

What is actually ...

...THE CALIBRATED LANGUAGE OF THE IPCC?

The most important findings of an IPCC report are complemented by a statement that indicates a degree of certainty with respect to the underlying findings. For these statements, authors use a formalised language. The calibrated phrasing supports political decision-making in view of complex or controversial issues and remaining uncertainties. Based on the quantity, quality and consistency of the available data and sources, authors rate their mutual trust in a scientific statement on a scale. The level of confidence is divided into five levels from "very low" to "very high". In addition, the likelihood of the occurrence of a specific event is stated. It is based on statistical methods and assessments by experts and can range from "particularly unlikely" to "practically certain".

...THE UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE CLIMATE?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental agreement. Existing since 1992, it aims to prevent human-induced disruptions of climate system with far-reaching or even irreversible consequences. According to the agreement, all member states are obliged to publish their national greenhouse gas inventories and trends. Developed countries should take a pioneering role by taking into account the needs of developing countries and particularly vulnerable nations. At their annual Conference of the Parties (COP), representatives work on the implementation of agreed climate targets.

...THE PARIS AGREEMENT?

Signatories of the UNFCCC agreed at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris in 2015 to keep human-induced global warming well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial and to make efforts to limit the temperature rise to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement has been in force since November 2016 and replaces the Kyoto Protocol adopted in 1997. In accordance with the agreement, all signatories formulate their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and report regularly on progress in achieving these goals. A global stocktake is due every five years. This will happen for the first time in 2023. As part of the agreement, the IPCC was invited to prepare a Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5).

REFERENCES:

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Germany
www.gerics.de
+49 (0) 40 226 338 0

AUTHORS:

Daniela Jacob, Tanja Blome, Irene Fischer-Bruns, Tania Guillén Bolaños, Maike Nicolai, Juliane Petersen, Swantje Preuschmann, Bettina Steuri | Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS)

DESIGN CONCEPT AND LAYOUT:

Bettina Steuri | Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS)
Bianca Seth | Helmholtz-Zentrum Hereon

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The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC

Information on the Sixth Assessment Cycle



WHAT IS THE IPCC?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a unique scientific body. It was founded in 1988 by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The IPCC is formed by experts from various scientific disciplines and practice on the one hand, and by governments of United Nations (UN) or WMO member states on the other. In addition, UN institutions as well as international and civil society organizations that are recognized as official observers of the IPCC are also involved.

WHO PRODUCES THE IPCC REPORTS?

Experts from all over the world analyse the latest results from research on climate change and evaluate them from a scientific point of view for the IPCC – but the IPCC does not conduct its own research. The experts are nominated by governments and observer organizations and selected by the IPCC bureau. The most important criterion for selection is scientific expertise: different research disciplines as well as practice and other stakeholders should be represented. In addition, it is also important that scientists from different regions of the world and genders are involved. Up to 250 Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors are responsible for the development of a report. Many other experts participate as Contributing Authors to address specific questions. Involvement in the IPCC process lasts several years, is done on a voluntary basis, and is not remunerated.

HOW ARE IPCC REPORTS DEVELOPED?

Three working groups contribute to Assessment Report, the main product of an IPCC assessment cycle:

- Working Group I (WGI): The Physical Science Basis
- Working Group II (WGII): Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability
- Working Group III (WGIII): Mitigation of Climate Change

In addition, special reports address specific topics. The subjects of the special reports and the focus and structure of all reports are agreed by the members of the IPCC. It takes several years to prepare the reports. The development includes expert and government reviews as well as revisions of the drafts. At the end of the process, in a meeting lasting several days, the Summary for Policymakers is approved by consensus of all IPCC member states, who thereby formally endorse the report. IPCC reports provide a

scientifically sound basis for developing policies in relation to climate, but are not policy-prescriptive.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT IPCC REPORTS?

The IPCC is in its Sixth Assessment Cycle. In 2018, the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5) was published. In 2019, the Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRCCL), the Special Report on the Ocean and the Cryosphere (SROCC), and a Methodology Report were published. The report of Working Group I was approved and launched in August 2021. The approval sessions for reports of Working Group II and III are scheduled for early 2022 and the synthesis report for 2023.

WHY AN IPCC SPECIAL REPORT OVER 1.5 ° C GLOBAL WARMING?

The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5) was prepared in response to an invitation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and launched in the run-up to the 24th UN Climate Change Conference (COP24). The full title reads: “Global Warming of 1.5°C –An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty”.

Since the mid-1990s, global warming of 2°C above pre-industrial times has been considered an approximate threshold that separates “tolerable” from “dangerous” climate change. But even now, with warming of about 1°C, people in all regions of the world are experiencing the effects of climate change. The inclu-

sion of the more ambitious upper limit of 1.5°C in the Paris Agreement takes regions and ecosystems into account that are particularly affected or vulnerable.

The SR1.5 uses an integrative, interdisciplinary approach to inform society about ways to achieve sustainable development, particularly with regard to the challenges posed by climate change. One focus is on the differences between the effects of global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C on our living conditions, as well as options for mitigation and adaptation to the consequences of climate change.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE IPCC REPORTS

