4. Governance and management

The IPCC is unique in the way it combines an intergovernmental form with scientific objectives. Representatives of participating governments (the Panel), in consultation with members of the Bureau, determine the scope of the assessment and review and accept the reports, and thousands of scientists from all over the world devote their professional expertise to carry out the assessment. This combination of responsibilities has yielded a landmark series of global assessments related to climate change and sustained the interest and support of governments on a critical set of policy-relevant climate issues.

Although many of IPCC's processes and procedures for carrying out assessments have evolved since its founding in 1988, its fundamental management structure has remained largely unchanged over the years. In that time, the complexity and scale of the subject matter, the associated assessment processes, and the variety of interested stakeholders have grown significantly (see 'Current Challenges Facing the IPCC' in Chapter 1). Moreover, the IPCC assessment process has come under ever-increasing pressures from stakeholders who are hoping for evidence that their interests are supported by the latest scientific developments. This is not surprising in an arena where so much is at stake, where so many interests collide, and where many uncertainties remain.

At the same time, charitable and educational trustee bodies, government organizations, and private corporations have been undergoing what may be described as a governance revolution, in which management and governance structures are now expected to be more accountable to a wider range of interests.[12] Although the IPCC is a different kind of organization, it faces acute issues of accountability and transparency, given the broad public policy interests associated with climate change. However, these new expectations are not yet reflected in the current governance and management structure of the IPCC.

12 For example, the HMG Companies Act of 2006 introduced sweeping new requirements (e.g., disclosure and conflict of interest) on all listed companies in the private sector in the United Kingdom.

This chapter evaluates IPCC's management structure and approach to communications as well as governance issues, such as conflict of interest and disclosure. The Committee's analysis was informed by a visit to the IPCC Secretariat in Geneva and a 2009 report of an IPCC Task Group, which examined the IPCC Secretariat (IPCC, 2009).

IPCC management structure

As described in Chapter 1, management of the IPCC assessment process is distributed among four entities:

1. The Panel, which meets annually to make decisions about the structure, principles, procedures, and work program of the IPCC. In some years, it also determines the broad scope of the assessment, elects a Bureau to oversee the work, or reviews and approves the Summaries for Policymakers, depending on the stage of the assessment
2. The IPCC Chair, who plans, oversees, and guides all IPCC activities, including chairing the Plenary sessions of the Panel, overseeing the Secretariat on scientific and technical matters, leading the scoping and writing of the Synthesis Report, and speaking on behalf of the IPCC
3. The Bureau, especially the individual Working Group Co-chairs and Vice Chairs, which is responsible for the detailed planning and execution of the assessments, including the selection of authors and expert reviewers
4. The IPCC Secretariat, which facilitates the work of the Panel and Bureau and the participation of developing-country scientists, manages the budget and website, and coordinates report production and outreach

The Panel

The IPCC has reporting responsibilities to four United Nations bodies: UNEP, WMO, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the UN General Assembly. Legally, the IPCC is an intergovernmental joint subsidiary panel of WMO and UNEP, but it has operated in practice as an independent organization. Perhaps as a consequence, although strongly supportive of the IPCC, WMO and UNEP officials appear to exert modest oversight over the organization.[13] This relationship bears further investigation, as does IPCC's relationship to the UNFCCC.

13 Presentations to the Committee by Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, on May 14, 2010, and Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General of WMO, on June 15, 2010.

The IPCC makes all of its major decisions at annual Plenary sessions. Although the Panel's elected subsidiary—the IPCC Bureau—can act on some issues between sessions, there are no effective formal mechanisms for the Panel to carry out key responsibilities at all times. IPCC's difficulty in responding to recent controversies, such as the errors in the Fourth Assessment Report, illustrates that such a mechanism is needed. To help fill this decision-making gap, the IPCC established an ad hoc Executive Team—comprising the IPCC Chair, Vice Chairs, Working Group Co-chairs, Secretary, and the heads of the Technical Support Units—to meet monthly, usually electronically. However, the Executive Team lacks authority, and its decisions are sometimes ignored or overturned (IPCC, 2009). A more powerful group is needed to look after the interests of the organization and to respond to issues as they arise.

Recommendation

▸The IPCC should establish an Executive Committee to act on its behalf between Plenary sessions. The membership of the Committee should include the IPCC Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs, the senior member of the Secretariat, and three independent members who include individuals from outside of the climate community. Members would be elected by the Plenary and serve until their successors are in place.

The Executive Committee would have the authority to act on the following issues:

- Approving modest alterations to the scope of an ongoing assessment in response to new scientific developments
- Approving minor corrections to published reports
- Ensuring effective, ongoing communication with stakeholders, especially the media, including responding to errors
- Addressing cross-cutting issues, such as ensuring, where appropriate, communication and cooperation among Working Groups
- Other tasks as specifically delegated by the Panel

The Executive Committee would be elected by and report to the Panel, and chaired by the IPCC Chair. To be nimble, the Executive Committee would be limited to ideally no more than 12 individuals. Most members of the Executive Committee would be drawn from the Bureau and thus would be knowledgeable about the assessment process. However, having a viable group of truly independent members with relevant experience and

qualifications would improve the credibility and independence of the Executive Committee. These individuals should be widely respected in their fields and should be drawn from academia, nongovernmental organizations outside of the UN system, and/or the private sector. To ensure that a substantial pool of well-qualified individuals is identified for the Executive Committee, the IPCC should consult a broader group of organizations beyond those that currently submit nominations for the Bureau and other positions.

The IPCC Chair

Because the IPCC Chair is both the leader and the face of the organization, he or she must have strong credentials (including high professional standing in an area covered by IPCC assessments), international stature, a broad vision, strong leadership skills, considerable management experience at a senior level, and experience relevant to the assessment task.

In line with UN practice for panels and working groups, member countries elect the IPCC Chair for a fixed period of time, in this case for the period of an assessment. Current IPCC procedures limit the Chair to two terms. The Chair receives no salary from the IPCC, but is supported by his or her home nation and/or institution. Although a significant proportion of their time has been devoted to their chairmanship role, each of the three Chairs to date has had significant professional responsibilities outside of the IPCC.

The fixed length of service and part-time nature of the chairmanship hold many advantages. A fixed term is important because over time it allows for a greater variety of perspectives and approaches to the assessment, and turnover in leadership is one key to maintaining the ongoing vitality of assessments. A 12-year appointment (two terms), however, is too long for a field as dynamic and contested as climate change.

Recommendation

▸The term of the IPCC Chair should be limited to the time frame of one assessment.

The IPCC Bureau

The IPCC Bureau comprises the IPCC Chair, IPCC Vice Chairs, and the Working Group Co-chairs and Vice Chairs, as well as the Co-chairs of the Task Force Bureau on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (Figure 4.1). The overall composition of the IPCC Bureau is intended to ensure balanced geographic representation with due consideration for scientific and technical requirements (IPCC, 2006). The current regional balance prescribed in the IPCC procedures is five members from Africa; five members from Asia; four members from South America; four members from North America, Central America, and the Caribbean; three members from the southwest Pacific; and eight members from Europe. The IPCC Chair does not represent a region. Government representatives nominate Bureau members, and voting is by secret ballot. Like many elections, intense negotiations are carried out in advance of the formal vote. Members of the Bureau are eligible to serve for two consecutive terms.

Two Co-chairs are elected for each Working Group: one from a developed country and one from a developing country. Each pair of Working Group Co-chairs is supported by a Technical Support Unit that is funded by the country of one of the Co-chairs. The cost of supporting the Technical Support Unit, which is staffed by the equivalent of about five to 10 full-time people, effectively limits the Co-chair nominations pool to those countries willing to provide this financial support. To date, only developed countries have been willing to bear this cost. In practice, this has meant that any developed country that nominates a Co-chair for a Working Group has to be willing to fund a Technical Support Unit.[14] One way to overcome this limitation is to encourage foundations or private corporations to help developing countries establish a Technical Support Unit, provided that such contributions are made without any precondition by the donor(s).

The Technical Support Units are generally headed by scientists or science managers and include both scientific and administrative staff who are responsible for coordinating and administering the activities of their Working Group. Their tasks include communicating with authors and reviewers, organizing author meetings, compiling and editing drafts, and coordinating the review process, all under the supervision of the Working Group Co-chair whose country provides the financial support. As a result, the Co-chair of the Working Group whose country supports and houses the Technical Support Unit generally has a particularly strong voice in the Working Group.

14 Written response to a Committee query by Renate Christ, IPCC Secretary, on May 7, 2010.

The Working Group Co-chairs have significant influence and control over the assessment, leading the preparation, review, and finalization of their Working Group report. The importance of the Co-chairs makes it essential that they have the highest scientific and leadership credentials. The IPCC has not established formal qualifications for Working Group Co-chairs, although, as many respondents to the Committee's questionnaire point out, somehow the current process has generally resulted in the election of appropriately talented individuals. Nevertheless, formal criteria could help ensure that well-qualified individuals are nominated.

Recommendation

- The IPCC should develop and adopt formal qualifications and formally articulate the roles and responsibilities for all Bureau members, including the IPCC Chair, to ensure that they have both the highest scholarly qualifications and proven leadership skills.

The task of the Working Group Co-chairs is both intellectually demanding and time-consuming. Perhaps as a consequence, most Working Group Co-chairs to date have served only one term. Nevertheless, the arguments for encouraging turnover among the IPCC leadership apply also to the Working Group Co-chairs, given their great influence on the assessment.

Recommendation

- The terms of the Working Group Co-chairs should be limited to the time frame of one assessment.

Chair
Rajendra K. Pachauri

IPCC Vice Chairs		
Ismail A.R. El Gizouli (Sudan – Acting Vice Chair)	Jean-Pascal van Ypersele (Belgium)	Hoesung Lee (Republic of Korea)

Working Group I The physical science basis	Working Group II Impacts, adaptation, vulnerability	Working Group III Mitigation of Climate Change	Task Force Bureau National Greenhouse Gas Inventories
Co-chairs	**Co-chairs**	**Co-chairs**	**Co-chairs**
Thomas Stocker (Switzerland)	Christopher Field (USA)	Ottmar Edenhofer (Germany)	Taka Hiraishi (Japan)
Dahe Qin (China)	Vicente Barros (Argentina)	Ramon Pichs-Madruga (Cuba)	Thelma Krug (Brazil)
		Youba Sokona (Mali)	
Vice Chairs	**Vice Chairs**	**Vice Chairs**	
Abdalah Mokssit (Morocco)	Nirivololona Raholijao (Madagascar)	Ismail A.R. El Gizouli (Sudan)	
Fatemeh Rahimzadeh (Islamic Republic of Iran)	Amjad Abdulla (Maldives)	Suzana Kahn Ribeiro (Brazil)	
Francis Zwiers (Canada)	Eduardo Calvo Buendia (Peru)	Antonina Ivanova Boncheva (Mexico)	
Fredolin T. Tangang (Malaysia)	Neville Smith (Australia)	Carlo Carraro (Italy)	
David Wratt (New Zealand)	Jose M. Moreno (Spain)	Jim Skea (UK)	
Jean Jouzel (France)	Sergey Semenov (Russian Federation)	Taha Zatari (Saudi Arabia)	

Figure 4.1 Organization and membership of the IPCC Bureau for the fifth assessment. The Task Force Bureau on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories is not involved in the assessment process.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is the only operational unit of the IPCC that remains active between assessment reports, and thus provides important institutional continuity and centralized administrative support. It comprises 10 individuals, including the Secretary; a Deputy Secretary (currently a WMO retiree); a science officer; a communications specialist; an information technology officer; a financial administrator; and office assistants who handle travel, meetings, and outreach. There are also part-time staff and

consultants who are not formally posted to the Secretariat. The Secretariat reports to the IPCC Chair on technical issues and most administrative matters and to UNEP and WMO on personnel issues. It is housed in the WMO building in Geneva.

Views on the effectiveness of the Secretariat are mixed, as are the suggested recommendations for improvement. Some respondents to the Committee's questionnaire, for example, found the Secretariat to be political and ineffective and recommended a more professional management structure. Others thought that it does a fine job, but that the structure is too lean given the increased responsibilities that have come with a larger, more complex assessment. Many respondents cautioned against simply expanding the Secretariat, recommending instead more strategic enhancements. A similar diversity of views has been expressed by Member governments (IPCC, 2009).

The 2009 IPCC Task Group recommended that the Secretariat's focus remain on organizational and administrative matters, with a secondary focus on supporting the scientific and technical activities of the IPCC. The Committee agrees, but notes that advances in digital technologies (see 'Access to Information' in Chapter 5) and new communications needs (see 'Communications' below) have changed the mix of skills and possibly the number of staff needed at the Secretariat. The extensive and diverse responsibilities of the Secretariat can no longer be discharged satisfactorily with the current combination of scale, job assignments, and the restrictions on staffing and budget imposed by its position in the context of a UN specialized agency.

Recommendation

▸ The IPCC should redefine the responsibilities of key Secretariat positions both to improve efficiency and to allow for any future senior appointments.

Although the Committee could not specify all of the staff's roles and responsibilities in the Secretariat, it is clear that a new architecture is needed. In particular, a new position of Executive Director is necessary to lead the Secretariat, ensure that IPCC protocols for processes and timelines are followed, and keep in touch with the Working Groups. A nominations committee established by the proposed Executive Committee would develop a slate of candidates, and the Executive Director would be elected by the Panel in Plenary session. The Executive Director would serve as an

ex officio member of the Executive Committee. Consequently, the Executive Director should be a peer of the Working Group Co-chairs. In addition, he or she should have a reputation for integrity and independence and should be a good networker, be familiar with the interface between science and public policy, and be capable of speaking and authorized to speak on behalf of the IPCC. To attract the best scientists and add vitality to the organization, the position would have a term of only five to seven years (a full assessment period), and would continue until the Working Group Co-chairs for the subsequent assessment are elected.

A full-time Executive Director is often found alongside a part-time Chair in other organizations (e.g., FRC, 2010). Such a senior individual has the full confidence of the Chair and can act on his or her behalf as needed. The only senior-level management position in the current IPCC structure is the IPCC Secretary. Although at a high director grade (D2), the Secretary does not carry either the equivalent level of autonomy or responsibility as Executive Directors of other international organizations.

Recommendation

- The IPCC should elect an Executive Director to lead the Secretariat and handle day-to-day operations of the organization. The term of this senior scientist should be limited to the time frame of one assessment.

Conflict of interest and disclosure

A key governance feature of institutions that deal with broad public policy interests is the consideration of conflict of interest (NRC, 2002). The term 'conflict of interest' refers to any financial or other interest that compromises the service of an individual by significantly impairing the individual's objectivity or creating an unfair competitive advantage for any person or organization. Conflict of interest means something more than a strong view or bias—there must be an interest, ordinarily financial, that could be directly affected by the individual's participation (NAS, 2003).

Many governmental and nongovernmental institutions that carry out scientific assessments or provide scientific advice have adopted conflict-of-interest and disclosure policies in order to assure the integrity of, and public confidence in, their results (BPC, 2009). For example, the U.S. National Research Council, which carries out hundreds of scientific

assessments every year, has a well-established and well-documented policy on conflict of interest and disclosure (NAS, 2003).

Some international institutions that carry out scientific assessments, such as the WMO and UNEP, have adopted codes of conduct that address conflict-of-interest issues for their staff. For example, WMO's code of ethics requires staff to avoid any conflict of interest, or appearance of conflict of interest, in the performance of their duties by: (1) disclosing in advance possible conflicts of interest that might arise; (2) refraining from acting on any matter in which they, someone with whom they have a close relationship, or someone from whom they are seeking a benefit or favor, has a special interest; and (3) refraining from associating with the management holding financial interest in any profit-seeking or other concern that might benefit by reason of their position in the WMO.[15] The latter also holds true for UNEP, and all staff members at the assistant secretary level and above are required to file confidential financial disclosure statements at regular intervals (UN, 2003). WMO and UNEP have not established conflict-of-interest or disclosure policies for experts who serve on most WMO and UNEP assessment teams. The UNEP Secretariat responsible for recent ozone assessments established a code of conduct for some of its panels that requires its members 'to avoid conflicts of interest in the performance of their duties,' but panel members are not required to fill out disclosure forms (UNEP, 2006). Other scientific assessments, such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the Global Biodiversity Assessment, have neither conflict-of-interest nor disclosure policies for their authors.

The IPCC does not have a conflict-of-interest or disclosure policy for its senior leadership (i.e., IPCC Chair and Vice Chairs), Working Group Co-chairs and authors, or the staff of the Technical Support Units. The professional staff members of the IPCC Secretariat are employees of WMO and/or UNEP and are subject to their disclosure and ethics policies. In particular, all IPCC Secretariat staff in Geneva, except for the Deputy Secretary, are WMO employees and therefore are required to follow the WMO code of ethics; the IPCC Deputy Secretary follows UN staff regulations; and the IPCC Secretary must comply with the rules for both UN and WMO staff because the Secretary is seconded from UNEP and WMO.

The lack of a conflict-of-interest and disclosure policy for IPCC leaders and Lead Authors was a concern raised by a number of individuals who

15 See http://www.wmo.int/pages/governance/ethics/Code%20of%20Ethics%20%28E%29.pdf.

were interviewed by the Committee or provided written input. Questions about potential conflicts of interest, for example, have been raised about the IPCC Chair's service as an adviser to, and board member of, for-profit energy companies (Pielke, 2010b), and about the practice of scientists responsible for writing IPCC assessments reviewing their own work. The Committee did not investigate the basis of these claims, which is beyond the mandate of this review. However, the Committee believes that the nature of the IPCC's task (i.e., in presenting a series of expert judgments on issues of great societal relevance) demands that the IPCC pay special attention to issues of independence and bias to maintain the integrity of, and public confidence in, its results.

The IPCC Secretariat informed the Committee that the Panel will be discussing options for conflict-of-interest and disclosure policies for the various actors in the IPCC process (e.g., members of the Bureau, non-UN staff, non-WMO staff, and authors) at its next Plenary session.

Recommendation

▸ The IPCC should develop and adopt a rigorous conflict-of-interest policy that applies to all individuals directly involved in the preparation of IPCC reports, including senior IPCC leadership (IPCC Chair and Vice Chairs), authors with responsibilities for report content (i.e., Working Group Co-chairs, Coordinating Lead Authors, and Lead Authors), Review Editors, and technical staff directly involved in report preparation (e.g., staff of Technical Support Units and the IPCC Secretariat).

In developing such a policy, the IPCC may want to consider features of the NRC policy. These include:

- Distinguishing between strong points of view (i.e., biases) that can be balanced and conflicts of interest that should be avoided unless determined to be unavoidable
- Differentiating between current conflicts, where the candidate's current interests could be directly and predictably affected by the outcome of the report, and potential conflicts of interest
- Considering a range of relevant financial interests, such as employment and consulting relationships; ownership of stocks, bonds, and other investments; fiduciary responsibilities; patents and copyrights; commercial business ownership and investment interests; honoraria; and research funding

- Judging the extent to which an author or Review Editor would be reviewing his or her own work, or that of his or her immediate employer
- Examining indications of a fixed position on a particular issue revealed through public statements (e.g., testimony, speeches, interviews), publications (e.g., articles, books), or personal or professional activities
- Maintaining up-to-date confidential disclosure forms and participating in regular, confidential discussions of conflict of interest and balance for the major components of each report

The policy should strike the appropriate balance between the need to minimize the burden on IPCC volunteers and the need to ensure the credibility of the process. To implement the policy, the IPCC will have to designate a senior individual, such as the proposed Executive Director, to review the disclosure forms, lead discussions of conflict of interest and balance, and make decisions about potential conflicts of interest.

Communications

Scientists have long struggled to communicate their findings effectively to broader audiences. Communicating the complex science of climate change, including the degree of consensus among scientists and areas of uncertainty, is particularly challenging. Many respondents to the Committee's questionnaire found communication to be a major weakness of the IPCC. Their primary concerns were IPCC's slow and inadequate responses to reports of errors and public statements by IPCC leaders that could be perceived as policy advocacy. This age of instant communication offers new opportunities for disseminating the findings of climate scientists, but it also makes doing so more challenging given how audiences are bombarded by so many competing, and often polarizing, sources of information.

The communications challenge for the IPCC is exemplified by its response to the discovery of an error in the Fourth Assessment Report regarding the melting rate of Himalayan glaciers. IPCC's official statement on the matter—issued more than a month after the error was widely publicized—did not state whether an error, in fact, had occurred or whether an erratum would be issued.[16] The IPCC leadership attributed this sluggish response to a lack of communications capacity at the Secretariat (the lead communications position was vacant at the time) and a breakdown in the relationship between the Secretariat and the disbanded

16 See http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/presentations/himalaya-statement-20january2010.pdf.

Working Groups and Technical Support Units of the fourth assessment. The IPCC responded more quickly to claims of other errors in the Fourth Assessment Report, either explaining why it believed news reports were wrong or acknowledging a mistake (Leake, 2010; Reuters, 2010).[17]

Improving communications and outreach is discussed regularly at IPCC sessions. An IPCC Outreach Task Group recommended hiring a communications expert in 2003 (IPCC, 2003). One was appointed to the IPCC Secretariat in 2006. In 2005, the IPCC commissioned a consulting firm (CNC) to develop a communications strategy for the release and dissemination of the Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC, 2005a). The CNC communications strategy also contains recommendations that are pertinent to current challenges, including a process for devising responses to media comments with the appropriate tone and language, giving several people authority to speak on IPCC's behalf, and guidelines for keeping messages within the bounds of IPCC reports and mandates.

IPCC's mandate is to be policy relevant, not policy prescriptive. However, as noted above, IPCC spokespersons have not always adhered to this mandate. Straying into advocacy can only hurt IPCC's credibility. Likewise, while IPCC leaders are expected to speak publicly about the assessment reports, they should be careful in this context to avoid personal opinions. The opinion of an IPCC representative can be interpreted as the official IPCC position, regardless of how the representative voices his or her views.

The IPCC Chair is the most visible public face and most often quoted representative of the IPCC. Relying so heavily on one person carries the risk that audiences will not appreciate the collaborative process involved in developing IPCC positions. A sole spokesperson is also less likely to be available to provide timely responses to media inquiries.

The IPCC's primary means for communicating to audiences outside of the scientific community are the Summaries for Policymakers and the Synthesis Report. However, it is not clear how useful these documents are on their own. The Working Group I report in the fourth assessment also included a user-friendly Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section, written by Lead Authors and taken directly from the chapters of the underlying report. However, the IPCC thus far has chosen to leave the production of materials for lay audiences (derivative material) to partner organizations. There are no press releases accompanying the assessment reports.

17 See IPCC erratum at http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg2/en/erratase-rrata-errata.html.

As part of its effort to finalize the Summaries for Policymakers, the IPCC may want to consider approving press release text to help journalists better understand and report on the assessment reports.

The IPCC Secretariat and Working Groups organized dozens of outreach events in developed and developing countries following the release of the Fourth Assessment Report. These events targeted a variety of individuals and groups, including heads of state, chief executives of private companies, journalists, nongovernmental organizations, academic societies, civic organizations, students, legislators, cabinet ministers, and others.[18] Having derivative material written for and relevant to these stakeholders would likely facilitate these outreach efforts. Moreover, such sessions would be most effective if scientists engage audiences in a two-way conversation rather than simply explaining their findings (Nisbet and Scheufele, 2009). Framing the discussion to take into account an audience's cultural values can also be beneficial (Kahan, 2010).

The IPCC participates in a Task Force on Climate Change within the UN Communications Group, in which UN information officers working on climate change issues share ideas and discuss opportunities to work together. Communication strategies employed by other scientific organizations could also help inform IPCC communication practices. These include rapid and broad dissemination of news and press releases through online social media, the institution's website, and clearinghouses for research news (e.g., EurekAlert, AlphaGalileo); ready access of media experts to institution leaders so responses to crises can be developed rapidly; and media training for spokespeople. Communicators at science organizations also help maintain transparency by explaining their institution's policies and procedures. In addition, trained science writers can translate technical language into text suitable for mass communication or design websites that explain scientific concepts to lay audiences while staying true to the underlying evidence.

The recently appointed IPCC communication and media relations manager has held media training sessions for some IPCC experts and drafted a communications strategy for consideration by the Panel in October 2010. Working Group II for the Fifth Assessment Report has also retained a communications consulting firm[19] to support it as well as the Secretariat.

18 See IPCC progress reports on outreach at http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/session27/doc7.pdf and http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session29/doc7.pdf for listings of events.

19 A June 23, 2010, press release from Working Group II lists a media contact from Resource-Media, a U.S. based non-profit communication group. See http://www.ipcc-wg2.gov/WGII_Press_release6-23-10.pdf.

Recommendation

▸The IPCC should complete and implement a communications strategy that emphasizes transparency, rapid and thoughtful responses, and relevance to stakeholders, and that includes guidelines about who can speak on behalf of IPCC and how to represent the organization appropriately.

Possible elements of an IPCC communications strategy include:

- More user-friendly derivative products based on assessment reports, such as a booklet that answers questions asked frequently by policy-makers, individuals skeptical about climate change, and the interested public. Given how carefully the language in the assessment reports is crafted and approved, the text of derivative products should be approved by the Working Group Co-chairs or other key authors to ensure the language is consistent with the underlying assessment. Because the Working Groups disband after release of their reports, any derivative products may need to be created as the assessments reach approval or shortly thereafter.
- A FAQ section in each Working Group report
- A rapid response plan to reply, in a coordinated and timely manner and with an appropriate tone, to the criticisms and concerns that arise
- Empowerment of and training for appropriate IPCC leaders to speak to the media not only about the content of the assessment reports but also the process used to generate them

Additional human and financial resources may be needed for the IPCC to perform the communication functions required of an organization with the public stature of the IPCC. In particular, the IPCC needs a senior communications officer or press secretary with established credibility, standing, and expertise to carry out this role.

Conclusions

IPCC's management and governance structure is not as effective as necessary to manage a larger and more complex assessment and to respond to a larger and more demanding group of stakeholders. The modified structure proposed for the IPCC by the Committee retains the decentralized structure, which is a key to IPCC's continued vitality and authority, but adds flexibility and strength to its administrative support function.

Because the individuals involved in the IPCC assessment process carry the burden and responsibility of maintaining the public's trust, it is important for all involved to act with transparency and integrity and to abide by appropriate codes of conduct. Public trust in science also depends on effective communication, and there are many opportunities to enhance the usefulness of IPCC assessments as tools for informing policymaking and public discourse.