

Our ref.: 5217-20/IPCC/AR6

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

## COPY

Geneva, 4 June 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well in these challenging times.

As you are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has implications for the activities of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), especially for the schedule for the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6). As per the original timeline, the contribution of IPCC Working Group I (the physical science basis of climate change) is due to be finalized in April 2021, Working Group III (mitigation of climate change) in September 2021, and Working Group II (impacts, adaptation and vulnerability) in October 2021. The Synthesis Report is due to be finalized in May 2022. Considering the unprecedented impacts of the pandemic around the world, the schedule of the activities of the Working Groups, the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories as well as the IPCC Bureau and Plenary Sessions may need to be reviewed.

The Chair of the IPCC, the IPCC Executive Committee (ExCom), with the support of the Technical Support Units (TSUs) and the Secretariat, have been in the process of consulting with IPCC Focal Points, Bureau members, authors and other stakeholders to inform a strategic response to the challenges the pandemic is posing on the IPCC work programme. This includes reviewing the timing and format of IPCC Bureau meetings, Lead Author Meetings and other activities in the coming months and the schedule for delivery of the AR6. Following a discussion of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on preparations for the AR6, including the timeline, the ExCom set up an Informal Group on Strategic Planning (IG SP) to make recommendations on the schedule. IG SP brings together the Chair, three IPCC Vice-Chairs and Secretary, with the support of the TSU heads as observers and relevant Secretariat staff.

Looking ahead at the overall implications of COVID-19 on international travel and the impossibility of face-to-face meetings, virtual meeting formats are being explored whenever possible. Due to the unfolding situation that may persist through the months ahead, it is anticipated that the dates in the original schedule for the finalization of the AR6 could shift by at least four months. These changes have been discussed by the IG SP and thoroughly coordinated between the Chair, the Co-Chairs and the relevant Bureaux to avoid conflicting activities and ensure smooth running of the process. Since March 2020, the Chair of the IPCC has convened several regular and extraordinary ExCom meetings to discuss these urgent matters, the outcomes of which have been communicated to you by the Secretariat. Kindly note that further adjustments to the schedule may be made needed as the situation evolves.

To keep you updated on regular basis, the Secretariat has upgraded and improved the IPCC Focal Points Portal at: <https://apps.ipcc.ch/fp/>, where you can easily find relevant documents and news.

In these difficult times, we are well aware of the additional challenges faced by many of you working from home, from caring for loved ones and communities, to managing your primary employment in changed conditions. I wish to express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation for your support, continued efforts and involvement in the work of the IPCC.

I would also like to thank you for the spirit of solidarity in these challenging times, and to express my gratitude to those Governments that are generously providing financial support to the IPCC. We are halfway through the Sixth Assessment cycle and have already successfully produced three Special Reports and a Methodology Report. I encourage you all to continue contributing to our work and the IPCC Trust Fund. With your support and dedication, we will successfully deliver the AR6 in the most timely and efficient manner possible.

Thank you for your attention and kindly note that a copy of this letter is being sent for information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Permanent Representatives from your country to the World Meteorological Organization and to the United Nations Environment Programme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'O' followed by a checkmark-like flourish.

(Abdalah Mokssit)  
Secretary of the IPCC