

**SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE IPCC
Bangkok, Thailand, 24 to 27 March 2026**

IPCC-LXIV/Doc. 3
(3.III.2026)
Agenda Item: 5.2
ENGLISH ONLY

MATTERS RELATED TO OTHER ACTIVITIES

Pre-plenary briefing session at the Sixty-first Session

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

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Introduction

In paragraph 23 of Decision IPCC-LXIII-5, the Panel, at its 63rd Session (Lima, Peru, 27–30 October 2025), recalled Decision IPCC-XLVII-4, para 2, and requested the Secretariat to provide a report at IPCC-64 on the pre-pleinary briefing session organised during IPCC-61, including budgetary implications, with a view to informing the Panel's decision on holding similar pre-pleinary briefings in future sessions.

The present document is submitted in response to that request.

Background

At the 41st Session of the IPCC (Nairobi, Kenya, 24–27 February 2015), the Panel agreed (Decision IPCC/XLI-4, paragraphs 24–27) that a number of additional measures would be appropriate to attract qualified experts from developing countries and to enhance and facilitate their engagement with the IPCC. The measures included the following:

- Further encourage Co-Chairs and other Bureau members to engage experts from developing countries in Technical Support Units (TSUs), author teams and as reviewers. Increasing training for TSUs and author teams will help ensure effective participation by all authors.
- Increase the number of IPCC activities in developing countries.
- Arrange briefings and training sessions for government representatives e.g. before sessions of the IPCC.
- In the context of communication and outreach activities, to provide experts with information about the IPCC process and how they can participate in IPCC work.

During the 44th Session of the IPCC (Bangkok, Thailand, 17–20 October 2016), the IPCC Secretariat presented a set of action points aimed at implementing Decision IPCC/XLI-4, paragraphs 24–27. Subsequently, the Panel (Decision IPCC/XLIV-1, paragraph 12) recognized the importance of organizing a one-day briefing session to raise awareness and enhance the participation of developing countries in the IPCC process, noting that the briefing should be open to all member countries.

The Panel proposed that a briefing session be held on a pilot basis one day prior to the 45th Session of the IPCC (IPCC-45) and further requested that the outcome of the session be evaluated in order to inform a decision on whether the activity should continue in the form of in-session briefings at future Plenary sessions.

Accordingly, the first Pre-Plenary Briefing Session was convened in Guadalajara, Mexico, on the afternoon of 27 March 2017, immediately prior to IPCC-45. A survey was subsequently conducted to assess the effectiveness of the inaugural session, and the findings were summarized in Document [IPCC-XLVII/Doc. 4](#) and presented to the Panel at its 47th Session (Paris, France, 13–16 March 2018).

In Decision IPCC-XLVII-4, the Panel subsequently:

1. Noted that the survey conducted indicates support for pre-pleinary briefing sessions, while also offering suggestions for improvement.
2. Recommended that the Secretariat continues to organize pre-pleinary briefing sessions which should be low cost, preferably without interpretation, be open to all registered delegates and be periodically assessed to improve their usefulness and efficiency.

3. Requested that the Secretariat continues with efforts to facilitate acquisition of entry visas for delegates attending IPCC meetings.
4. Requested the Secretariat to consider means to extend the stay of delegates funded from the IPCC Trust Fund during approval sessions of IPCC reports.

The second Pre-Plenary Briefing Session was held on the morning of 24 February 2020, prior to the 52nd Session of the IPCC (Paris, France, 24–28 February 2020).

The Pre-Plenary Briefing Session prior to the 61st Session of the IPCC

The third Pre-Plenary Briefing Session was held on the afternoon of 26 July 2024, prior to the 61st Session of the IPCC (Sofia, Bulgaria, 27 July–2 August 2024).

The pre-briefing programme consisted of two main segments. The first segment introduced the IPCC, including its role and mandate, its structure, and the key steps in the assessment process. This was followed by an experience-sharing session on engagement with the IPCC, tailored for Focal Points, Bureau members, and delegates.

The second segment presented key highlights of IPCC-61, including an overview of the agenda items, relevant mandates, background information, and other practical details. This was followed by a session offering practical insights for Focal Points, Bureau members, and other attending delegates.

Evaluation of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Session

Pursuant to paragraph 2 of Decision IPCC-XLVII-4, the Secretariat conducted an online survey to solicit the views of participants with a view to informing the evaluation of the Session.

The survey consisted of two parts. The first part collected background information on respondents, including their full names, institutional affiliation, and whether they served as IPCC Focal Points.

The second part of the survey comprised a series of structured questions designed to assess participants' views on the Session. For each question, respondents were also invited to provide comments and suggestions to elaborate on the reasoning underlying their responses. The questions were as follows:

1. Was the agenda developed in a manner which allowed sharing of all relevant information to delegates?
2. Did the presentations meet the needs of delegates, particularly those who are not very familiar with IPCC procedures and rules?
3. Was the time allocated to the session adequate for sharing of relevant information?
4. Is your country/ organization in a better position to participate in IPCC activities?
5. Should the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions be continued in future IPCC Sessions?
6. Additional remarks and suggestions.

A total of 105 respondents participated in the survey. Annex 1 provides detailed results. Overall, the session was widely regarded as beneficial, with respondents highlighting the need for sustained capacity-building efforts and adequate resource support to enable more effective and inclusive participation in IPCC activities. The comments indicated a broad support for the continuation of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions, along with constructive suggestions aimed at further enhancing their effectiveness, inclusiveness, and clarity of purpose.

Financial Implications

The table below summarizes the financial implications of holding a half-day pre-plenary briefing session in the context of IPCC Plenary Sessions.

Pre-plenary briefing session (half-day)	Actual Costs	Estimated Costs	
	At IPCC-61: held day before Plenary Session	Scenario 1: held day before Plenary Session ¹	Scenario 2: held virtually
Travel DC/EIT participants	19,596	36,081	0
Travel IPCC Secretariat	3,202	4,811	0
Interpretation ²	0	0	0
Venue	0	12,480	0
Total (CHF)	22,798	53,372	0

1. Actual costs (IPCC-61, Sofia, Bulgaria, July 2024):
The pre-plenary briefing session held on the afternoon of 26 July 2024, i.e. the day before the start of IPCC-61, incurred total costs of CHF 22,798. These costs consisted solely of one additional day of daily subsistence allowances (DSA) for participants from DC/EIT and Secretariat staff. No interpretation services were provided, and venue costs were fully covered by the host country.
2. Scenario 1 – Half-day session held the day before the Plenary:
Estimated costs for holding a half-day briefing session on the day prior to an IPCC Plenary Session amount to CHF 53,372. This estimate reflects the average costs of two representative host locations, namely IPCC-58 (Interlaken, high-cost), and IPCC-64 (Bangkok, low-cost). The projected expenditure includes one additional DSA day for DC/EIT participants and Secretariat staff as well as venue-related costs. It is assumed that no interpretation is provided, consistent with the recommendation contained in Decision IPCC-XLVII-4, paragraph 2.
3. Scenario 2 – Virtual session:
If the pre-plenary briefing session is held virtually, no additional travel and venue costs are expected. It is further assumed that no interpretation is provided. While cost-neutral, organizing a virtual session would still require technical and administrative support from the IPCC Secretariat. This would include making the session recording available to ensure broad and flexible access to the session content.

In summary, holding a half-day pre-plenary briefing session on the day before an IPCC Plenary Session is estimated to cost CHF 53,372, covering DSA and venue-related expenditures. Alternatively, conducting the session virtually is not expected to require any such costs.

Action Requested of the Panel

1. In line with para 23 of the decision IPCC-LXIII-5 of the IPCC-64 and para 2 of the decision IPCC-XLVII-4 of the Panel at IPCC-47, the Panel is invited to consider the information contained in the present document, including the evaluation of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Session held in conjunction with IPCC-61 and its associated financial implications and advise on the timing, format and frequency of the future sessions.

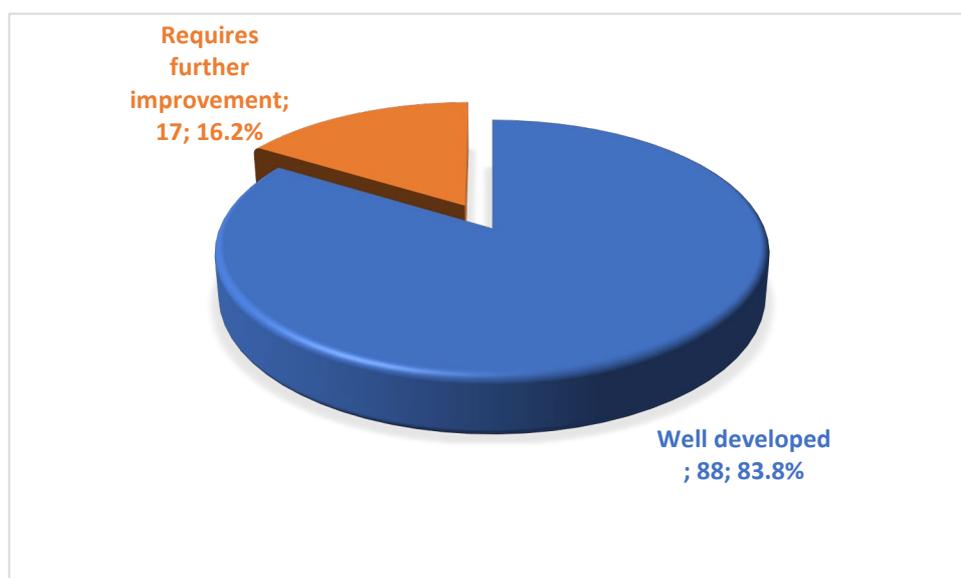
¹ Estimated costs are based on the average of two representative venues: the past host location of IPCC-58 (Interlaken, high-cost) and the upcoming host location of IPCC-64 (Bangkok, low-cost).

² Scenarios 1-2 assume that interpretation is not provided in line with the recommendation contained in Decision IPCC-XLVII-4, paragraph 2.

Annex 1 – Analysis of the survey on the Pre-Plenary briefing session

Question 1: Was the agenda developed in a manner which allowed sharing of all relevant information to delegates?

With regard to whether the agenda was developed in a manner that allowed for the sharing of all relevant information with delegates, respondents were invited to select one of three options: *well developed*; *not well developed*; or *requires further improvements*. A total of 88 respondents (approximately 83.8 %) indicated that the agenda was *well developed*, while 17 respondents (16.2 %) indicated that it *requires further improvements*. No respondents selected *not well developed*.



Several respondents expressed strong satisfaction with the agenda, describing it as well developed, interactive, and useful. Some indicated that the session met its objectives effectively and supported the continuation of the Pre-Plenary Briefings in future sessions.

Among those suggesting improvements, several respondents emphasized the importance of more timely communication and advance circulation of the agenda and related documentation, including presentation slides and reference materials. Some noted that receiving information earlier would facilitate better preparation and participation.

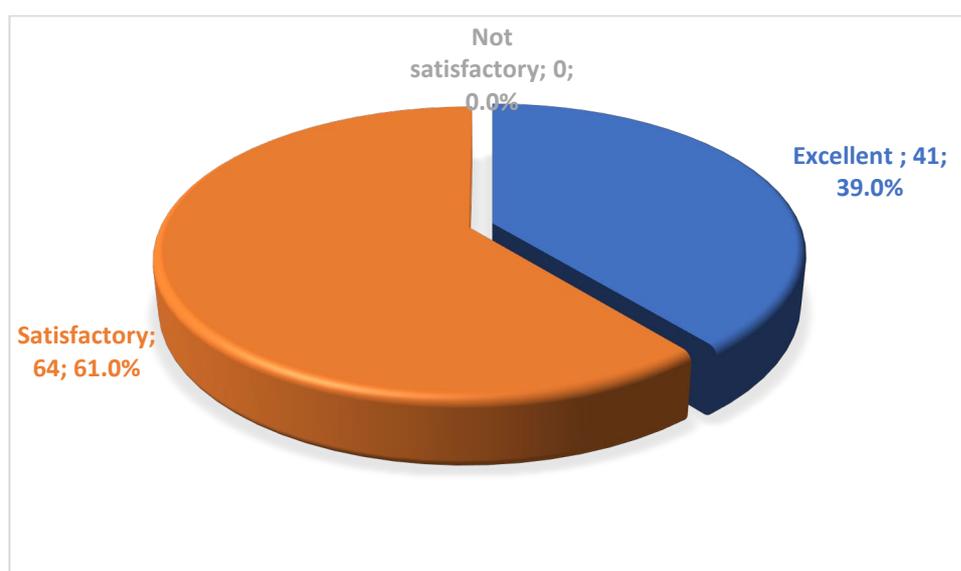
A recurring theme concerned the enhancement of interactive components. Respondents suggested allocating additional time for peer-to-peer exchanges, refining the format and objectives of the World Café discussions, improving reporting back from discussion groups, and using tools or methods to better capture and structure exchanges. A few comments proposed focusing discussions on fewer, more targeted topics and clarifying the overall objectives of the pre-plenary briefing.

Other suggestions included incorporating practical case studies or best practices from National Focal Points, providing additional information on IPCC reports and processes, and ensuring more structured moderation of interventions to maximise effective information-sharing.

Some comments referred to logistical or administrative matters, such as visa challenges or late notification, which may affect participation but are not directly related to the design of the agenda itself.

Question 2: Did the presentations meet the needs of delegates, particularly those who are not very familiar with IPCC procedures and rules?

About the question of whether the presentations met the needs of delegates, particularly those who are not very familiar with IPCC procedures and rules, respondents were invited to select one of three options: *excellent*, *satisfactory*, or *non-satisfactory*. A total of 41 respondents (approximately 39 %) rated the presentations as *excellent*, 64 respondents (approximately 61 %) rated them as *satisfactory*, and no respondents selected *non-satisfactory*.



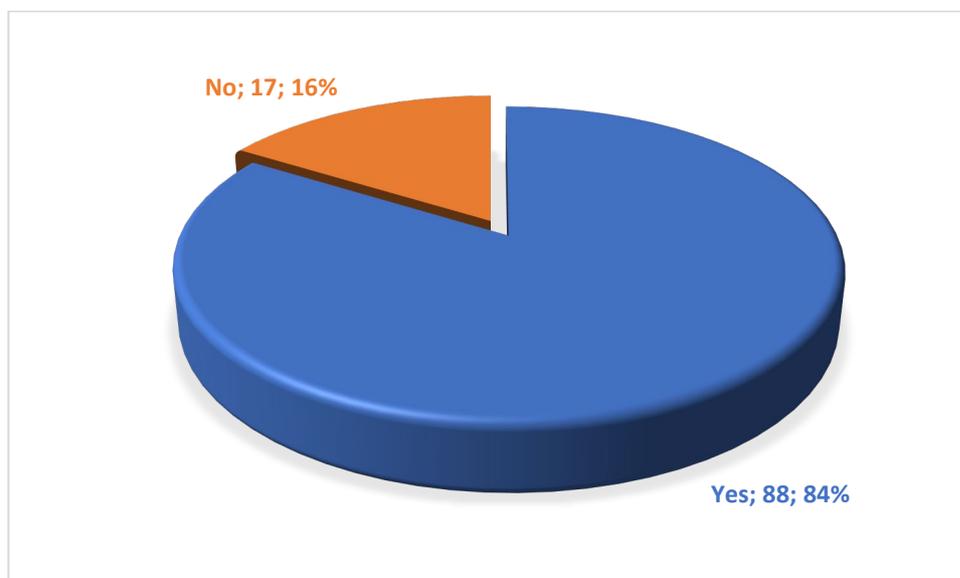
Several respondents indicated that the presentations were well prepared, useful, and met their expectations. Some described the session as very informative, noting that it provided important information on the IPCC's organization and working methods. A number of participants, including experienced Focal Points, found certain components, such as the walkthrough of PaperSmart and the Focal Point Portal, to be valuable refreshers and welcomed the continuation of similar presentations in future sessions.

Among suggestions for improvement, respondents highlighted the potential benefit of providing more tailored guidance for new delegates and Focal Points, including a concise overview of IPCC structures, procedures, and meeting processes in advance of the pre-plenary session. Some noted that reducing the number of topics covered could allow more time for deeper understanding, particularly for those less familiar with IPCC rules and procedures.

Several comments emphasized the importance of strengthening interactive and knowledge-sharing elements. Suggestions included better structuring experience-sharing segments, ensuring participation of experienced delegates where lessons learned are sought, and considering formats that facilitate more balanced exchanges

Question 3: Was the time allocated to the session adequate for sharing of relevant information?

With regard to the question of whether the time allocated to the session was adequate for the sharing of relevant information, respondents were invited to select one of two options: *yes* or *no*. A total of 88 respondents (approximately 84 %) indicated *yes*, while 17 respondents (approximately 16 %) indicated *no*.



Several respondents indicated that the time allocated to the session was adequate and that the overall duration was appropriate. Some participants described the timing as sufficient, particularly for achieving the stated objectives of the pre-plenary briefing.

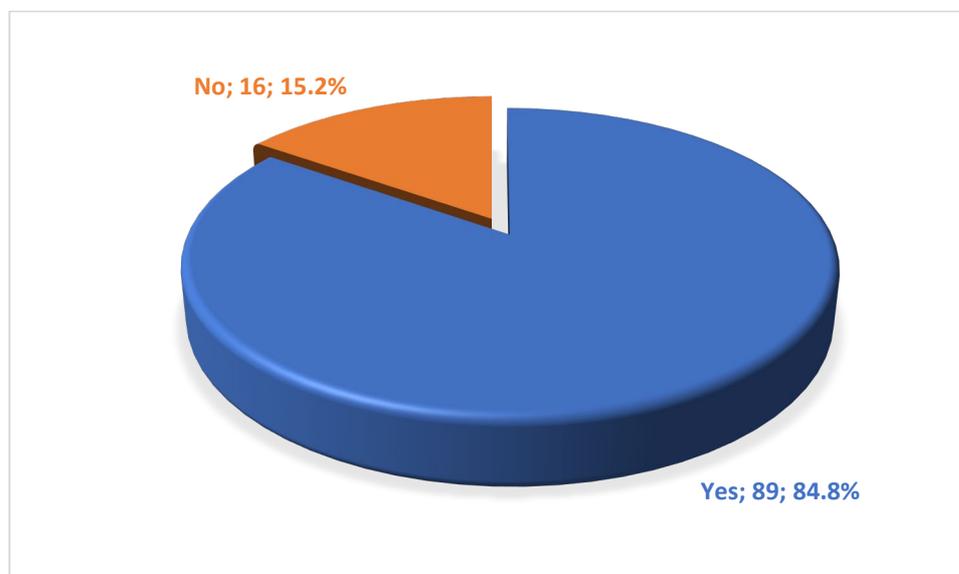
Among those suggesting improvements, a recurring view was that additional time would enhance the quality of discussions and allow for deeper engagement with the topics presented. In particular, respondents noted that the number and density of agenda items limited opportunities for thorough discussion and interaction. Some suggested reducing the number of topics covered, extending the session to a full day, starting earlier, or allocating more time for experience-sharing and regional exchanges among Focal Points.

A few comments highlighted that additional time would be particularly beneficial for newcomers and delegates from Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, enabling them to better absorb information and engage more fully. Others observed that the pace of presentations and the volume of content may have posed challenges, especially for participants working in a second language.

Some respondents also referred to logistical considerations, such as the timing of notifications and scheduling arrangements, which may affect participation but are not directly related to the adequacy of the time allocated during the session itself.

Question 4: Is your country/ organization in a better position to participate in IPCC activities?

With regard to the question of whether respondents' countries or organizations were in a better position to participate in IPCC activities following the session, respondents were invited to select one of two options: *yes* or *no*. A total of 89 respondents (approximately 85%) indicated *yes*, while 16 respondents (approximately 15 %) indicated *no*.



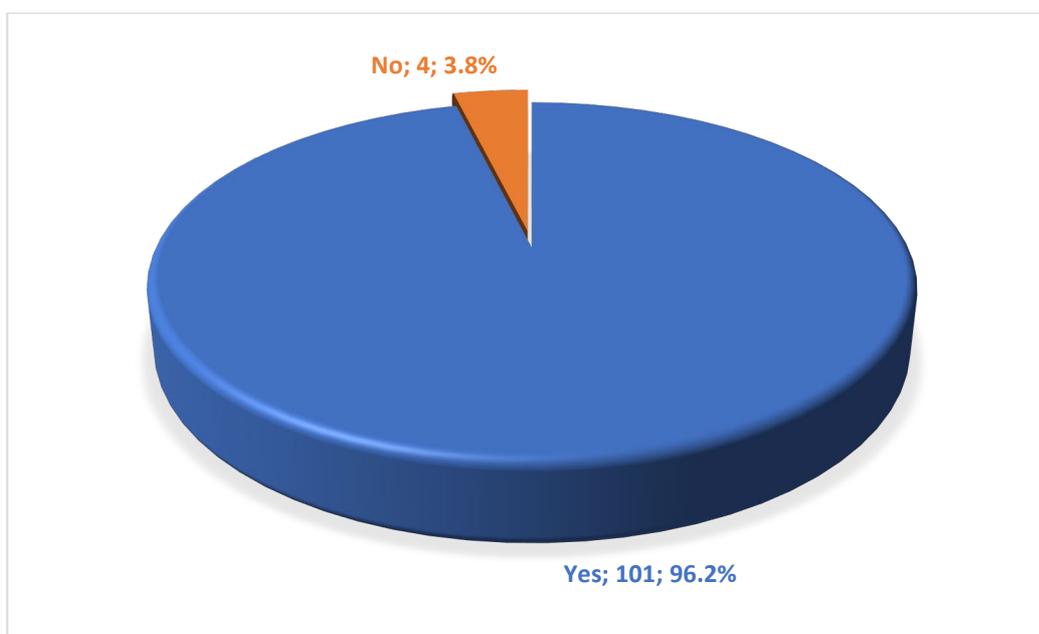
Several respondents indicated that the session placed their countries or organizations in a better position to participate in IPCC activities. Participants highlighted that the exchange of experiences, particularly among Focal Points, as well as discussions on nomination processes and best practices, provided practical tools and useful perspectives to strengthen national engagements. Some respondents described the session as laying a good foundation for more effective participation and welcomed continued efforts by the Secretariat and Bureau to enhance inclusiveness.

At the same time, a number of respondents noted that further support would be beneficial. In particular, some emphasized the need for clearer guidance for Observer Organizations regarding their role and procedural engagement within the IPCC. Others highlighted the importance of early and detailed communication on pre-plenary arrangements to facilitate internal decision-making and travel planning.

Financial and resource constraints were also identified as ongoing challenges, particularly for developing countries. Respondents referred to limitations in funding, the need to convene national coordination meetings, and broader capacity constraints affecting the identification and nomination of experts. A few comments also noted language barriers and the need for continued learning to strengthen participation.

Question 5: Should the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions be continued in future IPCC Sessions?

With regard to the question of whether the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions should be continued at future IPCC sessions, respondents were invited to select either *yes* or *no*. A total of 101 respondents (approximately 96 %) indicated *yes*, while 4 respondents (approximately 4 %) indicated *no*. These results reflect a very high level of support among participants for the continuation of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions in future IPCC sessions.



The majority of respondents expressed strong support for the continuation of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions, particularly highlighting their value for first-time delegates and newcomers. Participants noted that the sessions promote inclusiveness, facilitate effective participation in plenary discussions, and serve as a useful platform for peer exchange and familiarization with IPCC processes. Several respondents described the initiative as a best practice that should be sustained.

Among suggestions for improvement, respondents emphasized the importance of early communication and advance circulation of the agenda and logistical information to enable adequate preparation and travel planning. Some recommended refining the structure and objectives of the sessions, including clarifying expected outcomes, focusing discussions on fewer key topics, and providing summaries of deliberations. Others suggested strengthening interactive components, such as regional breakout groups, enhanced peer-to-peer exchanges, or exploring additional formats, including virtual participation.

A few respondents proposed that the sessions be organized on a more targeted or periodic basis (e.g., during key stages of the assessment cycle) or extended in duration to allow for more in-depth discussion of procedures and rules. Considerations relating to resource implications and costs were also raised by a small number of respondents.

Question 6: Additional remarks and suggestions

The final question was open-ended, and it invited respondents to provide additional comments and suggestions on matters not specifically addressed in the questions above.

In response, many respondents reiterated their appreciation for the organization of the Pre-Plenary Briefing Session and expressed strong support for its continuation. Participants described the initiative as valuable for strengthening understanding of IPCC processes, enhancing inclusiveness, and facilitating the exchange of experiences and best practices among Focal Points and delegates. Several respondents recommended retaining and further developing interactive components, including experience-sharing and the World Café format, and suggested that summaries of discussions could serve as useful reference materials.

A number of comments emphasized the importance of improved and earlier communication regarding the agenda, timing, and logistical arrangements to enable adequate preparation and travel planning. Some respondents proposed integrating the pre-plenary more formally into the overall session programme to facilitate participation.

Several respondents highlighted structural and administrative considerations affecting participation, including visa-related challenges and the need for greater flexibility and timely documentation, particularly for delegates from developing countries. Resource constraints and the need for continued support to ensure inclusive participation were also noted.

Additional suggestions included expanding access to IPCC communication platforms (e.g., access to the Focal Point Portal for Alternate Focal Points), providing further information on how to engage in IPCC activities, exploring virtual or hybrid formats, and modest adjustments to scheduling and duration to enhance interaction.

Overall, the additional comments reaffirm broad appreciation for the Pre-Plenary Briefing Sessions and offered constructive suggestions aimed at strengthening inclusiveness, accessibility, and practical impact.