

Our ref.: 5149-13/IPCC/AR5

To designated IPCC Focal Points and
Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs)
(if no focal point has been designated)

COPY

Geneva, 28 March 2013

Sir/Madam,

I have the honor of addressing you on the matter of the Government and Expert Review of the Working Group II (WGII) contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.

The IPCC decided at its 28th Session in Budapest, Hungary, in April 2008, to prepare the AR5 in accordance with IPCC Principles and Procedures. Following a Scoping Meeting in Venice, Italy, in July 2009, the outline of the WGII contribution to the AR5 was approved at the 9th Session of Working Group II and accepted by the 31st Session of the IPCC, both in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2009 (see <<http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/ar5-outline.html>>). The Panel also decided that the WGII AR5 would be completed in March 2014.

Following a call for nominations to member Governments and Observer Organizations in January 2010, for experts to participate in the WGII AR5, Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, and Review Editors were selected by the WGII Bureau in May 2010. Out of the 1,217 nominations evaluated by the WGII Bureau, 310 were selected in June 2010. You have been informed of slight modifications to the writing teams since then via the status reports submitted at IPCC Bureau meetings and Panel sessions; a dynamically updated author listing can be found at <http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/AR5_authors.php>. An Informal Peer Review on the zero-order draft (ZOD) chapters was conducted from 25 July - 21 September 2011, and the WGII AR5 Expert Review of the first-order draft (FOD) took place from 11 June - 6 August 2012. The report has now been revised by the authors in response to comments received and the second-order draft (SOD) is now ready for simultaneous review by governments and experts from 28 March - 24 May 2013. Please refer to <http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/AR5_provisional_schedule.html> for the full WGII AR5 development schedule.

The multi-stage review of draft reports is a key element of the IPCC assessment process. Participation in the review of the WGII AR5 provides governments and experts the opportunity to comment on the second-order draft chapters of the report and the first-order drafts of its summary products, the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) and Technical Summary. The writing teams will evaluate all submitted comments at the WGII AR5 Fourth Lead Authors Meeting, planned to be held in Bled, Slovenia, 15-19 July 2013. Review Editors will ensure that all substantive comments receive due consideration. The WGII AR5 final draft will be distributed to governments in October 2013, and a WGII session to approve the SPM and accept the underlying report will take place in Yokohama, Japan, in March 2014.

The core agenda of the WGII report is assessing the changing risks of diverse impacts to human, ecological, and social-ecological systems; adaptive response options; and the implications for decision-making under uncertainty. The report assesses the observed effects of climate change, including detection and attribution of impacts on human and natural systems. It evaluates sensitivities to climate variability and climate extremes, trends in vulnerability and exposure, and the role of non-climate stressors. The report also examines responses to date, distinguishing coping from adaptation. With a focus on understanding and managing risks, it is crucial for the WGII report to assess the full range of potential future impacts, not only the most likely outcomes. The report needs to examine the distribution of risks across populations with contrasting vulnerability and adaptive capacity, across sectors where metrics for valuing impacts may be quite different, and across regions with widely varying traditions and resources.

The purpose of the WGII AR5 Government and Expert Review is to help ensure that the second-order draft chapters provide a balanced and comprehensive assessment of the latest scientific findings associated with the approved outline. To this end, reviewers are requested to evaluate chapters for accuracy, attention to key issues, completeness of intellectual coverage and of the literature assessed, clarity, and balance. It is important to be as specific as possible. Review comments that identify literature should provide citations and, especially for references that are not in scientific journals, information on access. The SPM is intended to provide a policy-relevant but policy-neutral summary of the report. Review comments on the SPM and Technical Summary should ensure that suggested changes are fully consistent with material in the chapters of the report and provide cross-references to that material. Please make sure to follow the posted instructions to the letter, including the stipulation that the working language for comments be English. Review comments should focus on substantive issues. Comments about wording and editorial details are generally not useful at this stage in the process.

Later today, you will receive an e-mail providing your unique credentials to access the password-protected review site: *[Part of the text removed here]*. These web pages contain the drafts themselves, supporting materials, the comments spreadsheet, and instructions, as well as hosting the comments file upload mechanism. You are encouraged to bookmark the page (after completing the certification process), both to retrieve review materials and to facilitate return 8 weeks hence to upload compiled comments. As mentioned in Dr Renate Christ's correspondence of 1 March 2013 (Ref. 5135-13/IPCC/AR5), the drafts repository also contains a table of all authorized registrants *[Part of the text removed here]* so that you can confirm engagement of targeted experts. Please remind any expert reviewer participating in a national review that they are to submit comments either as an individual or as part of a government review, but not both.

All draft chapters are works in progress and are not to be cited or quoted, or further disseminated. These second-order draft chapters and first-order draft summary products have not been thoroughly reviewed or quality-checked, and do not represent approved products of the IPCC. The IPCC appreciates your willingness to respect its commitment to ensuring that only approved IPCC products are cited or distributed. Your input is one of several critical steps in moving the chapters to the stage where they represent a balanced assessment of views across the entire scientific community. Please do not share your credentials. Username/password pairs will be monitored for potential abuse, and will be disabled if anomalous activity is detected. Further, your specific credentials have been tagged to facilitate access to pages that allow concurrent file uploads and submission of national experts listings, while individual expert reviewer credentials do not. Governments and Observer Organizations are expected to generate and maintain their own review mechanisms.

Please note that, in accordance with Article 4.2 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, all comments collected as part of this Government and Expert Review will be made available on the IPCC website as soon as possible after the acceptance by the Panel and the finalization of the Report. Review comments will be associated with the names of the people who provided them and with the responses from the chapter authors.

As a reminder, the WGII AR5 Government and Expert Review starts today **Thursday, 28 March 2013, and ends on Friday, 24 May 2013**. If you have any questions about the process, please do not hesitate to contact the IPCC Working Group II TSU at <tsu@ipcc-wg2.gov>. Additional information about conduct of a Government and Expert Review is available in Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work. Any technical issues associated with the review site should be directed to *[Part of the text removed here]*.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Focal Point(s) of your country for information.

Yours sincerely,



(Gaetano Leone)
Deputy Secretary of the IPCC