



**IPCC 33rd Plenary session
Abu Dhabi, UAE, 10-13 May 2011**

**Statement by UNFCCC secretariat
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Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates and dear colleagues,

Thank you for the invitation extended to the UNFCCC secretariat to address the 33rd session of the IPCC. I would like to use this opportunity to update the plenary, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, on some developments in our process and to highlight some specific activities of relevance for IPCC.

Developments under the UNFCCC

The outcome in Cancun was encouraging. The Cancun Agreements include a comprehensive package to help developing nations deal with climate change, including a Technology Mechanism, Adaptation Committee and the Green Climate Fund.

Importantly, the Cancun Agreements, by committing to the long-term global goal of limiting average global temperature warming below 2 degrees Celsius, have provided the strongest signal the international community has ever given to the private sector that governments intend to move toward low-carbon economies.

All developed countries have submitted their quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets and these have now been published. The secretariat has also published information from 48 developing countries on the nationally appropriate mitigation actions, which they will implement in their effort to seek a deviation from business-as-usual emissions by 2020, with technological and financial support. Additionally, developed countries agreed to develop low-carbon strategies, while developing countries were encouraged to do so.

In Bangkok, at the first session of the AWGs in 2011, Parties to the UNFCCC agreed on an agenda to work towards a comprehensive and balanced outcome in Durban, at the end of the year. This outcome will address the implementation of the Cancun Agreements and issues that were not resolved at Cancun, but which are part of the comprehensive Bali Action Plan.

Specific activities of relevance for IPCC

Effective and meaningful policy needs to be based on sound science. In this context, the IPCC has some important contributions to make vis-à-vis the climate change negotiations.

Nowhere is this more important than in terms of the review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal. The Cancun Agreements call for this review to be guided by best

available scientific knowledge, including from AR5, the observed impacts of climate change and an assessment of overall aggregate efforts by Parties.

The review is scheduled to commence in 2013 and should be concluded by 2015, when Parties will consider strengthening the long-term global goal, including in relation to a 1.5 degrees goal. Notably, the Conference of the Parties “shall take appropriate action based on the review.”

It is expected that AR5 will provide important policy-relevant information to the review, which is seen as critical by the most vulnerable, notably the small island developing states.

But, at the end of the day, the report may not define what “dangerous” climate change is, because this is seen as a value judgment. Therefore, keeping in mind the fate of the most vulnerable, governments within the review process would need to answer if 2 degrees is an adequate goal. The question is: what can the IPCC do to help them make a fully informed decision on this important issue?

The schedule for completion of the assessment is important for the review. We know that efforts are being made for completing AR5 as soon as possible, and that the synthesis report is planned for October 2014. Yet to ensure commensurate policy responses to the AR5, I urge the IPCC to complete the report in time to allow its scientific assessments to be used for the review. The review will be considered by COP 21, at the end of 2015.

Scientific assessments are important for a number of other critical technical issues under the UNFCCC. The next session of the subsidiary bodies, which will take place in June, will continue to address the issue of scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of mitigation. The *Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation* will be an important contribution of the IPCC to inform these deliberations. An IPCC-SBSTA special event will be convened on June 7 to present the key findings of this report to climate change negotiators.

I am confident that the IPCC *Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation*, which is in the final stages of preparation, will make an important contribution to the work of the newly created adaptation institutions, once they become fully operational. Additionally, it will assist deliberations under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. Similarly, it is bound to make a contribution to the new SBI work programme on loss and damage and will assist Parties in implementing adaptation options on the ground.

The SBSTA will also continue to address other issue such as alternative common metrics to calculate the CO₂ equivalence of greenhouse gases, and the revision of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories for Annex I Parties to the Convention, taking into account information received from the IPCC.

In this connection, I would like to thank the IPCC for convening the expert meeting on harvested wood products, wetlands and nitrous oxide from soils, in response to the invitation of the SBSTA at its thirty-second session. The report of that meeting informed the SBSTA discussions on the reporting guidelines. The SBSTA, at its thirty-third session, invited the IPCC to undertake further methodological work on wetlands, focusing on

peatland, with a view to filling in the gaps in the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories. We look forward to receiving this contribution from IPCC, at the thirty-ninth session of the SBSTA.

Finally, the research dialogue and the research workshop have benefited, in the past, from the active participation of the IPCC. We look forward to the IPCC's participation in the workshop, scheduled for 2-3 June, and the next dialogue, that will take place under SBSTA on June 8. At these events, it would be useful to learn more about the IPCC's plans for AR5, in particular as it relates to its possible use for the review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal; the new scenarios for low temperature increases; and observed impact of climate change and their relationships with dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

Before concluding, I would like to express our thanks to IPCC for its active involvement in the UNFCCC process and cooperation during our sessions, workshops, briefings and numerous events, which contributed to making informed decisions on a sound scientific and technical basis.

We look forward to the outcomes of this session and wish you every success in your deliberations in the beautiful city of Abu Dhabi.

Thank you.

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