

**Follow-up meeting to the 3rd RTM
IPCC/Knowledge for climate change
ACP House, Brussels 15th September 2016**

CONCEPT NOTE

Background and context

Climate variability and change has become one of the greatest threats to the attainment of the agenda 2030 set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Climate related disasters constitute over 90% of global natural disasters and it is anticipated to increase as climate change gathers pace. The increase in climate related extremes interacts with vulnerable social conditions leading to large scale disruption of normal functioning of human and natural systems. To manage climate risks and related threats to sustainable development, a global climate governance architecture has been established through the UNFCCC that every year brings together policy and decision makers across the globe to negotiate and set global emission targets and associated temperature thresholds.

The global climate governance draws its conclusions from an average global temperature threshold based on the IPCC Assessment Report. But global average values do not tell the true picture at the local scale. For instance, an average global temperature change of 2 degrees may mean 3 - 6 degrees change at the local scale with irreversible impacts on critical human and natural systems that sustains human well-being, livelihoods and security. Climate action related to adaptation and loss and damage takes place at the local scale where evidence-based information is often not factored into the global climate change debate.

The UNFCCC process requires every country to submit its National Communications, National Adaptation Plans and associated documents which are local evidence-based assessment of the changing climates and their associated impacts. The IPCC assessment takes precedence over these valuable local evidence that form core of the National Communications and related reports commissioned by the UNFCCC.

The IPCC draws its materials from peer reviewed scientific publications that can exclude a wealth of evidence at the local scale due to the fact that most country scientists/experts cannot afford the high fees required by these journals. As if these were not problematic enough, developing country experts lack the publication skills that will enable them to properly package their rich, evidence-based knowledge to a standard for many peer reviewed journals and are often excluded from the IPCC processes.

There is a growing concern and consensus that a mechanism must be established that ensures that local evidence through the National Communications and related literature to inform the IPCC Assessment while simultaneously ensuring the credibility of the IPCC process. This concept note is an attempt by the ACP Group of States and the ACP Secretariat to build capacity of its member states to repackage their National Communications and related evidence-based research in peer-reviewed scientific publications to be incorporated into the next IPCC assessment report. To do this the concept note outlines strategies for producing a special issue on the African, Caribbean and Pacific Small Island Developing States (ACP SIDS). The publication will carry out a comparative analysis of the countries' National Communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Specifically, the science, human impacts, greenhouse gas reduction strategies, adaptation policies and identified gaps to achieve these will be assessed in order to provide stronger input from the developing countries of the ACP to inform the next IPCC report. The initial work will focus on ACP SIDS and then extend to coastal countries and remaining ACP countries.



GCCA Intra-ACP Programme

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Scope

The special issue will cover all the core areas of relevance to the negotiation process and structured along the IPCC thematic areas. The science-policy issues that underpin the negotiation process will be a key area for assessment.

Approach

A team of Experts from the three ACP regions will be identified. They will collate all National Communications and relevant publications at the country level, extract robust information that will be summarized and beefed up with further evidence. The content will be aligned to the science-policy issues that are core to the negotiation process and of priority interest to the ACP member states. This will then be packaged into a publication of high quality standards that meets the IPCC criteria. An Outline paper prepared by the Core Editorial team will be used as a basis for input to this work.

Input to the exercise

It is envisaged that the initial funding will come from the GCCA+ initiative. Long-term funding will be secured through the Intra-ACP GCCA process. The initial workshop will be at the ACP Secretariat. Later workshops could be in the ACP regions.

A team of scientific editors, reviewers and data and information collection team will be established to undertake the publication process. The expertise will be drawn from the ACP regions and then extended to international collaborators as deemed appropriate. The organs of the UNFCCC process (expert teams – SBSTA, SBI, LEG, etc) could constitute members of the expert team.

Timelines

The timelines will follow closely the IPCC timelines to ensure that materials are produced on time to be incorporated in the IPCC assessment report. These are as follows:

Nomination of representatives to the IPCC Scoping meetings for the Special Reports and the Sixth Assessment Cycle.

And Nominations of authors for the IPCC Special Reports and Sixth Assessment Cycle.

The full schedule and associated deadlines can be found here:
http://ipcc.ch/activities/pdf/ar6_WSPSchedule_07072016.pdf

Results

The result of the exercise will be a special issue on ACP regions with focus on each of the SIDS. The content will speak to the science and technical issues to inform the UNFCCC and SDG processes to ensure and evidence basis climate change negotiations of particular interest to the ACP member states.

