

**FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE IPCC**  
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## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

### **Informal Group on Publications**

(Prepared by the Co-Chairs of the Informal Group on Publications)

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

# PROGRESS REPORTS

## Informal Group on Publications

### 1. Overview

Following a pause while the Reports of Working Groups I, II and III were finalized and approved, the work of the Informal Group on Publications has resumed. Following fulfilment of its original mandate, the IPCC Bureau, at its 60<sup>th</sup> Session, extended the mandate to cover the translation of IPCC products. Under the new mandate, the Informal Group on Publications is chaired by Working Group III Co-Chair Jim Skea and Working Group II Vice-Chair Taha Zatari.

Two virtual meetings have taken place on 21 July 2022 and 23 August 2022. A further physical meeting is planned for 26 September 2022 in Geneva. The meetings have been attended by Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Technical Support Unit (TSU) members from each of the Working Groups; Co-Chairs and TSU members of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories; representatives of the Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments (TG-Data); the Secretary of the IPCC; and other Secretariat members.

### 2. Translations

The July meeting agreed a plan for a sequence of three meetings to deliver the extended mandate: an initial meeting to listen to the experiences of those involved in translation processes to date; a second meeting to consider two high-level options for a translation process developed offline by the Co-Chairs of the Informal Group on Publications and suggest a way forward; and a third meeting to focus in on a single option, again developed offline by the Co-Chairs, and generate a recommendation for the IPCC Bureau.

At the July meeting, participants shared their experiences of translation processes and expressed aspirations for an agreed process.

The Co-Chairs of the Informal Group on Publications, assisted by the Head of Operations of Working Group III distilled the discussions at the first meeting and arrived at two high-level options for consideration at the second meeting. Both options envisaged a role for contracted Science Editors as part of the process, as proposed by the Secretariat in order to reduce the reliance on voluntary contributions. Both options included mechanisms to reconcile views on translations, recognizing the interest shown in translations by both scientists on the Bureau and Governments. The first option included an Editorial Committee which would resolve different views; the second gave greater powers to the Science Editors to take decisions where views differ.

The weight of opinion at the second meeting was in favour of the first option including an Editorial Committee, but it was noted that elements of the second option could be incorporated. The following considerations were raised in discussion:

- The status of translations as legal texts which must accurately reflect the approved English language text, and not introduce new material.
- The importance of having glossaries in each of the United Nations (UN) languages with ready read-over from one to the other, and having a process for their revision during report production, to underpin a smooth translation process. The Collaborative Online Glossary System (COGS) under development by the Secretariat will help meet this need.
- Having clarity about the number and roles of Editorial Committees.
- Avoiding unnecessary procedural burdens and bureaucracy in the proposed process.
- Opportunities for direct engagement with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) translators.
- Recognizing the role of the Bureau and its responsibility for the overall quality of IPCC products.
- Creating space for Bureau members to play a role, recognizing that the Bureau did not contain the full range of scientific/language expertise required.
- Recognizing the interests of Governments in the process and having a clear view of their role.
- Having a clear view of the role played by authors with relevant expertise.
- The importance of establishing criteria for the Science Editor role, and having them formally contracted to fulfil their roles.
- Having more than one set of eyes for reviewing final copy-edited and typeset products.
- The importance of establishing timelines for the translation process.

The second meeting charged the Co-Chairs of the Informal Group on Publications with developing a single more detailed proposal for consideration at the third meeting on 26 September 2022, taking into account insights from the second meeting and in consultation with the Secretariat.

### **3. Progress with phase I recommendations**

A review of progress with the recommendations from the 1st phase of the Informal Group on Publications falls outside the extended mandate given by the Bureau at its 60<sup>th</sup> Session. However, some members of the Informal Group on Publications requested that progress be put on the agendas of the first two meetings. The following summary of discussion is for transparency purposes only and should not be taken as constituting any further recommendations from the Informal Group on Publications.

Progress in implementing the recommendations has been mixed:

- Some, such as achieving six month targets for getting from approved English language text to publication-ready text have been broadly successful.
- Some of the recommendations were in the form of suggestions for the development of written guidelines. The view was expressed that we were still in a learning process and more time was needed to achieve their implementation.
- The more technical recommendations relating to, for example, digital object identifiers (doi's) for IPCC products, were very partially implemented. One view was that achieving these should be simple, but others noted that achieving them might be outside the scope of the existing contracts with Cambridge University Press (CUP), or could be beyond the resources of TSUs. It was also noted that IPCC products are unique and are unlike either the journals or books with which publishers are familiar.

The Secretariat agreed to write to CUP, with help from the TSUs, to establish definitely what was and what was not possible with the current contract and resources. The TSUs would establish a joint view before the third meeting about the practicability of technical recommendations which had not been implemented.

There was an agreed view that authors should receive due recognition for their efforts in producing IPCC reports.