

DECISION FRAMEWORK FOR SPECIAL REPORTS, METHODOLOGY REPORTS AND TECHNICAL PAPERS

Adopted by the Panel at its 20th Session (Paris, 19-21 February 2003), amended at the 28th Session (Budapest, 9-10 April 2008) and the 29th Session (Geneva 31 August – 4 September 2008)

The Panel decided to adopt a framework and set of criteria (elaborated below) for establishing priorities for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers for the period of the Fourth and Fifth Assessment. This framework is to be applied in accordance with the Principles Governing IPCC Work, and is to serve to guide, but not prescribe, future decisions by the Panel regarding its work programme, noting that decisions regarding the conduct of these reports will be considered on a case by case basis.

Framework and criteria:

- The Panel decided that for the period of preparation of the Fourth and Fifth Assessment Report (AR):
- Priority should be given to the Assessment Report;
- The IPCC should continue to be responsive to the information needs of UN conventions addressing climate change issues that require some under-pinning scientific and/or technical assessment. Requests from UNFCCC should be accorded higher priority than requests from other Conventions and organisations;
- The IPCC's own initiative would be a key element in formulating and choosing Special Reports. Where appropriate, the IPCC strives to serve the policy community (UNFCCC and other) with relevant information in a pro-active fashion; and,
- The reports need to be consistent with the mandate, the role and the procedures of the IPCC.

Based on the above considerations, the Panel further decided that:

(A) The following should be considered in guiding decisions relating to Special Reports and Methodological Reports:

- Availability of sufficient scientific literature/technical advance to merit analysis at the
- Special Report/Methodological Report level - i.e enough information available to provide an authoritative scientific/technical assessment on the topic, which is different from that presented elsewhere (e.g., in an earlier IPCC reports);
- Origin of the request (e.g., request from the UNFCCC);
- Subject is directly relevant to the understanding of climate change;
- Considers issues that require input from more than one Working Group of the IPCC;
- Relevance of the subject for policy considerations including methodologies and other inputs for decision-making;
- Availability of experts;
- Preparation of this report would not limit the availability of experts for the Assessment Report;
- Timeliness of, and financial and personnel resources required for, preparation of the report, especially if the subject of the report is relevant to Assessment Report; and,
- Issue merits explicit consideration outside the framework of Assessment Report.

(B) Taking into consideration that Technical Papers are based on material already in IPCC Assessment Reports or Special Reports, the following should be considered in guiding decisions relating to Technical Papers:

- An objective, international scientific/technical perspective is essential for the topic in question;
- The origin of the request (e.g., request from the UNFCCC);
- Sufficient information exists in published IPCC reports to address the topic through possible repackaging and the information in published reports is still up to date.
- The level of complexity;
- Considers issues that require input from more than one Working Group of the IPCC;

- The relevance of the subject for policy considerations including methodologies and other inputs for decision-making;
- The availability of experts;
- The availability of financial and personnel resources are in coherence with the work plan; and,
- The issue could be better addressed within the framework of the Assessment Report or as a Special Report.