

# THE IPCC's FIFTH ASSESSMENT REPORT (AR5)

**ipcc**  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON  
climate change



## The IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)

### Completion dates

**Working Group I**  
Mid September 2013

**Working Group II**  
Mid March 2014

**Working Group III**  
Early April 2014

**Synthesis Report**  
End October 2014

For 20 years, the IPCC has provided assessments of climate change, including:

- causes of climate change
- impacts and vulnerability
- response strategies - mitigation – adaptation

The Fifth Assessment Report, due in 2014, will provide an update of knowledge related to climate change including information on:

- Socio-economic aspects of climate change and its implications for sustainable development
- More detailed regional information
- More precise considerations of risk, economics and ethics
- Stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations

## IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) now underway

The IPCC has started the preparation of its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). This follows the overall mandate of the IPCC, the main activity of which is to prepare comprehensive assessment reports about climate change at regular intervals, typically of about five to seven years.

The IPCC's First Assessment Report (FAR) in 1990 played a decisive role in leading to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was opened for signature at the Rio de Janeiro Summit in 1992. The Second Assessment Report (SAR) of 1995 provided key input for the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The Third Assessment Report (TAR) of 2001 provided further information relevant to the development of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) paid greater attention to the integration of climate change with sustainable development policies and the relationships between mitigation and adaptation, and led to a wider awareness of climate change issues in the general public and among decision-makers, inspiring world leaders to agree on the Bali Action Plan.

The Fifth Assessment, which will be finalised in 2014, will be made up of four reports: the three IPCC Working Groups' contributions dealing respectively with "The Physical Science Basis", "Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability", and "Mitigation of Climate Change", and the Synthesis Report (SYR). Each report will contain its own Summary for Policymakers (SPM) which is approved in detail by all member countries of the IPCC and represents a formally agreed statement on key findings and uncertainties.

### What will be new in the AR5?

Compared to the previous Assessment Reports, the AR5 will put greater emphasis on assessing the socio-economic aspects of climate change and its implications for sustainable development.

Some new features will be:

- A new set of scenarios for analysis across Working Group contributions;
- Dedicated chapters on sea level change, carbon cycle and climate phenomena such as monsoon and El Niño;
- Much greater regional detail on climate change impacts, adaptation and mitigation interactions; inter- and intra-regional impacts; and a multi-sector synthesis;
- Risk management and the framing of a response (both adaptation and mitigation), including scientific information relevant to Article 2 of the UNFCCC referring to the "...stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system".

The following issues have been identified as being important to be treated consistently throughout the three Working Groups' contributions. **Key AR5 cross-cutting themes will be:** Water and the Earth System: Changes, Impacts and Responses; Carbon Cycle including Ocean Acidification; Ice Sheets and Sea-Level Rise; Mitigation, Adaptation and Sustainable Development; and Article 2 of the UNFCCC.

**Key AR5 cross-cutting methodologies will be:** Consistent Evaluation of Uncertainties and Risks; Costing and Economic Analysis; Regional Aspects; Treatment of Scenarios; and Greenhouse Gas Metrics.

The outline of the Working Group contributions to the AR5 has been developed after a comprehensive scoping process involving the scientific community and governments. The outline of the Synthesis Report was prepared at a Scoping Meeting in Liege (Belgium) in August 2010 and was revised and approved at the 32nd Session of the IPCC in Busan (Republic of Korea) in October 2010.

### Abbreviated Outlines

(The full outlines are available at: [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)) Note: All outlines will be accompanied by Annexes including: a Glossary, Acronyms, Lists of Authors, and Lists of Reviewers. FAQs will also be included in the Working Group Contributions and in the Synthesis Report.

## Working Group I Contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis

### Summary for Policymakers

#### Technical Summary

1. Introduction
2. Observations: Atmosphere and Surface
3. Observations: Ocean
4. Observations: Cryosphere
5. Information from Paleoclimate Archives
6. Carbon and Other Biogeochemical Cycles
7. Clouds and Aerosols
8. Anthropogenic and Natural Radiative Forcing
9. Evaluation of Climate Models
10. Detection and Attribution of Climate Change: from Global to Regional
11. Near-term Climate Change: Projections and Predictability
12. Long-term Climate Change: Projections, Commitments and Irreversibility
13. Sea Level Change
14. Climate Phenomena and their Relevance for Future Regional Climate Change

#### Plus a new Feature:

Annex I: Atlas of Global and Regional Climate Projections

#### What is new in the Working Group I Outline?

- Improved treatment of regional information by specifically assessing key climate phenomena (monsoon, El Niño, etc.) and their relevance for future regional climate change;
- Assessment of the science of clouds and aerosols;
- An end-to-end assessment of sea level change;
- An end-to-end assessment of the carbon cycle;
- Extended coverage of climate change projections by assessing near- and long-term projections;
- Atlas of Global and Regional Climate Projections to enhance accessibility for users and stakeholders and ease the hand-over of relevant information from WG I to WG II.

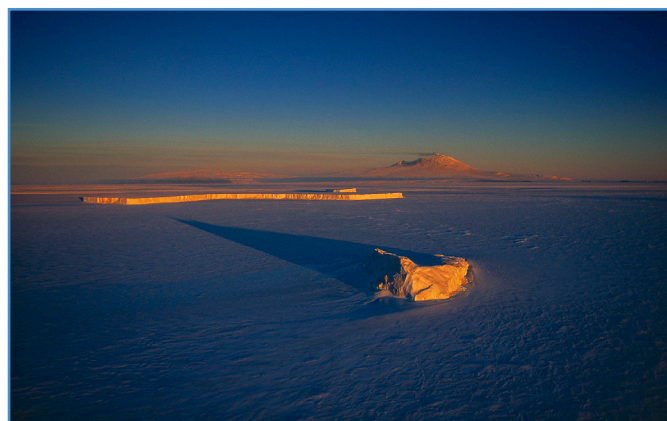


Photo Credit: © Yann Arthus-Bertrand/ Earth From Above - Sea ice of Ross and Mount Erebus, McMurdo Sound, Antarctica (South Pole) (76°12' S, 163°57' E)

## Working Group II Contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability

### Summary for Policymakers

#### Technical Summary

#### PART A: GLOBAL AND SECTORAL ASPECTS

##### Context for the AR5

1. Point of departure
2. Foundations for decision-making

##### Natural and Managed Resources and Systems, and Their Uses

3. Freshwater resources
4. Terrestrial and inland water systems
5. Coastal systems and low-lying areas
6. Ocean systems
7. Food production systems and food security

##### Human Settlements, Industry, and Infrastructure

8. Urban areas
9. Rural areas
10. Key economic sectors and services

##### Human Health, Well-Being, and Security

11. Human health
12. Human security
13. Livelihoods and poverty

##### Adaptation

14. Adaptation needs and options
15. Adaptation planning and implementation
16. Adaptation opportunities, constraints, and limits
17. Economics of adaptation

##### Multi-Sector Impacts, Risks, Vulnerabilities, and Opportunities

18. Detection and attribution of observed impacts
19. Emergent risks and key vulnerabilities
20. Climate-resilient pathways: adaptation, mitigation, and sustainable development

#### PART B: REGIONAL ASPECTS

**Regional chapters will cover: Africa, Europe, Asia, Australasia, North America, Central and South America, Polar Regions, Small Islands, and Open Oceans.** Chapter structure will include: major conclusions from previous assessment; adaptation and mitigation interactions; inter- and intra-regional impacts; and multi-sector synthesis.

#### What is new in the Working Group II Outline?

There will be an increased focus on the following information:

- Risk management framing
- Multiple stresses framing
- Expanded treatment of adaptation

More information will be available on the impacts and costs of climate change for different sectors and regions. The report will also assess a broader range of impacts, including impacts on ocean systems.

## Working Group III Contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change

### Summary for Policymakers

#### Technical Summary

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. Introductory Chapter

#### II. FRAMING ISSUES

2. Integrated Risk and Uncertainty Assessment of Climate Change Response Policies
3. Social, Economic and Ethical Concepts and Methods
4. Sustainable Development and Equity

#### III. PATHWAYS FOR MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE

5. Drivers, Trends and Mitigation
6. Assessing Transformation Pathways
7. Energy Systems
8. Transport
9. Buildings
10. Industry
11. Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU)
12. Human Settlements, Infrastructure and Spatial Planning

#### IV. ASSESSMENT OF POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND FINANCE

13. International Cooperation: Agreements and Instruments
14. Regional Development and Cooperation
15. National and Sub-national Policies and Institutions
16. Cross-cutting Investment and Finance Issues



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#### What is new in the Working Group III Outline?

- Improved treatment of risk, economic and ethical issues, combined with a discussion on their application in the context of sustainable development.
- Iterative top-down and bottom-up approach to assess global climate protection goals: concepts, costs and implications for the macro-economy, sectors, technology portfolios and sustainable development, taking into account differences across regions.
- Integrated risk and uncertainty assessment of climate change response policies on the global, regional, national and sub-national level.
- Integrated assessment of investment and finance issues.

## AR5 Synthesis Report

Introduction

**Topic 1** - Observed Changes and their Causes

**Topic 2** - Future Climate Changes, Impacts, and Risks

**Topic 3** - Adaptation and Mitigation Measures

**Topic 4** - Transformations and Changes in Systems

**Box** - Information relevant to Article 2 of the UNFCCC

### Selection of Authors

The outlines of the Working Group contributions to AR5 were approved by the Panel in October 2009. Governments and participating organizations, including all UN organizations, were then asked to nominate experts who could serve as authors and Review Editors for the three Working Groups' contributions to the AR5. The final selection of 831 Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs), Lead Authors (LAs) and Review Editors (RE) for the Reports made by the relevant Working Group Bureau from the list of nominated experts, plus other experts as appropriate based primarily on their publications and work, was announced on 23 June 2010.

The writing process has started in November 2010 for Working Group I and will start in early 2011 for Working Groups II and III. Authors will work in chapter teams to prepare and subsequently revise drafts based on comments provided by experts, governments and participating organisations. They participate in four lead author meetings. In addition IPCC Expert Meetings and Workshops related to a number of cross-cutting themes will be held to assist authors in conducting the Assessment.

The composition of the group of Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors for a chapter of the Assessment Report shall represent a range of views, expertise, gender, and geographical representation (ensuring appropriate representation of experts from developing and developed countries and countries with economies in transition).

The Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors selected by the Working Group Bureau may enlist other experts as Contributing Authors to assist with the work.

The preparation of IPCC reports follows clear procedures. IPCC Assessment Reports take into consideration the latest relevant scientific literature produced worldwide, involving an extensive circulation and review process. The review process involves a first review by a wide range of experts and a second review by governments and experts. Finally, the three Working Group reports are accepted by the Panel.

The Summaries for Policymakers (SPM) of the three Working Group reports and the SPM of the Synthesis Report (SYR) are approved line-by-line. The longer report of the SYR is adopted section by section.

## The IPCC

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the leading body for the assessment of climate change, established by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme. Its main activity is to prepare comprehensive assessment reports about climate change at regular intervals, typically of about five to seven years. 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.

The IPCC is currently starting the preparation of its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), which will be finalised in 2014. The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) was published in 2007, when the Panel was honoured with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize.

The IPCC is currently preparing two Special Reports, namely one on "Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation" to be released in mid 2011 and another on "Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation" to be released in late 2011. These Special Reports will also provide essential information for the Fifth Assessment Report.

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