

SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE IPCC
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CHAIR'S VISION FOR THE SEVENTH ASSESSMENT CYCLE

(Prepared by the Chair of the IPCC)

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

CHAIR'S VISION FOR THE SEVENTH ASSESSMENT CYCLE

When I made my case for election as Chair of IPCC, I emphasised three themes: policy relevance; inclusivity; and interdisciplinarity. As we start the seventh assessment cycle in earnest, it is time to turn these aspirations into practical action.

The sixth cycle was the busiest and perhaps one of the most impactful since the establishment of the IPCC. Expectations of us are high, as indicated by the extensive references to IPCC and its work in decisions taken at the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). During, and around the end of, this cycle, there are a number of important milestones including our 40th anniversary in 2028, the second Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement, the 2030 targets in the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation, and the goals and targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Much work remains to be done on inclusivity. Women now account for 40% of the IPCC Bureau, and I know that the Scientific Steering Committee of the Special Report on Climate Change and Cities and the Working Group Bureaux are giving great attention to gender, regional balance and intra-regional balance in selecting participants for the forthcoming Scoping Meeting. But much remains to be done, including the question of developing country chapter scientists.

On interdisciplinarity, the Working Groups have made an excellent start with their cooperation on the Special Report on Climate Change and Cities. This is helping to embed collaboration right from the start of the cycle. But interdisciplinarity can also refer to interaction with sister assessments, such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Within IPCC's mandate, I am keen to explore ways of enhancing collaboration given the intertwined nature of the climate, biodiversity and pollution challenges.

At the end of an IPCC cycle, I think many of us have regretted what we could have achieved had we only grasped the challenges sooner. This underlines the need to get the new cycle off to a prompt start, especially given the policy relevance challenge and the desire expressed by many Member countries to make timely contributions to other international processes. At the same time, IPCC has its own distinct mandate, to assess available scientific information on climate change, to assess the environmental and socio-economic impacts, and address response strategies. As such, we rely on progress made within a range of scientific communities. We can certainly nudge these communities in certain directions, but ultimately we depend on the state of the science and anticipated scientific progress over the coming cycle.

We all see IPCC through the lens of our own diverse experiences. I tend to think of an IPCC cycle through my experience of large multi-year interdisciplinary research activities. They have a beginning, a middle and an end, and they are made up of multiple interdependent work packages. We need to consider both the planning of the cycle and how we conduct our business.

In order to make a prompt start, we need to rapidly address **the first challenge** and mobilise IPCC's capacity for scientific assessment. We have made an excellent start with the Special Report on Climate Change and Cities and plans for the Scoping Meeting are well under way. The Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) has plans in hand for a Special Report on Short-Lived Climate Forcers. I commend the efforts of the Co-Chairs of the three Working Group, the TFI and their respective Technical Support Units (TSUs). But now we need to set the course for the rest of the cycle. We expect this to be the main agenda item for this Plenary session, and it will be covered under agenda item 7.2. This discussion will be based on the results of the survey of Member countries conducted by the Secretariat (IPCC-LX/INF. 6) and the report of the Informal Group on the Programme of Work for the seventh assessment cycle, established by the Bureau (IPCC-LX/Doc. 4). It is my aspiration to end this session with a clear Decision on the Programme of Work for the cycle, which may include: Working Group Reports; Special Reports; Methodology Reports; and a

Synthesis Report. Other relevant activities during the cycle may include Expert Meetings, Workshops and Technical Papers. Proposals for these would be brought to subsequent plenaries.

We also need to start work on **the second challenge** – how we conduct our business. Once the direction is set for the next scientific assessments, Member countries can focus on the many issues raised in the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) Lessons Learned document (IPCC-LX/INF. 9). The scope of this document is broad, covering potential actions for Working Groups and the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, their TSUs, the Secretariat, the Bureau, Focal Points and the IPCC Plenary. Some potential actions might involve changes to the principles and procedures of IPCC, while others could be achieved through attention to working practices.

The Secretariat will present the Lessons Learned document shortly under Agenda item 6. It would be difficult to do justice to all of the topics covered in this document in a single session. We will propose, subject to Panel agreement, establishing a Task Group at the 61st Session of the IPCC (IPCC-61) to give comprehensive consideration to the Lessons Learned document and work towards consensus on the implementation of the recommendations. This Task Group needs to have a clear and focused mandate if it is to deliver actionable outcomes. The Lessons Learned document is therefore for information at the 60th Session of the IPCC (IPCC-60), and under Agenda item 6 the Secretariat will set out an approach for addressing the issues that it raises.

But first we would like to conduct a survey of Member Countries to ascertain which of the many topics covered in the Lessons Learned document are seen as high priorities, which are seen as “nice to have”, and which are of a lower priority. From such a survey we can identify areas of convergence, and propose Terms of Reference for a Task Group to work on issues where more work needs to be done, or there does not appear to be consensus.

In taking forward the Lessons Learned over the cycle, it will be important to monitor progress. To facilitate this, we will propose two new standing items at Plenary sessions: a progress report covering the activities of the Chair and Vice-Chairs; and a progress report covering the Secretariat. This reflects a call in Section I.2.7 of the Lessons Learned for more transparency about roles and responsibilities.

We have also made progress already in addressing some of the issues raised in the Lessons Learned document where there was a high degree of consensus. For example, both Member Countries and Bureau members called for the clear identification of roles for Vice-Chairs. The Chair and Vice-chairs have together agreed a set of specific responsibilities for Vice-Chairs. These are listed in the Appendix. They cover: liaison with the Working Groups and TFI; leadership of mandated committees and teams (e.g. Conflict of Interest, Gender Action Team); and acting as Focal Points within IPCC for links with external bodies including other United Nations (UN) assessments; constituted bodies within the UNFCCC; and major stakeholder groups. These are already being acted on. Notably at COP 28, we interacted with the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), IPBES, and, among stakeholders, Youth, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Government and Municipal Authorities. We will need to keep these roles under review as some areas are already generating intense activity.

The role of Working Group Vice-Chairs is a related issue meriting attention.

I hope this conveys the message that the entire elected Bureau, with the support of their TSUs, is approaching the new cycle with a sense of purpose. A collegiate spirit is emerging among Bureau members, exemplified by progress among the Working Groups in establishing a Scientific Steering Committee for the Special Report on Climate Change and Cities, progressing the selection of participants’ in the Scoping Meeting. We also benefit from institutional memory in Bureau members, the Secretariat and key members of Working Group TSUs who have transitioned from the AR6. With your help I am optimistic that we can get the seventh cycle off to a prompt start and maintain momentum over the coming months and years.

Annex: Roles of IPCC Vice-Chairs and Chair

Working Group liaison

WG I	Ladislav Chang'a
WG II	Ramón Pichs-Madruga
WG III	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
Scientific Integration/synthesis	Jim Skea

Lead roles in mandated committees/teams

Conflict of Interest Committee	Ladislav Chang'a
Gender Action Team	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
Chair, SR-Cities Scientific Steering Committee	
Communications Action Team	Jim Skea
Publications Committee	Ramón Pichs-Madruga

Focal points for other UN environmental assessments/programmes

AGAD/overview	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
IPBES/GEO-7/UNCCD Science-Policy Interface	Ramón Pichs-Madruga
International Resources Panel/ UNEP GAP report	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
World Climate Research Programme/CMIP/WMO United in Science	Ladislav Chang'a
Chemicals Panel	tbd

Focal points: UNFCCC constituted Bodies

SBSTA-IPCC Joint Working Group (JWG)/overview	Ladislav Chang'a
Research and systematic observation	Ladislav Chang'a
Adaptation Committee	Ramón Pichs-Madruga
Standing Committee on Finance (SCF)	
Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage	
Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)	
Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures (KCI)	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
Technology Executive Committee	

Focal points: UNFCCC constituencies

Overview	Ramón Pichs-Madruga
Business and industry NGOs (BINGO)	Jim Skea
Environmental NGOs (ENGO)	Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
Women and Gender (WGC)	
Youth NGOs (YOUNGO).	Ladislav Chang'a/ Diana Ürge-Vorsatz
Research and independent NGOs (RINGO)	Ürge-Vorsatz
Indigenous peoples organizations (IPO)	Ramón Pichs-Madruga
Farmers	
Local government and municipal authorities (LGMA)	
Trade union NGOs (TUNGO)	