop and adopt a rigorous conflict of interest policy**
- ***Notes that the term of the IPCC Chair is already set as the timeframe of one assessment***
- ***Notes that the terms of the Working Group Co-chairs are already set as the timeframe of one assessment***
- ***Establishes a Task Group on the IPCC Management Structure to consider options for the implementation of the recommendations agreed to in principle; to prepare draft revisions to the IPCC Rules and Procedures implementing the recommendations accepted; and to consider options to maintain continuity within the IPCC process while limiting elected officers to a single term. The Task Group should report on these options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC***

Recommendations on strengthening the review process

The IAC recommendations:

- *The IPCC should encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority to ensure that reviewers' comments are adequately considered by the authors and that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the report*
- *The IPCC should adopt a more targeted and effective process for responding to reviewer comments. In such a process, Review Editors would prepare a written summary of the most significant issues raised by reviewers shortly after review comments have been received*
- *Authors would be required to provide detailed written responses to the most significant review issues identified by the Review Editors, abbreviated responses to all non-editorial comments, and no written responses to editorial comments*

Discussion of the recommendations:

- While supporting in principle the recommendations on strengthening the review process, we note they may have significant implications for authors (and for TSUs) that may make their practical implementation difficult
- Increasing the workload of authors and reviewers by requiring detailed written responses to the most significant review issues will need to be accompanied by a review of the workload and an examination of how this can be lightened
- Because it addresses practical issues involving guidance to authors and Review Editors, it is more appropriate that this issue is addressed by the Bureau than by a Plenary Task Group.

PROPOSAL 2:

That this plenary Session:

- **Accepts the recommendations of the IAC:**
 - **To encourage Review Editors to fully exercise their authority**
 - **To adopt a more targeted and effective process for responding to reviewer comments**
- **Agrees in principle with the recommendation of the IAC to provide detailed written responses to the most significant review issues**
- **Requests the Bureau to consider options for the implementation of the recommendations on strengthening the review process, and report on the preferred options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC for decision**

[Alternative: Establishes a Task Group on the IPCC Review Process to consider options for the implementation of the recommendations, and report on these options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC for decision]

Recommendations on characterizing and communicating uncertainties

The IAC recommendations:

- *All Working Groups should use the qualitative level-of-understanding scale in their Summary for Policy Makers and Technical Summary, as suggested in IPCC's uncertainty guidance for the Fourth Assessment Report. This scale may be supplemented by a quantitative probability scale, if appropriate*
- *The confidence scale should not be used to assign subjective probabilities to ill-defined outcomes*
- *Quantitative probabilities (as in the likelihood scale) should be used to describe the probability of well-defined outcomes only when there is sufficient evidence. Authors should indicate the basis for assigning a probability to an outcome or event (e.g., based on measurement, expert judgment, and/or model runs)*
- *The likelihood scale should be stated in terms of probabilities (numbers) in addition to words to improve understanding of uncertainty*
- *Chapter Lead Authors should provide a traceable account of how they arrived at their ratings for level of scientific understanding and likelihood that an outcome will occur*
- *Where practical, formal expert elicitation procedures should be used to obtain subjective probabilities for key results*

Discussion of the recommendations:

- The IPCC has already demonstrated its intent to simplify and clarify issues of uncertainty for readers of the IPCC Reports, with the holding of the recent IPCC Cross-Working Group Meeting on Consistent Evaluation of Uncertainties and Risks
- While supporting the intent of the recommendations, we understand that the detail of the recommendations may not always be consistent with the discussions of experts at the recent Cross-Working Group Meeting
- We suggest that the recommendations should be referred to a Task Group on Uncertainties for detailed consideration, along with the Report from that Expert Meeting, and that the Task Group provide updated recommendations for implementation at the next IPCC Plenary.

PROPOSAL 3:

That this plenary Session:

- **Accepts in principle the recommendations of the IAC to improve the characterization and communication of uncertainties**
- **Establishes a Task Group on Uncertainties to consider both the IAC recommendations and the Report of the July 2010 IPCC Cross-Working Group Meeting on Consistent Evaluation of Uncertainties and Risks; to develop options for the implementation of improved characterization and communication of uncertainties; and report on the preferred options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC for decision**

Recommendation for developing an effective communications strategy

The IAC recommendation:

- *The IPCC should complete and implement a communications strategy that emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders, and which includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately*

Discussion of the recommendation:

- The strategy should identify, for a range of possible situations, who should speak on IPCC's behalf
- The strategy should lay out guidelines for keeping messages within the bounds of the IPCC reports and mandates
- Since the development of such a strategy is already underway by the Secretariat, we suggest that the IAC recommendations should be accepted and referred to the Secretariat and Bureau for detailed proposals for implementation.

PROPOSAL 4:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Agrees with the recommendation of the IAC to complete and implement a communications strategy***
- ***Notes that a draft communications strategy has been developed and circulated for comment***
- ***Requests the Secretariat to continue to develop this draft strategy in consultation with the Bureau, and to provide a proposed strategy for consideration by the 33rd Plenary.***

Recommendations on increasing transparency

The IAC recommendations:

- *The IPCC should make the process and criteria for selecting participants for scoping meetings more transparent*
- *The IPCC should develop and adopt formal qualifications and formally articulate the roles and responsibilities for all Bureau members, including the IPCC Chair, to ensure that they have both the highest scholarly qualifications and proven leadership skills*
- *The IPCC should establish a formal set of criteria and processes for selecting Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors*
- *Lead Authors should explicitly document that a range of scientific viewpoints has been considered, and Coordinating Lead Authors and Review Editors should satisfy themselves that due consideration was given to properly documented alternative views*

Discussion of the recommendations:

- We strongly support the general goal of increasing transparency within the IPCC.
- Since the AR5 Scoping Meetings have been held and Bureau members, CLAs, and LAs have already been appointed for the AR5, the implementation of these particular recommendations may be seen as less urgent than for others
- However it can be expected that over the course of the AR5 there will be occasional changes to author lists and possibly to Bureau membership as some people are unable to continue in their role for one reason or another, and there may be changes to report scoping if for example there are major developments in the science, so the sooner the recommendations are implemented the better
- We suggest that the IAC recommendations should be accepted in principle and referred to the Bureau for detailed proposals for implementation.

PROPOSAL 5:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Agrees in principle with the recommendations of the IAC to increase transparency***
- ***Requests the Bureau to review the current Rules and Procedures, and Guidance for Authors, and to provide revised text for by the Plenary consideration and decision at their earliest convenience and certainly no later than before the start of the next (AR6) assessment cycle.***

Recommendations on clarifying the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed sources

The IAC recommendation:

- *The IPCC should strengthen and enforce its procedure for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature, including providing more specific guidance on how to evaluate such information, adding guidelines on what types of literature are unacceptable, and ensuring that unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature is appropriately flagged in the report*

Discussion of the recommendation:

- A conundrum faced by the IPCC is that it is often the very regions and sectors where data, knowledge, and understanding of issues are hard to come by, that are also where they are most needed
- IPCC procedures call for all the draft assessment reports to be peer-reviewed and the use of 'grey literature' to be particularly carefully reviewed. It is expected of authors that if the grey literature document is key to any significant finding of the report, they would subject it to a similar review process to that followed in reviewing and accepting a document for publication as a peer-reviewed paper in a journal. However it is clear the guidelines have not always been followed
- We suggest that this recommendation be accepted as it stands. It needs to be referred to the TSUs and the Bureau to draw up detailed recommendations for implementation.

PROPOSAL 6:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Accepts the recommendation of the IAC to strengthen and enforce the procedures for the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature***
- ***Requests the three Working Group TSUs to consider options for implementing this recommendation and place these options before the next Bureau meeting***
- ***Requests the Bureau to consider these options to strengthened and enforce the guidelines for the use of use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed literature, and to report on the preferred options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC for decision***
- ***[OR: Establishes a Task Group on the Use of Grey Literature to consider options for the implementation of the recommendation, and report on these options to the 33rd Plenary Session of the IPCC]***

Recommendation on engaging the best regional experts

The IAC recommendation:

- *The IPCC should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment*

Discussion of the recommendation:

- The IAC has identified that in some cases highly qualified experts may not be included in author teams because they do not live in the relevant region
- We support efforts to ensure the best available author input to the regional chapters, while also making every effort to engage local experts
- We suggest that this recommendation be accepted as it stands. It needs to be referred to the TSUs and the Bureau to draw up detailed recommendations for implementation
- Because there may be some turnover of authors during the course of the writing process for the AR5, we suggest guidance on the issue be provided as a matter of some urgency.

PROPOSAL 7:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Accepts* the recommendation of the IAC that it should make every effort to engage local experts on the author teams of the regional chapters of the Working Group II report, but should also engage experts from countries outside of the region when they can provide an essential contribution to the assessment**
- ***Requests* the Bureau to consult with the TSUs and consider options to improve practice in this area and if appropriate update the guidelines for the use of use of experts on the author teams of the regional chapters**
- ***Requests* the Bureau to report to the 33rd Plenary on how this recommendation is being implemented**

Recommendation on expediting approval of the Summary for Policy Makers

The IAC recommendation:

- *The IPCC should revise its process for the approval of the Summary for Policy Makers so that governments provide written comments prior to the Plenary*

Discussion of the recommendation:

- We suggest that this recommendation raises a number of practical difficulties. It needs to be referred to the Bureau to draw up workable options for implementation
- While the approval process for the Summary for Policy makers is tedious some form of negotiation of at least some parts of the final text seems necessary
- The current process allows negotiation between government representatives and the authors, to ensure the text covers those topics important to governments in a clear and concise way that is understandable and able to be used by policymakers in their work, while at the same time reflecting accurately the assessments of the scientists as expressed in the body of the report to which the summary refers
- Our experience is that scientists do not always produce summaries which are as intelligible to policymakers as they might be. It is therefore important that the final product allows for negotiation over the text
- There may be options to improve the process, such as requiring majority agreement of the Plenary to open passages up for such negotiation
- However it will be important that all governments 'own' the final text, so removing the ability of any Member to challenge the text and have their challenge heard, seems likely to lead to additional problems.

PROPOSAL 8:

That this plenary Session:

- ***Agrees to consider options to implement the recommendation of the IAC that the IPCC revise its process for the approval of the Summary for Policy Makers***
- ***Requests the Bureau to consider such options for implementing this recommendation and place these options before the Plenary for decision, at least 12 months before the first of the AR5 Summaries for Policymakers is due to be considered by the Plenary***

APPENDIX 1: Suggestions relating to the IPCC Management Structure

Establishment of an Executive Committee

Membership:

- The Executive Committee should include the Vice-Chairs of the IPCC as well as the Chair
- The proposed size of the committee is large. To make it more effective we suggest each Working Group be represented by a single member (normally a WG Co-Chair). The Working Group representative could be supported by their respective TSU head, present as an observer
- It is not clear to us that the inclusion of three independent committee members (possibly from outside the climate community) will add sufficient value to the committee to justify the increase in size
- If the Committee is to act on behalf of the Plenary it should allow each Committee member to be supported by a representative of their government (as at present for Bureau meetings) as an observer
- An option to reduce executive numbers while providing continuity would be to replace the current Chair and three Vice Chair positions with a 'Troika' – The Chair, the immediate past Chair, and a Chair-Elect. They would form the senior members of the Executive Council and the Bureau. In this case the term of each office could be reduced to say three years, so that each assessment cycle had more than one Chair contributing.

Procedures:

- The committee will undertake its meetings by email, conference phone, or other electronic process for virtual meetings, except when meetings can be arranged back-to-back with Plenary, Bureau, or other meetings
- A quorum should exist when two-thirds of the membership and either the Chair or one of the Vice-Chairs, are able to participate in the meeting
- The Committee agenda and minutes containing its decisions should be available to the all Bureau and Panel members

Mandate:

- The mandate will need to define the extent to which the Committee is acting on behalf of governments; the extent to which it is acting on behalf of authors; and the extent to which it is acting on behalf of the Secretariat and staff of the TSUs
- It will also need to clarify and define the role of the Committee in relationship to the Bureau
- The IAC describes the Bureau as overseeing the assessment work but in practice the Bureau has undertaken a wider oversight role. The Task Group should consider whether, if an Executive Committee is formed, the role of the Bureau should be confined to managing the assessment process.

Appointment of an Executive Director

- We support in principle the appointment of an Executive Director with a formal mandate to enhance consistent actions and ensure smooth running of the IPCC. While we would expect the Executive Director to have a substantial science background, we would see the role as primarily a management one, and the priority skills and experience required would be senior management ones
- It should be clear that the senior IPCC scientist is the Chair, and the role of the Executive Director is to ensure that the decisions of the Chair (and decisions of the Plenary, the Bureau, and any Executive Committee, which will be expressed through the Chair) are implemented

- The IPCC Vice-Chairs are elected to act on behalf of the Chair when necessary. We do not feel this is a role for the Executive Director
- We are unclear why the management position of Executive Director should be filled by election. An appointment on merit under normal UN processes would appear to be a more satisfactory option.

Responsibilities of key Secretariat positions

- We support the suggestions circulated by Switzerland, namely:
 - The Secretariat should establish each year an annual work plan including managerial and budget aspects, to be approved by the Executive Committee and the Plenary.
 - The relationships with the Technical Support Units (TSUs) and the distribution of roles between Secretariat and TSUs should be part of the Secretariat's work plan.
 - The work plan of the Secretariat should recognise the need for freedom for the TSUs to focus on scientific issues and to remain independent of any political input to the scientific assessment.
 - [In this context, the TSUs should establish a yearly working plan to be approved by the Executive Committee.]

Conflict of interest policy

- We strongly support the introduction of a rigorous conflict of interest policy
- This should cover IPCC staff, elected officials, and authors
- Because moves to avoid conflict of interest by increased transparency can conflict with expectations of individual or institutional privacy, such moves can become controversial and we urge the Task Group to allow time for comment on its proposals prior to consideration by Plenary.
- It may not be reasonable to make the policy retrospective and to require full public disclosure of interests for all current staff and elected officials. In lieu of such disclosure, at least assertions of no conflict of interest should be required.

Length of time a Bureau position can be held

- As noted, we believe it is important that successive Assessment Reports should be independent and seen to be independent
- At the same time, it is important that the large amount of valuable institutional knowledge around processes built up during an assessment is not lost
- The recommendations do not restrict the IPCC Chair or a Working Group Co-Chair from accepting another position in the Bureau for a subsequent assessment period
- The existing rules specify that no member of the bureau may serve more than two terms in the same position. This rule should continue to apply to the IPCC Vice-Chairs and the Working Group Vice Chairs, and to members of the Executive Committee (should the committee be agreed to)
- One other option for consideration to reduce numbers while providing continuity, may be to replace the current Chair and three Vice Chair positions with a 'Troika' – The Chair, the immediate past Chair, and a Chair-Elect. They would form the senior members of the Executive Council and the Bureau. In this case the term of each office could be reduced to say three years, so that each assessment cycle had more than one Chair contributing.

APPENDIX 2: Suggestions regarding the review process

- Additional guidance could be provided for Review Editors to help clarify their role and the expectations of them
- Increasing the number of Review Editors would make it more practical to provide a careful consideration of all comments and to monitor that all comments are adequately considered by the authors
- Making comments and author responses available to reviewers and governments immediately after author meetings would increase transparency and assist reviewers and governments in formulating further comments
- The author teams, with assistance of the TSUs, could provide on-line access to the literature for reviewers (including government reviewers), e.g. through hyperlinks in the draft texts
- The chapter teams could be expanded to include 'chapter assistants', who would check references underpinning the statements
- Increasing the workload of authors and reviewers by requiring detailed written responses to the most significant review issues will need to be accompanied by a review of the workload and an examination of how this can be lightened.

APPENDIX 3: Suggestions regarding uncertainties

- The IPCC is probably unique in the very wide range of issues across which it must characterise and communicate uncertainty
- There is a risk the IAC were thinking of individual views on uncertainty or views by a group of scientists who all agree and so are writing a review paper
- The assessment process has to be different because it has to be consistent with the range of views and the IAC does not make this clear
- The IPCC has already signalled its intent to simplify and clarify issues of uncertainty for readers of the IPCC Reports, with the holding of the recent IPCC Cross-Working Group Meeting on Consistent Evaluation of Uncertainties and Risks
- Implementation of the recommendations of the IAC on this topic should be consistent with the Report of this meeting, or the inconsistencies should be noted and justified.

APPENDIX 4: Suggestions on clarifying the use of unpublished and non-peer-reviewed sources

- There is a strong demand for information on projected impacts to be provided for geographical regions which, for one reason or another, lack the national science resources and capability to undertake their own independent regional climate risk assessment. The weak science infrastructure in these regions will mean few peer reviewed papers from the region will be published and available for assessment
- Many of the regions with limited science resources are highly populous and (in part because of the lack of adaptation knowledge and resources) amongst the most vulnerable to climate change

- The 'grey' literature that has not been published in peer-reviewed journals, often may be reports commissioned by developed-world governments or by international agencies such as the World Bank, when work is likely to have been widely peer reviewed even if it has not be edited into the form of a journal paper
- The IPCC has recognized the value of this material where peer-reviewed literature is not available. A decision was taken for the AR4 that such grey literature could be referred to (and significant results quoted) as long as the grey literature document was public and readily available to reviewers and readers of the AR4
- Examples of such grey literature that may be put forward from the Pacific region for inclusion in the next assessment, AR5 could include:
 - Reports on the work by NIWA in Kiribati as part of the Kiribati Adaptation Project
 - Reports on technical work by regional organisations, such as SOPAC, on the process of developing and embedding climate information into sector decision-making
- In both examples the work is done under contracts that include no provision for producing peer-reviewed papers from the reports
- An additional source of grey literature is from sectors where journal publication is not the norm. We understand this may be the case in some areas of energy engineering, and possibly engineering more widely.

UK response to the recommendations of the Inter-Academy Council review of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

1. Introduction

We welcome the careful consideration that the Inter-Academy Council (IAC) has given to their assessment of the procedures and management of the IPCC, and particularly thank the panel for working so quickly to provide recommendations in good time for IPCC Governments to consider in advance of discussions in October's Session of the Panel. Overall we consider that the IAC has provided a range of helpful recommendations which will help strengthen the IPCC and enable it to build on its impressive record.

2. How the IAC recommendations are handled

a) Timing

We look forward to discussing these recommendations in detail with the IPCC Panel in Plenary. The IAC's recommendations are substantial and wide ranging, and considering them fully will require significant discussion. Once Governments have agreed on the recommendations, implementing the proposals properly will also require time.

Nonetheless, we recognise and value the message within the IAC's recommendations . that embracing change in a timely fashion will be of great benefit to the IPCC, helping it to strengthen its effectiveness and global reputation. We consider that IPCC should seek to reap these benefits as quickly as is practicable . in particular ensuring that the upcoming Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) is taken forward in a way that is enlightened by the IAC recommendations.

b) Arrangements at the 32nd Session of the Panel

To this end, we look forward to the IPCC Leadership making arrangements to ensure that Governments have time to consider and discuss the review findings fully in the during the IPCC Session in October 2010. We welcome the suggestion that the IPCC would invite a member of the IAC panel to present the key findings to IPCC's Governments within this Session and answer any questions.

As the importance and relevance of the IPCC's work has grown, so has the level of public interest and scrutiny in how the IPCC functions. Members of IPCC's leadership have commented publically on the importance that the IPCC places on considering and taking forward the IAC recommendations openly and promptly. It will be important for the IPCC Leadership to demonstrate this commitment to openness. To avoid any apparent conflict of interest we suggest that whether detailed consideration of review is undertaken in Plenary or in a Plenary contact group (or both) it is led by co-chairs drawn from IPCC's government representatives. Whilst we

have full confidence in the Chair of IPCC to handle these discussions, we consider it essential for the response to the review to be handled by those who do not have personal interest in the outcome.

The contact group should also aim to address issues which can be agreed at the coming (October) session, including those which have practical implications for the preparation of the AR5 and issues that are most important for the IPCC's reputation, including a process to handle potential conflicts of interest. It should propose clear decisions to be made at the same Session. This might also include decisions in principle on issues that may need further elaboration, such as the role of an executive team, the appointment of an Executive Director, and the issue of terms of appointment to the Bureau.

c) Developments following Plenary: establishment of a Task Group

To consider those recommendations that can be finally agreed on at the October Session, we propose that the IPCC should set up a Task Group to review written comments and those voiced at the Session. Made up of a geographically-diverse selection of IPCC's Member Governments, this Task Group would have responsibility for exploring the practicalities of implementing the review recommendations, and could return a set of proposals to IPCC's Plenary in early 2011 for approval. This Task Group would likely evolve from the contact group.

3. Specific comments on recommendations relating to IPCC's management

a) The IPCC's management structure

The IAC's recommendations make a number of proposals relating to how the IPCC is managed.

We consider that the IPCC's unique structure . based around three working groups of high scientific credibility . has been its strongest asset in the past 20 years. This structure has allowed IPCC to remain closely linked with the diverse academic communities that its scope spans, and has been the driving factor in producing four high-quality assessment reports and numerous special reports.

The activities of these working groups has always required some central coordination by the IPCC's Secretariat and Leadership . coordinating general IPCC business and better uniting the activities of the three working groups. In recent years, the profile of this 'centralised' IPCC has grown . as evidenced by IPCC jointly receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. More recently, IPCC received intense media pressure over a number of errors in its Fourth Assessment Report. It is clear from these events that IPCC is increasingly perceived, and held accountable, as a single coordinated body and it is vital that IPCC is able to function effectively in this

way. When working optimally, these core functions should act not to restrict IPCC working groups, but to facilitate their effective and efficient working, maximise the transfer of best practice, and communicate IPCC messages effectively to the outside world.

We consider the IAC recommendations to be a good set of proposals for how these core IPCC functions can be strengthened to this end.

In implementing these recommendations, Governments will need to consider how IPCC management can be strengthened without duplicating posts or weighing the IPCC down with unnecessary bureaucracy. We note that the IAC has recommended that terms of reference be written for IPCC existing management posts and the new executive committee posts (including the Executive Director), as well as recommending that the tasks of the Secretariat are reviewed. We consider that this provides a good opportunity for the responsibilities of all of IPCC core posts to be considered alongside each other, to ensure a joined up picture of responsibilities and accountabilities at this level.

We would therefore propose that the Task Group take forward this recommendation and draft terms of reference and/or job descriptions for all of IPCC centralised posts, ensuring clear accountability, and minimisation of overlaps. In combination, these posts should act, inter alia, to:

- Coordinate IPCC activities, finances and communications to ensure IPCC working groups are supported in their activities, and held accountable for producing reports of the highest quality.
- Keep IPCC member governments informed of IPCC activities and reports.
- Represent the IPCC successfully to external stakeholders and an interested public . including through effective handling of media enquiries.
- Manage IPCC business efficiently and effectively to the high standards of a multi-national organisation.

b) Executive Director and Executive Committee

We support the IAC recommendations that an Executive Director and executive committee (effectively a management board) be introduced. We would welcome bringing individuals external to climate science into this board, recognising that many multinational organisations benefit from wider perspectives through such arrangements.

Bearing in mind that the above process could take a few months, we note that IPCC structure already includes an informal Executive team (E-team). As an interim measure, we would support agreement at the Panel Session for this E-team

to be formalised. In this regard we would propose that such meetings should have formal agendas and minutes, which are made more widely available. We would support countries reaching conclusion on such interim measures as an area of immediate agreement.

c) Terms of office of IPCC's management

We note that IAC's recommendation that the terms of office of IPCC's Chair, Co-Chairs and Executive Director should be restricted to the term of a single assessment report. We recognise the value that refreshing leadership provides for organisations, but also note the importance of institutional memory and continuity within organisations. We would have concerns with a situation that resulted with a large proportion of IPCC's leadership leaving the organisation simultaneously. We would therefore propose that the Task Group consider these recommendations alongside the terms of reference of all positions within IPCC's central team, giving particular consideration to how to strike a balance between fresh thinking and continuity. The current arrangements define an appropriate term of office by the time taken to prepare a major assessment report. This has slowly increased in length to effectively 7 years. In future (post AR5) the IPCC may choose to produce reports differently which would have bearing on the term of office. Defining an appropriate term of office by assessments is tied in to the historic way of working which may not be the most appropriate long-term strategy for the IPCC.

d) IPCC's Conflict of Interest Policy

We support the importance that the IAC review places on a conflict of interest policy for all those involved in IPCC's reports. We would recommend that IPCC consider the policies used by other international organisations in this regard. We consider this to be an issue which IPCC Governments should treat as a priority, with a view to reaching an agreement at the forthcoming meeting.

4. Specific comments on the IAC recommendations relating to the preparation of IPCC reports

a) IPCC's guidelines

The IAC makes a number of recommendations about how IPCC's process of producing reports can be strengthened. We note that these recommendations generally recognise the merit of IPCC's existing guidelines, suggesting that there is value in simply renewing attention to properly applying and enforcing these guidelines.

b) Author selection

Some of the IAC's recommendations are intended to improve the transparency of IPCC reports, including formalising the invitees to scoping meetings, and formalising the process by which IPCC authors are selected. We are supportive of these ideas, whilst recognising the importance that Working Group Co-Chairs place on being able to exert their scientific discretion and expertise. We would propose that guidelines for a formalised process of author selection could draw heavily on the work already initiated on an ad-hoc basis by previous working group Co-Chairs. We also support the IAC's recommendation that local knowledge is supplemented by external expertise in IPCC's regional chapters where this can add value.

c) Grey literature

On the use of non-peer-reviewed (grey) literature, we note the IAC's finding that IPCC does have existing and adequate guidelines on this subject, and welcome the recommendation that authors could be provided with clearer advice on how to apply these guidelines in practice. We are keen to see such advice produced in time to be considered by the authors currently working on the AR5.

d) Treatment of uncertainty in IPCC's reports

The IAC also makes recommendations on how IPCC authors should document uncertainty. While we welcome the IAC's recommendations in this area, we note that the treatment of uncertainty in IPCC reports is a topic that has received much attention by IPCC's authors, editors and leaders through its history. Most recently, this was reviewed in a cross-working-group workshop on 6-7 July 2010. We would be keen for the IAC's recommendations to be considered alongside the findings of this workshop. We recognise that unifying approaches to uncertainty across working groups could be very difficult in practice, but agree that further efforts should be made to improve the communication of uncertainty through a more unified approach which would provide real value for the users of the IPCC reports.

5. Specific comments on the IAC recommendations relating to IPCC's communication

a) Coordinating IPCC's communication

Since its inception in 1988, the IPCC's reputation has been based on its ability to produce reports that effectively and clearly capture global consensus on climate change, and which are endorsed by Governments as the basis of international negotiations. In the past decades, this work has grown rapidly in importance and global relevance. As the political and societal implications of climate science has grown, so has the number of people with an active interest in the conclusions of the IPCC.

We support the recommendation of the IAC that the IPCC could value from pulling together all its communication efforts into a single strategy. It will be useful for IPCC Governments to have clarity on which positions within IPCC's centralised core are responsible for implementing this strategy . and the timeframe on which it will be delivered.

b) Rapid response strategy

When questions are raised about IPCC's reports, it is vital for the credibility of the organisation that it is able to respond quickly and effectively. We support the IAC recommendation that the IPCC Communication Strategy includes a rapid response strategy for these instances, including information about who is, and is not, able to speak on behalf of the IPCC. We consider this to be the highest priority for the IPCC Communications team.

c) User-friendly communication products

The IAC makes a number of recommendations for how IPCC's communication can be strengthened, including recommendations for the IPCC to produce a broad range of more user-friendly communications products. We strongly value the importance of public engagement with science . including climate science . noting that all Parties have a responsibilities in the field of education, training and public awareness under Article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We have also strongly valued the addition of 'Frequently Asked Questions' to IPCC's reports, and consider these to be very helpful in engaging non-experts with IPCC's content.

However, we judge that while many of these efforts are valuable, it will be important to retain a sense of what the IPCC uniquely provides. In particular, IPCC's structure is particularly established to provide international consensus . requiring an unusually high level of review and discussion. Other groups and institutions may be better placed to engage the public with IPCC's conclusions in a way that is not weighed down by the time (and resource) constraints that reaching such international consensus requires.

6. Further considerations of the IAC recommendations

The above response identifies the UK's key responses to the IAC's broad findings. However, the IAC's recommendations cover topics and details not fully addressed in this submission. The UK's views on the more detailed recommendations of the IAC will be communicated in the course of the in-depth considerations during the Session and to any Task Group set up to address them.