

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

IPCC OUTREACH EVENT FOR THE CARIBBEAN KINGSTON, JAMAICA, WEDNESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2016 OPENING STATEMENT, HOESUNG LEE, CHAIR OF THE IPCC

Your Excellency, The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica
Professor Dale Webber, pro-vice-chancellor of the University of the West Indies
Dr Ulric Trotz, Deputy Director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
Mr Gerard Alleng, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank

Distinguished guests and colleagues

I'd like to thank the government of Jamaica, in particular the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, for hosting this outreach event, and the University of the West Indies for providing these fine facilities.

As small-island developing states, the Caribbean nations are particularly vulnerable to climate change, and so it's particularly appropriate that this event, bringing together all the nations of the region, is the major item on this year's calendar of the IPCC's ambitious outreach programme. Besides producing the best science, the IPCC has a duty to help policymakers and other stakeholders gain an understanding of climate change and how to respond to it.

We are meeting less than a year since the global community reached agreement in Paris on an accord to tackle climate change. The Paris Agreement has entered into force in record time, and earlier this month, at COP22 in Marrakech, parties started the work of putting flesh on the bones to make the accord reality. I'd like to tell you what the IPCC is doing to implement the Paris Agreement.

In Paris, governments asked the IPCC to prepare a special report on the impacts of warming of 1.5°C and related emissions pathways. Earlier this year we brought experts together to scope out that report, and we signed off the outline – the table of contents and structure – in October. We are now recruiting authors to write the report, which will be delivered in 2018.

Next week we will convene experts to draft the outline of a second special report, on climate change and oceans and the cryosphere. That will be ready in 2019.

We will hear more about these two important reports over the coming two days. Let me observe the following. The special report *Global Warming of 1.5°C* will be extremely important, coming in 2018 just before countries hold a facilitative dialogue to prepare for the review of individual ambition – the nationally determined contributions or NDCs – which aim cumulatively to hold warming to the Paris target of well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

The report on oceans is also particularly timely, and of obvious relevance to island nations. Oceans cover 70% of the planet's surface but have been somewhat ignored in the climate negotiations so far. Now some – not all – countries are including them in their NDCs. Paying attention to the oceans is particularly important for adaptation – think of the risk to coastal settlements – but it is also important for mitigation.

In 2019 we will also deliver a third special report, on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems, as well as an update to the *2006 IPCC Guidelines on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, which provide methodologies for countries to measure their emissions and removals of greenhouse gases. Up-to-date methodologies drawing on the latest science are essential for the transparency of the Paris Agreement. And of course, we will produce our next comprehensive assessment, the Sixth Assessment Report, to be finalized in 2022, a year before the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement. We will hold the scoping meeting for AR6 in May next year, so we only have five months now to hear the views of policymakers as we design that report.

Besides presenting our findings and the work of the IPCC to you, I hope that this event will contribute to an important goal of the IPCC: enhancing the involvement of developing countries in our work. We already have some excellent authors in the region, and you'll be hearing from some of them in the next few days, and I hope this event will encourage governments and observer organizations to nominate authors for the three special reports and AR6.

One of the aims of AR6 will be to close some of the knowledge gaps we have of climate change at the regional level. As you know, the IPCC does not conduct original research: we assess the published research of other scientists. I hope experts from the Caribbean will publish research on regional topics across the full range of disciplines in the coming years that we can draw into our assessment. And

once work on the reports has started you are all encouraged to register as expert reviewers to contribute to the development of the drafts.

Besides this intellectual capital, we also need financial support. Most of the IPCC budget goes on supporting the participation of experts from developing countries in our work. In that regard I'm pleased that we and the 5 C's have been able to bring in so many participants from the neighbouring countries. But on present trends we would run out of funds before we finish the work programme I have outlined to you. Even small countries can and do make contributions, and serve as examples to bigger states.

Let me close by looking at some of the topics we raised in Marrakech, which may stimulate our discussions here.

One common question there was whether political developments in some countries could hinder the global community in providing a science-based response to climate change. My view is that values and political beliefs may vary, but science is the common ground where these conflicting views can find a common understanding.

Other questions revolved around the relationship of climate and development policy. It's important, as countries invest in infrastructure, that they don't lock in high-carbon solutions that put stabilization out of reach. Today's decision will have a long-lasting impact on what we do in 20 or 30 years from now.

Some people argue that mitigation is too costly an option. But responding to climate change is not an either/or choice for a country, it's part of its development strategy. The Fifth Assessment Report showed that under cost-efficient scenarios that hold warming to 2°C by the end of the century, economic growth measured by consumption is reduced by only 0.06 percentage points a year. Business-as-usual scenarios – i.e. doing nothing – project 3% economic growth to the end of the century. But that is hardly consistent with warming of 4°C or more. In fact I would argue that business would be very far from usual in a four-degree world. There is some literature – not yet assessed by the IPCC – that suggests that for every 1° warming growth will be reduced by 1-2%. We need to improve our understanding of the costs and benefits of mitigation, for instance looking at the costs of mitigation

compared with other activities that generate a given volume of growth. I expect AR6 will look at this.

Lastly, we know that in many countries policymakers are still struggling to explain to people the threat of climate change and how it affects their everyday life. Here too the IPCC has something to contribute. That is why we are looking at how to work with our new authors to encourage them to produce their summaries for policymakers in clear, accessible language for non-specialists, and why we are working with academies to help them develop educational materials based on our reports.

I hope this meeting will contribute to a better understanding in the Caribbean region of climate change and help policymakers at all levels develop their responses. I also look forward to the discussions we will have so that we can draw on your insights in our coming work. Thank you for your attention.