

IPCC STATEMENT

24 June 2012

IPCC statement on New Scientist article

In response to an article published in the online edition of the New Scientist on 18 June 2012, corrected on 19 June, and further corrected on 22 June, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states:

- The IPCC has always sought, among other considerations, to achieve geographical representation, including representation from developing countries, in the selection of authors for its reports. This is because the IPCC wants its assessments to reflect a range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views and expertise, and not to be subject to any one perspective. There has never been any question, nor is there now, of imposing geographical or gender quotas on authors – the scientific experts who volunteer to work on its reports.
- At a meeting in Geneva on 6-9 June 2012 the Panel revised the rules for the election of the IPCC Bureau – the elected officials comprising the IPCC Chair, IPCC Vice-Chairs, Working Group and Task Force Co-Chairs and Working Group Vice-Chairs. The Bureau is the main advisory body that provides guidance on scientific and technical aspects of its work and is authorized to take certain decisions. Members of the Bureau are chosen on the basis of their scientific qualifications. The composition of the Bureau has in addition always represented the different regions of the world, in common with the practice of many United Nations organizations regarding their executive bodies. IPCC Bureau members are grouped according to the six regions of the World Meteorological Organization. At its meeting in Geneva, the Panel amended the election rules to strengthen the representation of Southwest Pacific states in the IPCC Bureau, raising total membership of the IPCC Bureau to 31, in order to ensure that each region is represented in each Working Group and in the Executive Committee.
- The IPCC has always recognized that non-peer reviewed literature, such as reports from governments and industry, or national statistics, can be crucial for the IPCC's assessments. The appropriate use of such literature expands the breadth and depth of the assessment by including relevant information. At its previous meeting in Kampala in November 2011, the Panel agreed to strengthen the rules governing the use of literature from all sources. The procedures to validate sources of information from non-peer reviewed literature, and to ensure its quality, were reaffirmed. The procedures specify that the use of non-peer reviewed literature brings with it an extra responsibility for the author teams. IPCC writing teams were explicitly required to critically assess and to review the quality and validity of all cited literature. As in the past, copies of cited information that is not publicly or commercially available must be held, preferably electronically, in order to be made available to reviewers upon request during the review of IPCC draft reports. The Panel did not discuss non-peer reviewed literature at its latest meeting in Geneva.

The changes made in Geneva and in Kampala represent a strengthening of the IPCC's operations to ensure the IPCC can produce its policy-neutral assessments of climate science more effectively.

The procedures for selecting authors and drafting reports can be found in Appendix A to the IPCC's Procedures; Annex 2 to Appendix A provides detailed guidance on the use of non-peer reviewed literature. The procedures for electing the Bureau are laid out in Appendix C. This material is all available on the IPCC's website, www.ipcc.ch.

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