

# How to review IPCC reports

## webinars and guidance for climate experts

Tuesday 15 October 2019 2.30-3.45 pm CEST / 12.30-13.45 GMT



ClimateContact  
Consultancy

### *Webinar 1: How does the IPCC Work?*

**Moderator:**

**Karen Morris**  
FCFA, SSN



**Presenters:**

**Leo Meyer**  
CC-C



**Jean-Pascal  
van Ypersele, UC Louvain**



# Learning objectives

*After following the full course, you will be able to:*

- Understand the structure of the IPCC and its assessment process
- Phrase effective review comments on content of texts and figures in IPCC draft reports, based on one's own expertise
- Introduce additional knowledge from local and regional scientific literature

# Disclaimer

*This course for climate experts from developing countries is the responsibility of Future Climate for Africa (FCFA) and the presenters. It is not a product of the IPCC, which cannot be held responsible or liable for the content of this course.*

# Introducing the Course and Timeline

- 11 October - 6 December midnight CET: Registration as a prospective Expert Reviewer of the FOD WG II Assessment Report
- 15 October : Webinar 1 - How does the IPCC work? General introduction, process
- 22 October: Webinar 2 - How to conduct an IPCC review – guidance and examples
- 22 October – 8 November: Register for one-to-one feedback on draft review comments
- 13 December midnight CET : Deadline for uploading review comments on the FOD WG II Assessment Report

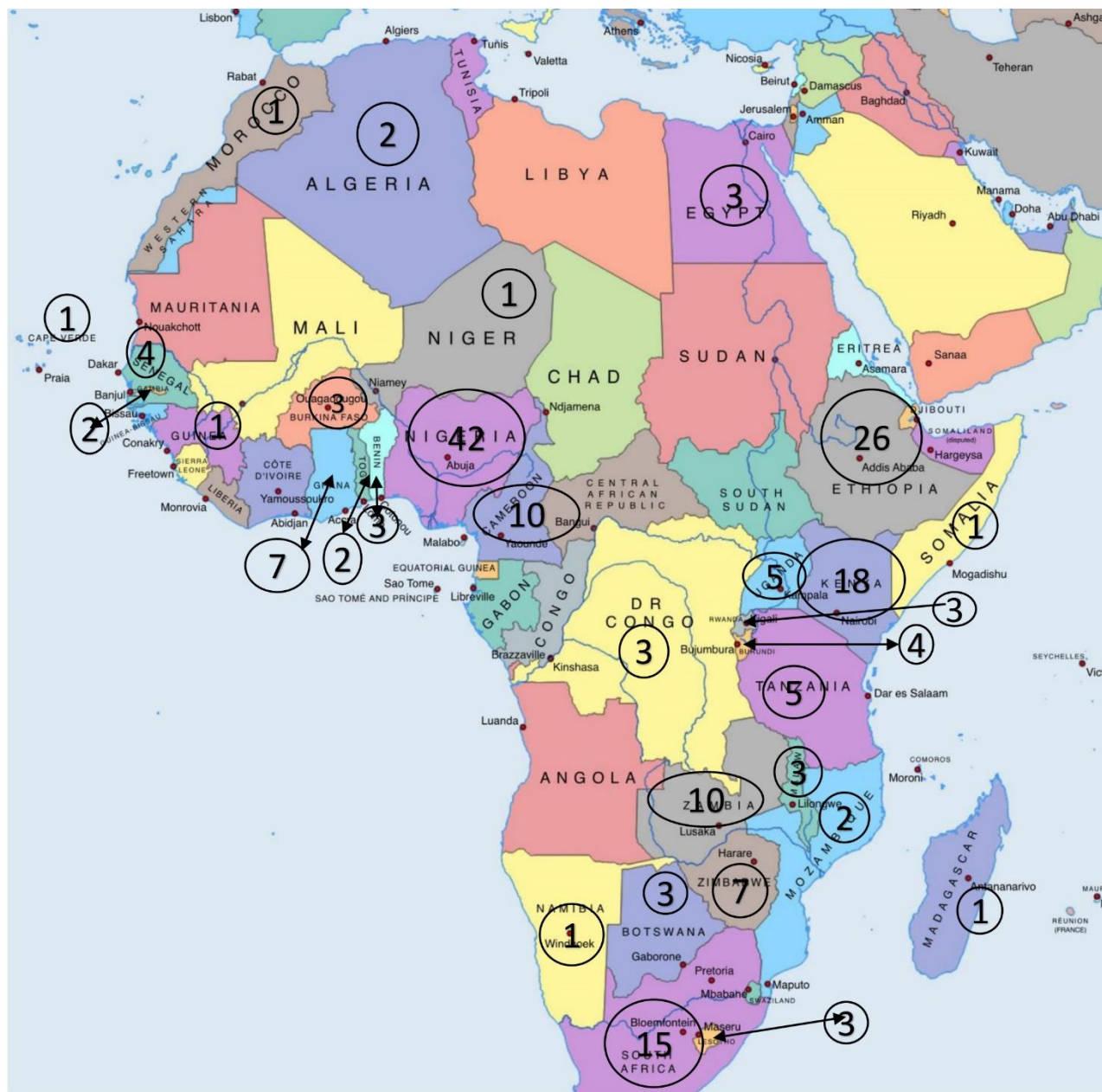
# Course Registrations Africa

SOUTH  
SOUTH  
NORTH

FUTURE  
CLIMATE  
FOR  
AFRICA



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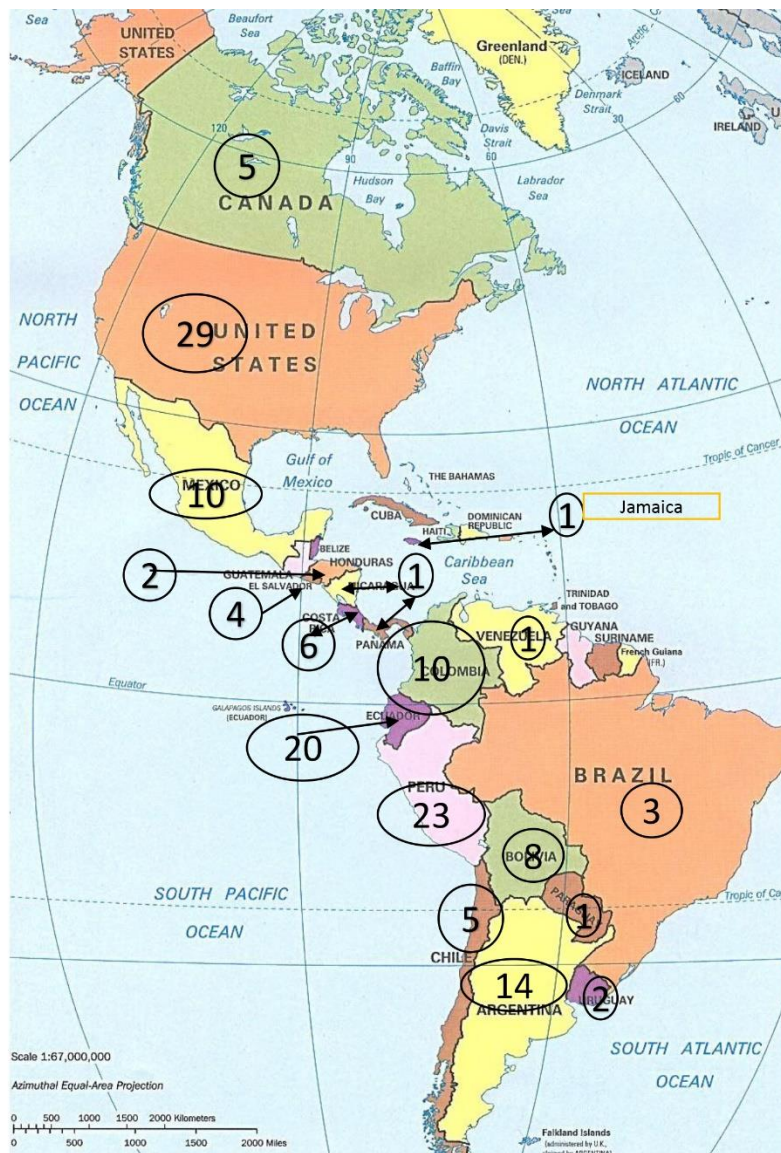
# Course Registrations other continents

SOUTH  
SOUTH  
NORTH

FUTURE  
CLIMATE  
FOR  
AFRICA



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# IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

- Organisation of all UN governments requesting scientists periodically to report on the status of the knowledge on climate change
- Installed by UN through World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UN Environment in 1988
- Organises every 5-7 years a scientific assessment of published literature on climate change, its impacts, and its response options – now working on the 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment
- In addition, publishes Special Reports on specific themes
- By teams of scientists from all continents
- Primarily to inform the policymakers of the UN member states

# Why the IPCC is needed

- Thousands of scientific publications on climate change each year...
- Policy makers cannot base policies on a single publication!
- An assessment of literature by balanced author teams help to filter out the key policy relevant messages
- Fifth Assessment 2013-2014:
  - 830 authors from 80 countries
  - more than 1000 contributors
  - More than 2000 reviewersproducing >140.000 comments





# The Role of the IPCC is ...

“... to **assess** on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the **scientific, technical and socio-economic information** relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation.”

“IPCC reports should be **neutral with respect to policy**, although they may need to **deal objectively with scientific, technical and socio-economic factors** relevant to the application of particular policies.”

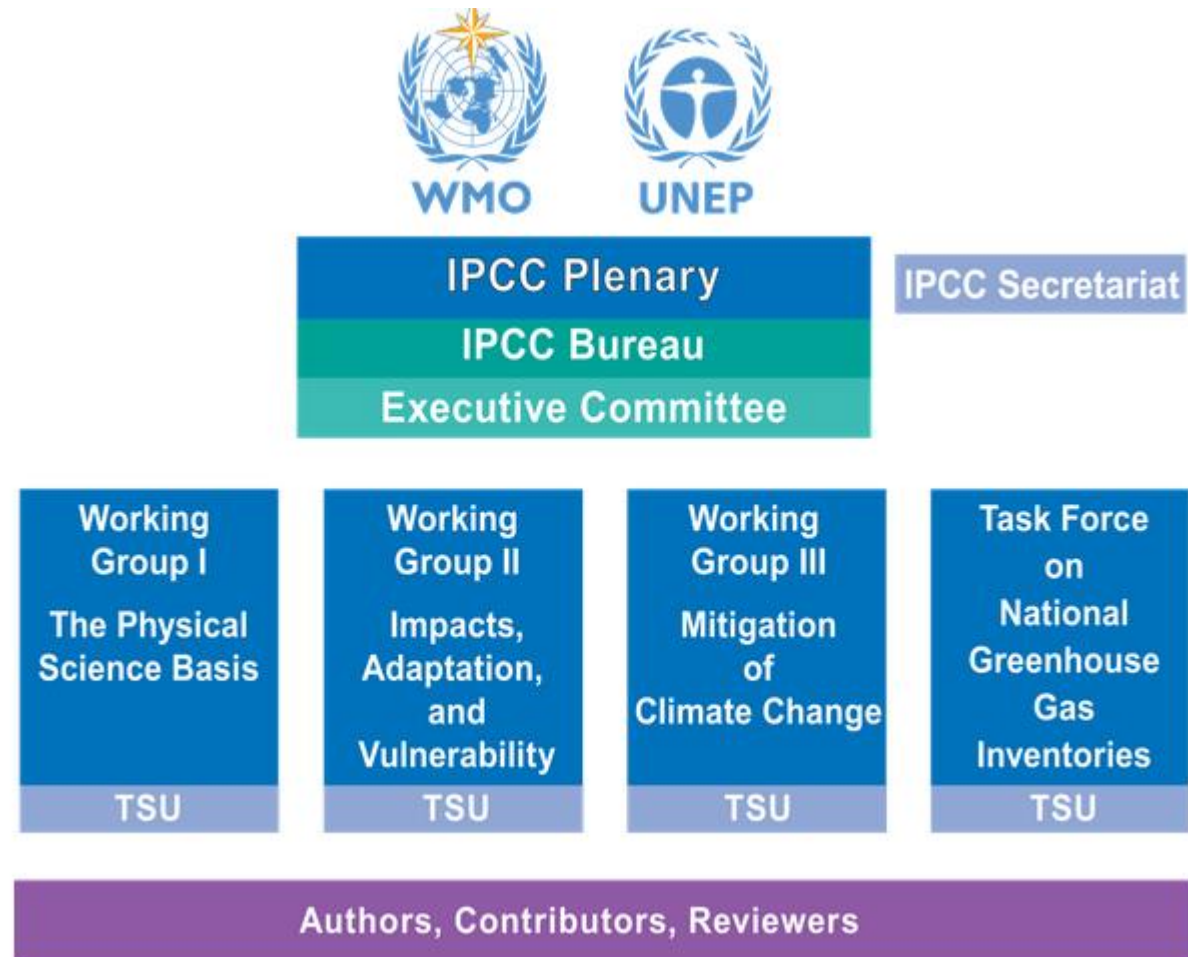
Principles Governing IPCC Work, paragraph 2

Source: <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/ipcc-principles.pdf>

# What IPCC is *not* – Common Misunderstandings

- IPCC does not do research for itself – it evaluates the key messages from scientific literature
- Authors do their work voluntarily, IPCC does not pay them
- Individuals are not ‘members’ of the IPCC; only governments can be members
- IPCC does not recommend or tell policymakers, civil society or private sector what to do – but it delivers the knowledge for taking informed decisions

# IPCC Structure



# Governance of the IPCC

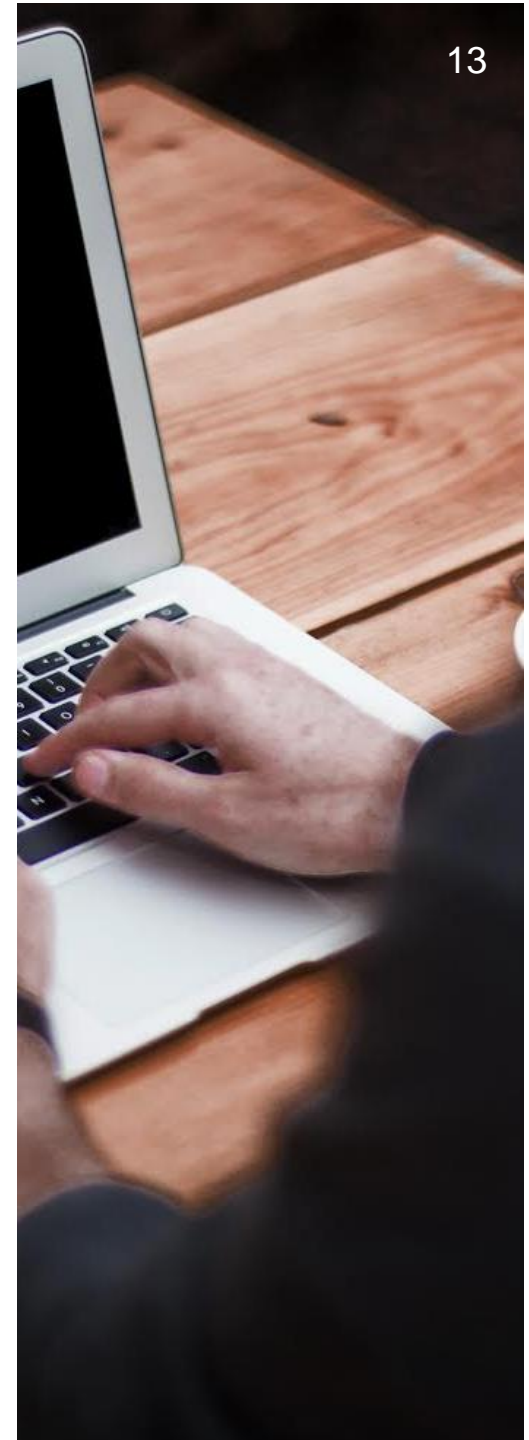
- Decisions of the IPCC are taken by its members in plenary sessions of government representatives of 195 UN member states. This body
  - *Elects* IPCC Chair and IPCC Vice-Chairs, Working Group Co-chairs and other members of the Working Group Bureaux
  - *Determines* which reports to make and *decides* about their scope and outline
  - *Adopts* the assessment reports and *approves* its Summary for Policy Makers
  - *Determines* the procedures used to produce the reports
- Assessment work is *managed* by three Working Groups and a Task Force each with their own Co-Chairs and Secretariats (Technical Support Units, TSU)



# Producers of IPCC reports (1)

These contributors are nominated by governments and scientific institutions, and selected by the Working Group Bureaux :

- *Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs)*: 2-4 per chapter; coordinate the writing of a chapter
- *Lead Authors (LAs)* :5-20 per chapter; do the main writing
- *Review Editors (REs)*: supervise adequate responding to review comments





## Producers of IPCC reports (2)

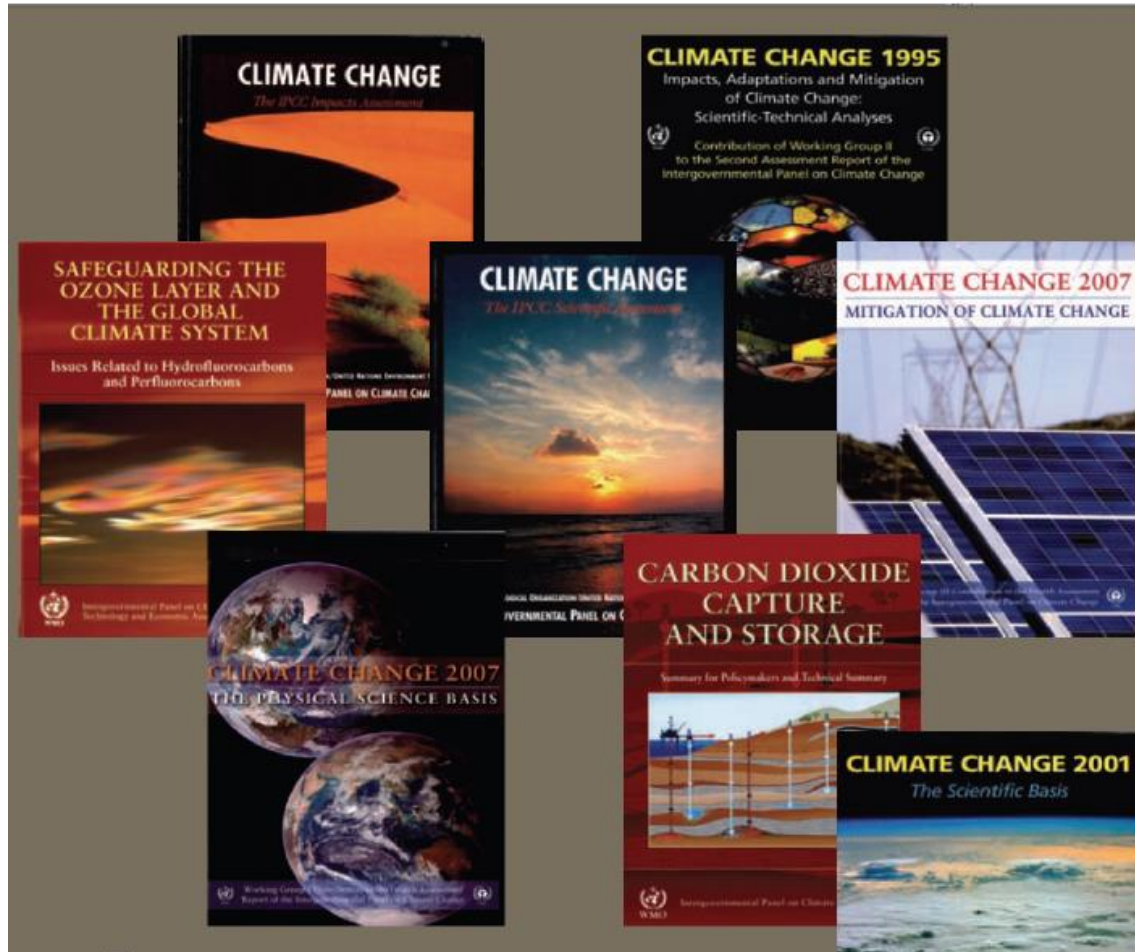
- *Contributing Authors*: deliver contributions to Lead Authors
- *Chapter Scientists*: early career scientists assisting the CLAs

### Reviewers of draft reports

- *Expert Reviewers*: anyone with relevant expertise
  - voluntary job, can nominate themselves, need self-declaration of expertise
- *Governments*



# IPCC Main Products: 'Assessment Reports'



**Assessment Reports:** full assessment for each of the 3 IPCC Working Groups

**Special Reports:** assessment of a specific theme

# Other IPCC Activities and Achievements

Methodology Reports providing practical guidelines for the preparation of national greenhouse gas inventories



Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessment (TG-Data): facilitates distribution and application of climate change related data and scenarios)

Organizing expert meetings and workshops to facilitate discussion on topics relevant to the Assessment process



# What is a 'Scientific Assessment' IPCC-style (1)?

- It addresses topics identified through a scoping process and agreed by the Plenary
- It draws key conclusions from the full span of available (mostly peer-reviewed) scientific literature
- It is written by a diverse group of qualified authors from all regions of the world—taking different views into account
- When appropriate, its findings are labelled with uncertainty qualifiers

# What is a 'Scientific Assessment' IPCC-style (2)?

Consensus Machine? Prescriptive?





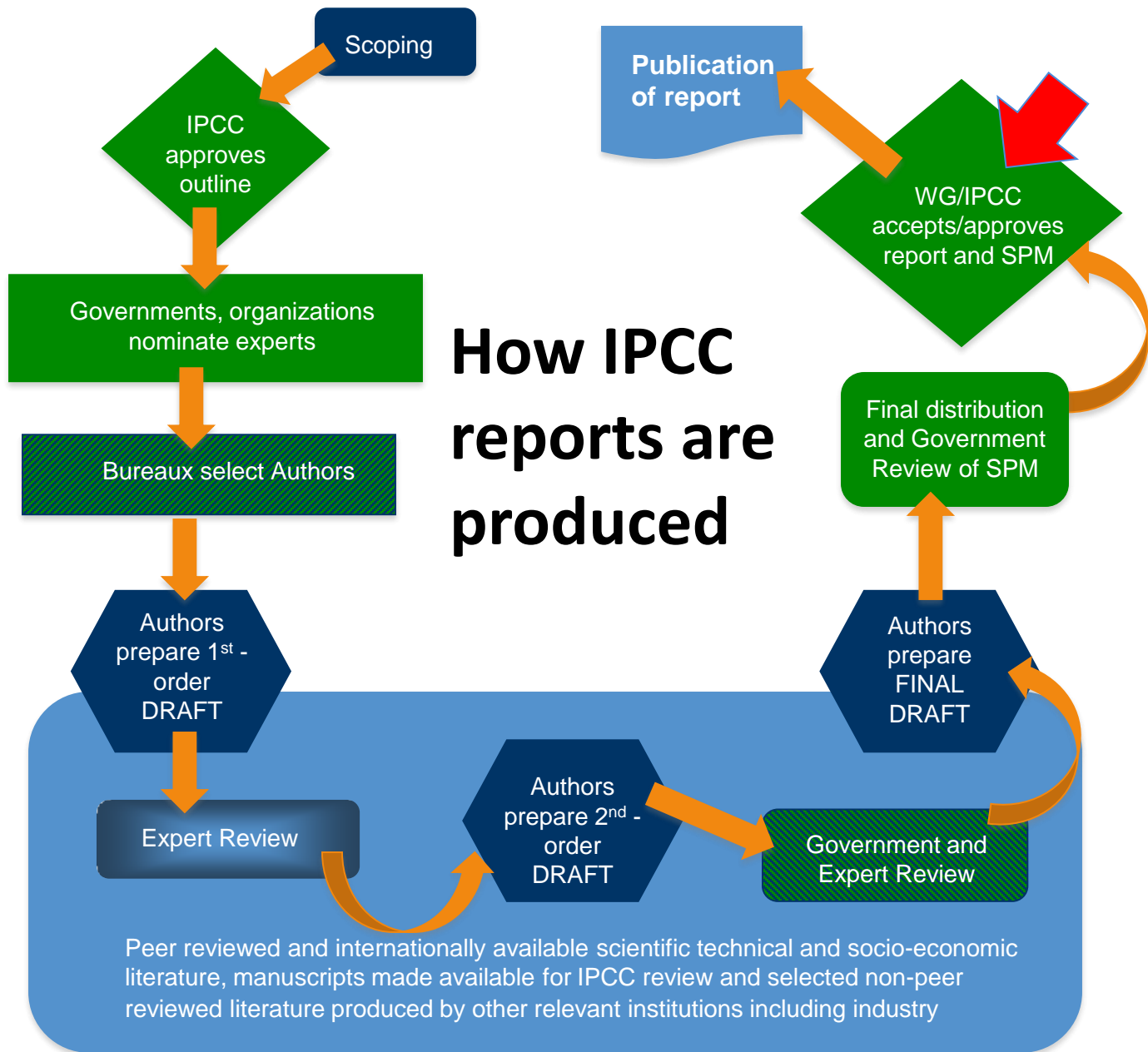
# What is a 'Scientific Assessment' IPCC-style (2)?

'Policy relevant but not policy prescriptive'



'Deals objectively with science'





# Summary for Policymakers (SPM)

- A report is accepted by the Panel as a whole, after it has approved its Summary for Policymakers
- Government representatives have to approve the SPM line by line!
- Proposals for changes have to be endorsed by the authors
- Full consensus on each and every detail is needed before approval, as there is no vote
- The option exists for a country to have a 'footnote' if it disagrees with the consensus



# The Fifth Assessment Report (2013-2014)



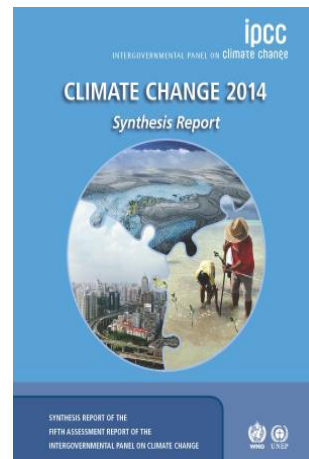
Working Group  
I report:  
The Physical  
Science Basis



Working Group II report:  
Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability



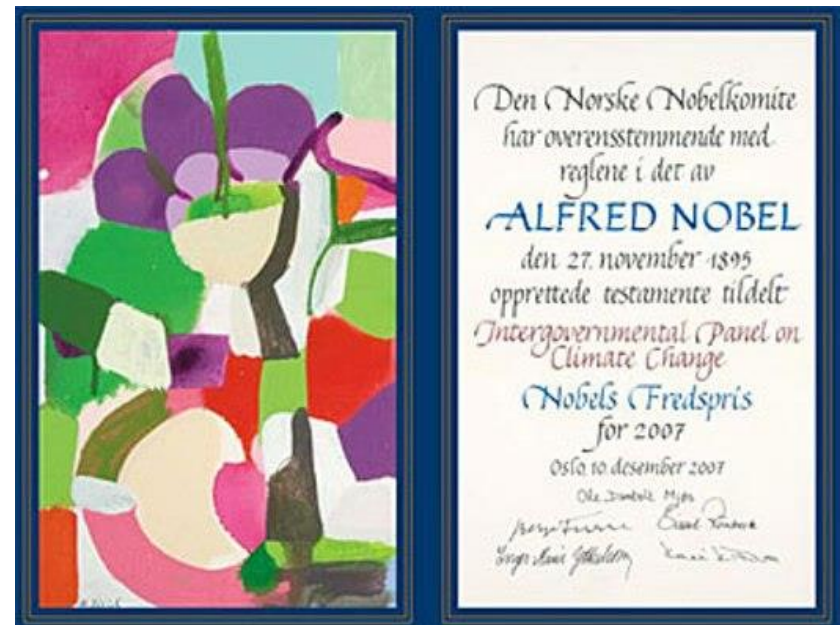
Working Group  
III report:  
Mitigation of  
Climate Change



Synthesis  
Report

# The IPCC- and its interaction with Society (1)

- Delivers the main scientific basis for the UNFCCC process and climate strategies and policies of many nations, companies, and civil society
- UNFCCC decides how the IPCC guidelines have to be used for national greenhouse gas inventories
- The IPCC has been rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 together with Al Gore....





# The IPCC - and its interaction with Society (2)

- .... but was also attacked, including by unjustified accusations of some of its authors in 2009: they were accused of manipulating temperature data. Several external enquiries proved these accusations to be baseless
- ...and heavily criticized in 2010 due to an error in one of the reports (about the speed of melting of Himalaya glaciers)
- ... The 2010 crisis has led to the improvement of the IPCC processes and procedures, including:
  - More precise rules for using literature sources
  - Enhanced role for Review Editors
  - Better communication
  - Protocol for adequate dealing with alleged errors

## New errors in IPCC climate change report

The United Nations panel on climate change is facing fresh criticism today as The Sunday Telegraph reveals new factual errors and poor sources of evidence in its influential report to government leaders.



Climate Change  
News » Earth »  
Earth News »  
Environment »  
Global Warming »

In Climate Change



Bolivia's second  
largest lake dries up



# IPCC Provides Strong Basis for Global Climate Policy

- First Assessment 1990:
 

Rio Framework Convention on Climate Change 1992 (UNFCCC)
- Second Assessment 1995:
 

Kyoto Protocol 1997
- Third Assessment 2001:
 

Ratification Kyoto in 2005
- Fourth Assessment 2007:
 

Copenhagen Accord 2009 (2 degrees limit)
- Fifth Assessment 2014:
 

Paris Agreement 2015 ('well below 2 °C/1.5°C)
- (Sixth Assessment 2022:
 

Global Stocktake in 2023)

# Nations Unies Conférence sur les Changements Climatiques

COP21/CMP11

## Paris, France






# Recent and forthcoming AR6 Reports

March 2018

Conference on  
Cities

October 2018

 Global  
warming of  
1.5°C

September 2019

Oceans  
and cryosphere



April 2021

The Physical  
Science Basis

October 2021

Climate Change  
Impacts,  
Adaptation and  
Vulnerability

April 2022

The IPCC  
Synthesis Report

Talanoa  
Dialogue  
UNFCCC

Climate Change  
and Land



August 2019

2019 Refinement

May 2019

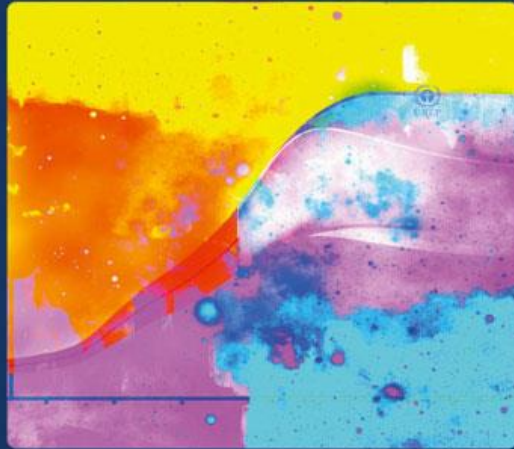
Mitigation  
of  
Climate Change

July 2021

Global Stocktake  
2023  
UNFCCC

Source: IPCC

# Latest Special Reports of the IPCC



Oct 2018

ipcc  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change



## Global Warming of 1.5 °C

An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty.

Aug 2019

## Climate Change and Land

An IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems

Sept 2019

IPCC Special Report on the  
Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate  
(SROCC)



# Upcoming: the First Draft of the WG 2 report....



Info on Working Group 2 of the IPCC is available at  
<https://www.ipcc.ch/working-group/wg2/>

# Content Working Group II report

The WG II report will include:

- Risks, adaptation and sustainability for systems impacted by climate change (water, food, ecosystems, oceans, coasts, cities; health, poverty)
- Regions (Africa, Asia, Australasia, Central and South America, Europe, North America, Small Islands)
- Cross chapter papers (biodiversity, cities and settlements by the sea, deserts, mountains, polar regions, tropical forests)
- Sustainable development pathways (risks, decision making, climate resilient development pathways)
- Annexes (including a list of Reviewers)
- The full outline is available here:

[https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/AR6\\_WGII\\_outlines\\_P46.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/AR6_WGII_outlines_P46.pdf)



# Review periods IPCC Reports

- WGI SOD: 2 March – 26 April 2020
- **WGII FOD: 18 Oct – 13 December 2019**
- WG II SOD: 7 August – 2 October 2020
- WGIII FOD: 13 January 2020 – 1 March 2020
- W III SOD: 13 July – 13 September 2020





# Acknowledgements

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Centre de recherches pour le développement international

**Canada**

# Thank you for your attention!

- *Now:* Q&As follow (15 minutes). You may submit your questions in English, French or Spanish
- You may wish to send more questions to [info@futureclimateafrica.org](mailto:info@futureclimateafrica.org); will be taken up by trainers
- Please consult the FCFA website for recordings, presentations and responses to questions
- *Next webinar:* How to conduct an IPCC review, 22 October 2.30-3.30 pm CEST/12 am -1.30 pm GMT
- We encourage you to register as an Expert Reviewer at <https://apps.ipcc.ch/comments/ar6wg2/fod/register.php>.