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MATTERS RELATED TO OTHER ACTIVITIES

Financial implications and estimated associated travel-related greenhouse gas emissions of holding physical, virtual and hybrid meetings

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

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1. Background

At the 60th Session of the IPCC (Istanbul, Türkiye, 16 – 19 January 2024), the Panel in Decision IPCC-LX-10, para 25, noted Document IPCC-LX/Doc.12 "Financial implications and estimated associated travel-related GHG emissions", and requested the Secretariat to update the document with similar information for other IPCC travel-related activities, including but not limited to outreach events, not prejudging any changes in meeting formats, at the earliest, by the next Plenary session where the Financial Task Team will meet.

Due to the fully packed agenda of the 62nd Session of the IPCC (Hangzhou, China, 24 – 28 February 2025), the discussion on the financial implications and travel-related carbon emissions of holding physical, virtual and hybrid meetings was deferred to IPCC-63.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the analysis presented in this document is to present more information at the request of the Panel at IPCC-60, recalled by the Panel at IPCC-62.

3. Approach

The methodology used previously for the document presented at the IPCC-60 on the same matter has been applied. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Carbon Emissions Calculator was used to calculate the CO_2 emissions attributed to individuals' air travel. The ICAO Calculator requires that the user inputs the origin and destination aerodromes, as well as the cabin class. This information is used by the tool to estimate the passengers' aviation emissions. A detailed description of the methodology used by the tool is available here.

As for the previous assessment, emissions estimates included those for meeting participants funded from the IPCC Trust Fund and those funded from other sources. For Trust Fund meeting participants, detailed travel data enabled use of the ICAO Calculator. For others, estimates were based on country of origin and delegate numbers, with assumptions including travel from the main airport to the main airport of the final country of destination, economy class flights, and exclusion of train emissions due to their negligible impact.

The emissions related to conference facilities were estimated using the tools available on the United Nations Carbon Offset Platform. The primary data used here were the duration of the meetings and the number of participants. Details of the tools are available here.

The financial costs of the meetings were derived from Quantum, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool used at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

This approach ensures that the emissions and financial implications of different meeting modalities are evaluated across the full spectrum of IPCC activities.

4. Scope of the assessment

The scope of the assessment covers three main categories of meetings: Lead Author Meetings, Bureau meetings, and Outreach events. Each category is represented by various formats, namely virtual, in-person, and hybrid meetings, as applicable.

4.1 Lead Author Meetings

Two Lead Author Meetings (LAMs) were selected for the analysis: The Working Group I (WGI) Third Lead Author Meeting (LAM3; Toulouse, France, 26 – 31 August 2019) and the WGI Fourth Lead Author Meeting (LAM4; Virtual, 15 – 19 February 2021).

For LAM3, 91 journeys were funded from the IPCC Trust Fund, whereas 190 were funded independently.

Breakdown of Financial Implications
(Swiss Francs)

Cost Category	**Type of Meeting**		
	In-person (LAM3)		**Virtual (LAM4)**
Travel (delegates)	268,708		0
Travel (IPCC staff)	2,376		0
Total	**271,084**		**0**

The estimated travel-related carbon emissions for the two LAMs are shown below.

Carbon Emissions (Kg CO_2)

	Type of Meeting		
	In-person (LAM3)		**Virtual[1] (LAM4)**
IPCC Trust Fund	92,315		0
Independently funded	107,693		0
Conference facilities	23,125		0
Total	**223,133**		**0**

4.2 IPCC Bureau Meetings

Three IPCC Bureau meetings were selected.

a) The 56th Session of the IPCC Bureau (BUR-56; Geneva, Switzerland, 18 – 19 March 2019) was considered as physical in-person meeting.
b) The 64th Session of the IPCC Bureau (BUR-64; Hybrid Session, 16 February 2023) was considered a hybrid session, the first after the COVID-19 pandemic.
c) The 58th Session of the IPCC Bureau (BUR-58; Virtual Session, 19 May 2020) was considered a virtual session, the first after the outbreak of COVID-19.

For BUR-56, 26 journeys were funded from the IPCC Trust Fund, whereas 33 were funded independently. The latter included Technical Support Unit (TSU) staff who travelled to Geneva from cities within Europe. For BUR-64, 49 participants (i.e., Bureau members, Government Representatives, TSU staff, TG-Data Co-Chair and UNFCCC representatives) attended in-person. Amongst these, 21 were funded from the IPCC Trust Fund, and 28 were funded independently.

[1] Emissions associated with teleconferencing technology while very low are not entirely zero. The technology-related GHG emissions could not be estimated. This comment applies to all emissions from virtual meetings.

Breakdown of Financial Implications
(Swiss Francs)

Cost Category	Type of Meeting				
	In-person (BUR-56)		**Hybrid (BUR-64)**		**Virtual (BUR-58)**
Travel (delegates)	59,465		53,715		0
Security	-		1,157		0
Miscellaneous	-		1,080		0
Total	**59,465**		**55,952**		**0**

The estimated travel-related carbon emissions for the three Bureau meetings are shown below.

Carbon Emissions (Kg CO_2)

	Type of Meeting				
	In-person (BUR-56)		**Hybrid (BUR-64)**		**Virtual (BUR-58)**
IPCC Trust Fund	29,414		22,634		0
Independently funded	14,908		11,374		0
Conference facilities	1,515		838		0
Total	**45,837**		**34,846**		**0**

4.3 Outreach Events

The Outreach Events that were selected for the analysis were:

a) Meeting of Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFA) representatives and Members of Parliament from Central Asia on climate change issues in Central Asia, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 22 August 2019. The event was attended by about 51 participants including national delegations from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, World Bank, IPCC representatives, Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC), Diplomatic corps and international organizations; and

b) A Webinar, titled “Engagement of academia and students from Central Asia in climate related studies and IPCC activities”, held virtually on 25 November 2020. This event was organized and hosted by the CAREC based in Kazakhstan, in the framework of the project "Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Program for Aral Sea Basin" (CAMP4ASB) supported financially by the World Bank. IPCC representatives participated in the event whose main goal was to update on the progress with the AR6 and inform on existing opportunities for engagement in IPCC work.

Seven participants who attended the in-person event on 22 August 2019 were funded from the IPCC Trust Fund. The rest were funded independently.

Breakdown of Financial Implications
(Swiss Francs)

Cost Category	Type of Meeting		
	In-person (22 August 2019)		**Virtual (25 November 2020)**
Travel (delegates)	7,767		0
Travel (IPCC staff)	5,736		0
Miscellaneous	3,200		0
Total	**16,703**		**0**

The estimated travel-related carbon emissions for the two outreach events are shown below.

Carbon Emissions (Kg CO_2)

	Type of Meeting		
	In-person (22 August 2019)		**Virtual (25 November 2020)**
IPCC Trust Fund	4,430		0
Independently funded	4,826		0
Conference facilities	892		0
Total	**10,148**		**0**

5. Conclusion:

The above estimates reaffirm the potential of virtual and hybrid meeting formats to reduce costs and carbon emissions of the IPCC meetings. Additionally, it reinforces the validity of the proposed strategies for reducing emissions and costs of these meetings as outlined in section 5 of the Document IPCC-LX/Doc.12.