

# Appendix I: Glossary

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## Notes:

1. This glossary defines some specific terms as the lead authors intend them to be interpreted in the context of this Report.
2. Words in italic indicate that the following term is also contained in this glossary.

### Acclimatisation

The physiological *adaptation* to climatic variations.

### Active layer

The top layer of soil or rock in *permafrost* that is subjected to seasonal freezing and thawing.

### Adaptability

See *adaptive capacity*.

### Adaptation

Adjustment in natural or *human systems* in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Various types of adaptation can be distinguished, including anticipatory, autonomous and planned adaptation:

**Anticipatory adaptation** – Adaptation that takes place before impacts of *climate change* are observed. Also referred to as proactive adaptation.

**Autonomous adaptation** – Adaptation that does not constitute a conscious response to climatic stimuli but is triggered by ecological changes in natural systems and by market or *welfare* changes in *human systems*. Also referred to as spontaneous adaptation.

**Planned adaptation** – Adaptation that is the result of a deliberate policy decision, based on an awareness that conditions have changed or are about to change and that action is required to return to, maintain, or achieve a desired state.

### Adaptation assessment

The practice of identifying options to adapt to *climate change* and evaluating them in terms of criteria such as availability, benefits, costs, effectiveness, efficiency and feasibility.

### Adaptation benefits

The avoided damage costs or the accrued benefits following the adoption and implementation of *adaptation* measures.

### Adaptation costs

Costs of planning, preparing for, facilitating, and implementing *adaptation* measures, including transition costs.

### Adaptive capacity (in relation to climate change impacts)

The ability of a system to adjust to *climate change* (including *climate variability* and extremes) to moderate potential damages, to take advantage of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences.

### Aerosols

A collection of air-borne solid or liquid particles, with a typical size between 0.01 and 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , that reside in the *atmosphere* for at least several hours. Aerosols may be of either natural or *anthropogenic* origin. Aerosols may influence *climate* in two ways: directly through scattering and absorbing radiation, and indirectly through acting as condensation nuclei for cloud formation or modifying the optical properties and lifetime of clouds.

### Afforestation

Direct human-induced conversion of land that has not been forested for a period of at least 50 years to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources. See also *reforestation* and *deforestation*. For a discussion of the term *forest* and related terms such as *afforestation*, *reforestation* and *deforestation*, see the IPCC Special Report on Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (IPCC, 2000).

### Aggregate impacts

Total *impacts* integrated across sectors and/or regions. The aggregation of impacts requires knowledge of (or assumptions about) the relative importance of impacts in different sectors and regions. Measures of aggregate impacts include, for example, the total number of people affected, or the total economic costs.

### Albedo

The fraction of solar radiation reflected by a surface or object, often expressed as a percentage. Snow-covered surfaces have a

high albedo; the albedo of soils ranges from high to low; vegetation-covered surfaces and oceans have a low albedo. The Earth's albedo varies mainly through varying cloudiness, snow, ice, leaf area, and land-cover changes.

### Algae

Photosynthetic, often microscopic and *planktonic*, organisms occurring in marine and freshwater *ecosystems*.

### Algal bloom

A reproductive explosion of *algae* in a lake, river or ocean.

### Alpine

The biogeographic zone made up of slopes above the *tree line* characterised by the presence of rosette-forming *herbaceous* plants and low, shrubby, slow-growing woody plants.

### Anthropogenic

Resulting from or produced by human beings.

### AOGCM

See *climate model*.

### Aquaculture

The managed cultivation of aquatic plants or animals such as salmon or shellfish held in captivity for the purpose of harvesting.

### Aquifer

A stratum of permeable rock that bears water. An unconfined aquifer is recharged directly by local rainfall, rivers and lakes, and the rate of recharge will be influenced by the permeability of the overlying rocks and soils.

### Aragonite

A calcium carbonate (limestone) mineral, used by shell- or skeleton-forming, calcifying organisms such as *corals* (warm- and cold-water corals), some macroalgae, *pteropods* (marine snails) and non-pteropod molluscs such as bivalves (e.g., clams, oysters), cephalopods (e.g., squids, octopuses). Aragonite is more sensitive to *ocean acidification* than *calcite*, also used by many marine organisms. See also *calcite* and *ocean acidification*.

### Arbovirus

Any of various viruses transmitted by blood-sucking arthropods (e.g., mosquitoes, ticks, etc.) and including the causative agents of *dengue fever*, yellow fever, and some types of encephalitis.

### Arid region

A land region of low rainfall, where 'low' is widely accepted to be <250 mm precipitation per year.

### Atmosphere

The gaseous envelope surrounding the Earth. The dry atmosphere consists almost entirely of nitrogen and oxygen, together with trace gases including *carbon dioxide* and *ozone*.

### Attribution

See *Detection and attribution*

### Baseline/reference

The baseline (or reference) is the state against which change is measured. It might be a 'current baseline', in which case it represents observable, present-day conditions. It might also be a 'future baseline', which is a projected future set of conditions excluding the driving factor of interest. Alternative interpretations of the reference conditions can give rise to multiple baselines.

### Basin

The drainage area of a stream, river or lake.

### Benthic community

The community of organisms living on or near the bottom of a water body such as a river, a lake or an ocean.

### Biodiversity

The total diversity of all organisms and *ecosystems* at various spatial scales (from genes to entire *biomes*).

### Biofuel

A fuel produced from organic matter or combustible oils produced by plants. Examples of biofuel include alcohol, black liquor from the paper-manufacturing process, wood, and soybean oil.

### Biomass

The total mass of living organisms in a given area or volume; recently dead plant material is often included as dead biomass. The quantity of biomass is expressed as a dry weight or as the energy, carbon or nitrogen content.

### Biome

Major and distinct regional element of the *biosphere*, typically consisting of several *ecosystems* (e.g., forests, rivers, ponds, swamps) within a region of similar *climate*. Biomes are characterised by typical communities of plants and animals.

### Biosphere

The part of the Earth system comprising all *ecosystems* and living organisms in the *atmosphere*, on land (terrestrial biosphere), or in the oceans (marine biosphere), including derived dead organic matter, such as litter, soil organic matter, and oceanic detritus.

### Biota

All living organisms of an area; the flora and fauna considered as a unit.

### Bog

*Peat-accumulating acidic wetland*.

### Boreal forest

Forests of pine, spruce, fir and larch stretching from the east coast of Canada westward to Alaska and continuing from Siberia

westward across the entire extent of Russia to the European Plain. The climate is continental, with long, very cold winters (up to 6 months with mean temperatures below freezing), and short, cool summers (50 to 100 frost-free days). Precipitation increases during summer months, although annual precipitation is still small. Low *evaporation* rates can make this a humid climate. See *taiga*.

### Breakwater

A hard engineering structure built in the sea which, by breaking waves, protects a harbour, anchorage, beach or shore area. A breakwater can be attached to the coast or lie offshore.

### C<sub>3</sub> plants

Plants that produce a three-carbon compound during *photosynthesis*, including most trees and agricultural crops such as rice, wheat, soybeans, potatoes and vegetables.

### C<sub>4</sub> plants

Plants, mainly of tropical origin, that produce a four-carbon compound during *photosynthesis*, including many grasses and the agriculturally important crops maize, sugar cane, millet and sorghum.

### Calcareous organisms

A large and diverse group of organisms, many marine, that use *calcite* or *aragonite* to form shells or skeletons. See *calcite*, *aragonite* and *ocean acidification*.

### Calcite

A calcium carbonate (limestone) mineral, used by shell- or skeleton-forming, calcifying organisms such as foraminifera, some macroalgae, lobsters, crabs, sea urchins and starfish. Calcite is less sensitive to *ocean acidification* than *aragonite*, also used by many marine organisms. See also *aragonite* and *ocean acidification*.

### Capacity building

In the context of *climate change*, capacity building is developing the technical skills and institutional capabilities in developing countries and economies in transition to enable their participation in all aspects of *adaptation* to, *mitigation* of, and research on *climate change*, and in the implementation of the Kyoto Mechanisms, etc.

### Carbon cycle

The term used to describe the flow of carbon (in various forms, e.g., *carbon dioxide*) through the *atmosphere*, ocean, terrestrial *biosphere* and lithosphere.

### Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)

A naturally occurring gas fixed by *photosynthesis* into organic matter. A by-product of fossil fuel combustion and *biomass* burning, it is also emitted from land-use changes and other industrial processes. It is the principal *anthropogenic greenhouse gas* that affects the Earth's radiative balance. It is the reference gas against which other greenhouse gases are measured, thus having a Global Warming Potential of 1.

### Carbon dioxide fertilisation

The stimulation of plant *photosynthesis* due to elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, leading to either enhanced productivity and/or efficiency of *primary production*. In general, C<sub>3</sub> plants show a larger response to elevated CO<sub>2</sub> than C<sub>4</sub> plants.

### Carbon sequestration

The process of increasing the carbon content of a *reservoir/pool* other than the *atmosphere*.

### Catchment

An area that collects and drains rainwater.

### CDM (Clean Development Mechanism)

The CDM allows *greenhouse gas* emission reduction projects to take place in countries that have no emission targets under the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Kyoto Protocol*, yet are signatories.

### Chagas' disease

A parasitic disease caused by the *Trypanosoma cruzi* and transmitted by triatomine bugs in the Americas, with two clinical periods: acute (fever, swelling of the spleen, oedemas) and chronic (digestive syndrome, potentially fatal heart condition).

### Cholera

A water-borne intestinal infection caused by a bacterium (*Vibrio cholerae*) that results in frequent watery stools, cramping abdominal pain, and eventual collapse from dehydration and shock.

### Climate

Climate in a narrow sense is usually defined as the 'average weather', or more rigorously, as the statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities over a period of time ranging from months to thousands or millions of years. These quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation, and wind. Climate in a wider sense is the state, including a statistical description, of the *climate system*. The classical period of time is 30 years, as defined by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

### Climate change

Climate change refers to any change in *climate* over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. This usage differs from that in the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, which defines 'climate change' as: 'a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global *atmosphere* and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods'. See also *climate variability*.

### Climate change commitment

Due to the thermal inertia of the ocean and slow processes in the *biosphere*, the *cryosphere* and land surfaces, the climate would continue to change even if the atmospheric composition was held fixed at today's values. Past change in atmospheric com-

position leads to a ‘committed’ *climate change* which continues for as long as a radiative imbalance persists and until all components of the *climate system* have adjusted to a new state. The further change in temperature after the composition of the *atmosphere* is held constant is referred to as the committed warming or warming commitment. Climate change commitment includes other future changes, for example in the hydrological cycle, in *extreme weather events*, and in *sea-level rise*.

### Climate model

A numerical representation of the *climate system* based on the physical, chemical, and biological properties of its components, their interactions and *feedback* processes, and accounting for all or some of its known properties. The climate system can be represented by models of varying complexity (i.e., for any one component or combination of components a hierarchy of models can be identified, differing in such aspects as the number of spatial dimensions, the extent to which physical, chemical, or biological processes are explicitly represented, or the level at which empirical parameterisations are involved. Coupled *atmosphere/ocean/sea-ice General Circulation Models* (AOGCMs) provide a comprehensive representation of the climate system. More complex models include active chemistry and biology. Climate models are applied, as a research tool, to study and simulate the climate, but also for operational purposes, including monthly, seasonal, and interannual *climate predictions*.

### Climate prediction

A climate prediction or climate forecast is the result of an attempt to produce an estimate of the actual evolution of the climate in the future, e.g., at seasonal, interannual or long-term time scales. See also *climate projection* and *climate (change) scenario*.

### Climate projection

The calculated response of the *climate system* to *emissions* or concentration *scenarios* of *greenhouse gases* and *aerosols*, or *radiative forcing scenarios*, often based on simulations by *climate models*. Climate projections are distinguished from *climate predictions*, in that the former critically depend on the emissions/concentration/*radiative forcing* scenario used, and therefore on highly uncertain assumptions of future socio-economic and technological development.

### Climate (change) scenario

A plausible and often simplified representation of the future *climate*, based on an internally consistent set of climatological relationships and assumptions of *radiative forcing*, typically constructed for explicit use as input to climate change impact models. A ‘climate change scenario’ is the difference between a climate *scenario* and the current climate.

### Climate sensitivity

The equilibrium temperature rise that would occur for a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> concentration above *pre-industrial* levels.

### Climate system

The climate system is defined by the dynamics and interactions

of five major components: *atmosphere*, hydrosphere, *cryosphere*, land surface, and *biosphere*. Climate system dynamics are driven by both internal and external forcing, such as volcanic eruptions, solar variations, or human-induced modifications to the planetary radiative balance, for instance via *anthropogenic emissions* of *greenhouse gases* and/or land-use changes.

### Climate threshold

The point at which external forcing of the *climate system*, such as the increasing atmospheric concentration of *greenhouse gases*, triggers a significant climatic or environmental event which is considered unalterable, or recoverable only on very long time-scales, such as widespread bleaching of *corals* or a collapse of oceanic circulation systems.

### Climate variability

Climate variability refers to variations in the mean state and other statistics (such as standard deviations, statistics of extremes, etc.) of the *climate* on all temporal and spatial scales beyond that of individual weather events. Variability may be due to natural internal processes within the *climate system* (internal variability), or to variations in natural or *anthropogenic* external forcing (external variability). See also *climate change*.

### CO<sub>2</sub> fertilisation

See *carbon dioxide fertilisation*.

### Coastal squeeze

The squeeze of coastal *ecosystems* (e.g., salt marshes, mangroves and mud and sand flats) between rising sea levels and naturally or artificially fixed shorelines, including hard engineering defences (see Chapter 6).

### Coccolithophores

Single-celled microscopic *phytoplankton algae* which construct shell-like structures from *calcite* (a form of calcium carbonate). See also *calcite* and *ocean acidification*.

### Committed to extinction

This term describes a species with dwindling population that is in the process of inescapably becoming extinct in the absence of human intervention. See also *extinction*.

### Communicable disease

An *infectious disease* caused by transmission of an infective biological agent (virus, bacterium, protozoan, or multicellular macroparasite).

### Confidence

In this Report, the level of confidence in a statement is expressed using a standard terminology defined in the Introduction. See also *uncertainty*.

### Control run

A model run carried out to provide a ‘*baseline*’ for comparison with climate-change experiments. The control run uses constant values for the *radiative forcing* due to *greenhouse gases* and *anthropogenic aerosols* appropriate to *pre-industrial* conditions.



**Coral**

The term ‘coral’ has several meanings, but is usually the common name for the Order *Scleractinia*, all members of which have hard limestone skeletons, and which are divided into reef-building and non-reef-building, or cold- and warm-water corals.

**Coral bleaching**

The paling in colour which results if a *coral* loses its symbiotic, energy-providing, organisms.

**Coral reefs**

Rock-like limestone (calcium carbonate) structures built by *corals* along ocean coasts (fringing reefs) or on top of shallow, submerged banks or shelves (barrier reefs, atolls), most conspicuous in tropical and sub-tropical oceans.

**Cryosphere**

The component of the *climate system* consisting of all snow and ice (including *permafrost*) on and beneath the surface of the Earth and ocean.

**Cryptogams**

An outdated but still-used term, denoting a group of diverse and taxonomically unrelated organisms, including fungi and lower plants such as *algae*, lichens, hornworts, liverworts, mosses and ferns.

**Deforestation**

Natural or *anthropogenic* process that converts forest land to non-forest. See *afforestation* and *reforestation*.

**Dengue fever**

An *infectious* viral *disease* spread by mosquitoes, often called breakbone fever because it is characterised by severe pain in the joints and back. Subsequent infections of the virus may lead to dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS), which may be fatal.

**Desert**

A region of very low rainfall, where ‘very low’ is widely accepted to be <100 mm per year.

**Desertification**

Land degradation in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities. Further, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) defines land degradation as a reduction or loss in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of rain-fed cropland, irrigated cropland, or range, pasture, forest and woodlands resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including those arising from human activities and habitation patterns, such as: (i) soil *erosion* caused by wind and/or water; (ii) deterioration of the physical, chemical, and biological or economic properties of soil; and (iii) long-term loss of natural vegetation.

**Detection and attribution**

Detection of change in a system (natural or human) is the process of demonstrating that the system has changed in some defined statistical sense, without providing a reason for that change.

*Attribution* of such an observed change in a system to *anthropogenic climate change* is usually a two-stage process. First, the observed change in the system must be demonstrated to be associated with an observed regional climate change with a specified degree of *confidence*. Second, a measurable portion of the observed regional climate change, or the associated observed change in the system, must be attributed to *anthropogenic* climate forcing with a similar degree of confidence.

Confidence in such *joint attribution* statements must be lower than the confidence in either of the individual attribution steps alone due to the combination of two separate statistical assessments.

**Diadromous**

Fish that travel between salt water and freshwater.

**Discount rate**

The degree to which consumption now is preferred to consumption one year hence, with prices held constant, but average incomes rising in line with *GDP* per capita.

**Disturbance regime**

Frequency, intensity, and types of disturbances, such as fires, insect or pest outbreaks, floods and *droughts*.

**Downscaling**

A method that derives local- to regional-scale (10 to 100 km) information from larger-scale models or data analyses.

**Drought**

The phenomenon that exists when precipitation is significantly below normal recorded levels, causing serious hydrological imbalances that often adversely affect land resources and production systems.

**Dyke**

A human-made wall or embankment along a shore to prevent flooding of low-lying land.

**Dynamic global vegetation model (DGVM)**

Models that simulate vegetation development and dynamics through space and time, as driven by *climate* and other environmental changes.

**Ecological community**

A community of plants and animals characterised by a typical assemblage of species and their abundances. See also *ecosystem*.

**Ecological corridor**

A thin strip of vegetation used by wildlife, potentially allowing movement of biotic factors between two areas.

**Ecophysiological process**

Individual organisms respond to environmental variability, such as *climate change*, through ecophysiological processes which operate continuously, generally at a microscopic or sub-organism scale. Ecophysiological mechanisms underpin individual organism's tolerance to environmental stress, and comprise a broad range of responses defining the absolute tolerance limits of individuals to environmental conditions. Ecophysiological responses may scale up to control species geographic ranges.

**Ecosystem**

The interactive system formed from all living organisms and their abiotic (physical and chemical) environment within a given area. Ecosystems cover a hierarchy of spatial scales and can comprise the entire globe, *biomes* at the continental scale or small, well-circumscribed systems such as a small pond.

**Ecosystem approach**

The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. An ecosystem approach is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organisation, which encompass the essential structure, processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many *ecosystems*. The ecosystem approach requires adaptive management to deal with the complex and dynamic nature of ecosystems and the absence of complete knowledge or understanding of their functioning. Priority targets are conservation of *biodiversity* and of the ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services.

**Ecosystem services**

Ecological processes or functions having monetary or non-monetary value to individuals or society at large. There are (i) supporting services such as productivity or *biodiversity* maintenance, (ii) provisioning services such as food, fibre, or fish, (iii) regulating services such as climate regulation or *carbon sequestration*, and (iv) cultural services such as tourism or spiritual and aesthetic appreciation.

**Ecotone**

Transition area between adjacent *ecological communities* (e.g., between forests and grasslands).

**El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**

El Niño, in its original sense, is a warm-water current that periodically flows along the coast of Ecuador and Peru, disrupting the local fishery. This oceanic event is associated with a fluctuation of the inter-tropical surface pressure pattern and circulation in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, called the Southern Oscillation. This coupled atmosphere-ocean phenomenon is collectively known as El Niño-Southern Oscillation. During an El Niño event, the prevailing trade winds weaken and the equatorial countercurrent strengthens, causing warm surface waters in the Indonesian area to flow eastward to overlies the cold waters of the Peru current. This event has great impact on the wind, sea surface temperature, and precip-

itation patterns in the tropical Pacific. It has climatic effects throughout the Pacific region and in many other parts of the world. The opposite of an El Niño event is called *La Niña*.

**Emissions scenario**

A plausible representation of the future development of emissions of substances that are potentially radiatively active (e.g., *greenhouse gases, aerosols*), based on a coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about driving forces (such as demographic and socio-economic development, technological change) and their key relationships. In 1992, the IPCC presented a set of emissions scenarios that were used as a basis for the *climate projections* in the Second Assessment Report. These emissions scenarios are referred to as the IS92 *scenarios*. In the IPCC Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (*SRES*) (Nakićenović et al., 2000), new emissions scenarios – the so-called SRES scenarios – were published.

**Endemic**

Restricted or peculiar to a locality or region. With regard to human health, endemic can refer to a disease or agent present or usually prevalent in a population or geographical area at all times.

**Ensemble**

A group of parallel model simulations used for *climate projections*. Variation of the results across the ensemble members gives an estimate of *uncertainty*. Ensembles made with the same model but different initial conditions only characterise the uncertainty associated with internal *climate variability*, whereas multi-model ensembles including simulations by several models also include the impact of model differences.

**Epidemic**

Occurring suddenly in incidence rates clearly in excess of normal expectancy, applied especially to *infectious diseases* but may also refer to any disease, injury, or other health-related event occurring in such outbreaks.

**Erosion**

The process of removal and transport of soil and rock by weathering, mass wasting, and the action of streams, *glaciers*, waves, winds and underground water.

**Eustatic sea-level rise**

See *sea-level rise*.

**Eutrophication**

The process by which a body of water (often shallow) becomes (either naturally or by pollution) rich in dissolved nutrients, with a seasonal deficiency in dissolved oxygen.

**Evaporation**

The transition process from liquid to gaseous state.

**Evapotranspiration**

The combined process of water *evaporation* from the Earth's surface and *transpiration* from vegetation.

**Externalities**

Occur when a change in the production or consumption of one individual or firm affects indirectly the well-being of another individual or firm. Externalities can be positive or negative. The impacts of pollution on *ecosystems*, water courses or air quality represent classic cases of negative externality.

**Extinction**

The global disappearance of an entire species.

**Extirpation**

The disappearance of a species from part of its range; local *extinction*.

**Extreme weather event**

An event that is rare within its statistical reference distribution at a particular place. Definitions of ‘rare’ vary, but an extreme weather event would normally be as rare as or rarer than the 10th or 90th percentile. By definition, the characteristics of what is called ‘extreme weather’ may vary from place to place. Extreme weather events may typically include floods and *droughts*.

**Feedback**

An interaction mechanism between processes is called a feedback. When the result of an initial process triggers changes in a second process and that in turn influences the initial one. A positive feedback intensifies the original process, and a negative feedback reduces it.

**Food chain**

The chain of *trophic relationships* formed if several species feed on each other. See *food web* and *trophic level*.

**Food security**

A situation that exists when people have secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth, development and an active and healthy life. Food insecurity may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level.

**Food web**

The network of *trophic relationships* within an *ecological community* involving several interconnected *food chains*.

**Forecast**

See *climate prediction* and *climate projection*.

**Forest limit/line**

The upper elevational or latitudinal limit beyond which natural tree regeneration cannot develop into a closed forest stand. It is typically at a lower elevation or more distant from the poles than the *tree line*.

**Freshwater lens**

A lenticular fresh groundwater body that underlies an oceanic island. It is underlain by saline water.

**Functional extinction**

This term defines a species which has lost its capacity to persist and to recover because its populations have declined to below a minimum size. See *committed to extinction*.

**General Circulation Model (GCM)**

See *climate model*.

**Generalist**

A species that can tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions.

**Glacier**

A mass of land ice flowing downhill (by internal deformation and sliding at the base) and constrained by the surrounding topography (e.g., the sides of a valley or surrounding peaks). A glacier is maintained by accumulation of snow at high altitudes, balanced by melting at low altitudes or discharge into the sea.

**Globalisation**

The growing integration and interdependence of countries worldwide through the increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in goods and services, free international capital flows, and the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology, information and culture.

**Greenhouse effect**

The process in which the absorption of infrared radiation by the *atmosphere* warms the Earth.

In common parlance, the term ‘greenhouse effect’ may be used to refer either to the natural greenhouse effect, due to naturally occurring *greenhouse gases*, or to the enhanced (*anthropogenic*) greenhouse effect, which results from gases emitted as a result of human activities.

**Greenhouse gas**

Greenhouse gases are those gaseous constituents of the *atmosphere*, both natural and *anthropogenic*, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of infrared radiation emitted by the Earth’s surface, the atmosphere, and clouds. This property causes the *greenhouse effect*. Water vapour (H<sub>2</sub>O), *carbon dioxide* (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and *ozone* (O<sub>3</sub>) are the primary greenhouse gases in the Earth’s atmosphere. As well as CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, and CH<sub>4</sub>, the *Kyoto Protocol* deals with the greenhouse gases sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs).

**Gross Domestic Product**

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the monetary value of all goods and services produced within a nation.

**Gross National Product**

Gross National Product (GNP) is the monetary value of all goods and services produced in a nation’s economy, including income generated abroad by domestic residents, but without income generated by foreigners.

**Gross primary production**

The total carbon fixed by plant through *photosynthesis*.

**Groundwater recharge**

The process by which external water is added to the zone of saturation of an *aquifer*, either directly into a formation or indirectly by way of another formation.

**Groyne**

A low, narrow jetty, usually extending roughly perpendicular to the shoreline, designed to protect the shore from *erosion* by currents, tides or waves, by trapping sand for the purpose of replenishing or making a beach.

**Habitat**

The locality or natural home in which a particular plant, animal, or group of closely associated organisms lives.

**Hantavirus**

A virus in the family *Bunyaviridae* that causes a type of haemorrhagic fever. It is thought that humans catch the disease mainly from infected rodents, either through direct contact with the animals or by inhaling or ingesting dust that contains aerosolised viral particles from their dried urine and other secretions.

**Heat island**

An urban area characterised by ambient temperatures higher than those of the surrounding non-urban area. The cause is a higher absorption of solar energy by materials of the urban fabric such as asphalt.

**Herbaceous**

Flowering, non-woody.

**Human system**

Any system in which human organisations play a major role. Often, but not always, the term is synonymous with ‘society’ or ‘social system’ e.g., agricultural system, political system, technological system, economic system; all are human systems in the sense applied in the AR4.

**Hydrographic events**

Events that alter the state or current of waters in oceans, rivers or lakes.

**Hydrological systems**

The systems involved in movement, distribution, and quality of water throughout the Earth, including both the hydrologic cycle and water resources.

**Hypolimnetic**

Referring to the part of a lake below the *thermocline* made up of water that is stagnant and of essentially uniform temperature except during the period of overturn.

**Hypoxic events**

Events that lead to a deficiency of oxygen.

**Ice cap**

A dome-shaped ice mass covering a highland area that is considerably smaller in extent than an *ice sheet*.

**Ice sheet**

A mass of land ice that is sufficiently deep to cover most of the underlying bedrock topography. An ice sheet flows outwards from a high central plateau with a small average surface slope. The margins slope steeply, and the ice is discharged through fast-flowing ice streams or outlet *glaciers*, in some cases into the sea or into *ice shelves* floating on the sea. There are only two large ice sheets in the modern world – on Greenland and Antarctica, the Antarctic ice sheet being divided into east and west by the Transantarctic Mountains; during glacial periods there were others.

**Ice shelf**

A floating *ice sheet* of considerable thickness attached to a coast (usually of great horizontal extent with a level or gently undulating surface); often a seaward extension of ice sheets. Nearly all ice shelves are in Antarctica.

**(climate change) Impact assessment**

The practice of identifying and evaluating, in monetary and/or non-monetary terms, the effects of *climate change* on natural and *human systems*.

**(climate change) Impacts**

The effects of *climate change* on natural and *human systems*. Depending on the consideration of *adaptation*, one can distinguish between potential impacts and residual impacts:

**Potential impacts:** all impacts that may occur given a projected change in climate, without considering adaptation.

**Residual impacts:** the impacts of climate change that would occur after adaptation. See also *aggregate impacts*, *market impacts*, and *non-market impacts*.

**Indigenous peoples**

No internationally accepted definition of indigenous peoples exists. Common characteristics often applied under international law, and by United Nations agencies to distinguish indigenous peoples include: residence within or attachment to geographically distinct traditional *habitats*, ancestral territories, and their natural resources; maintenance of cultural and social identities, and social, economic, cultural and political institutions separate from mainstream or dominant societies and cultures; descent from population groups present in a given area, most frequently before modern states or territories were created and current borders defined; and self-identification as being part of a distinct indigenous cultural group, and the desire to preserve that cultural identity.

**Industrial revolution**

A period of rapid industrial growth with far-reaching social and economic consequences, beginning in England during the second half of the 18th century and spreading to Europe and later to other countries including the USA. The industrial revolution marks the beginning of a strong increase in combustion of fos-



sil fuels and related emissions of *carbon dioxide*. In the AR4, the term ‘*pre-industrial*’ refers, somewhat arbitrarily, to the period before 1750.

### Infectious disease

Any disease caused by microbial agents that can be transmitted from one person to another or from animals to people. This may occur by direct physical contact, by handling of an object that has picked up infective organisms, through a disease carrier, via contaminated water, or by the spread of infected droplets coughed or exhaled into the air.

### Infrastructure

The basic equipment, utilities, productive enterprises, installations and services essential for the development, operation and growth of an organisation, city or nation.

### Integrated assessment

An interdisciplinary process of combining, interpreting and communicating knowledge from diverse scientific disciplines so that all relevant aspects of a complex societal issue can be evaluated and considered for the benefit of decision-making.

### Integrated water resources management (IWRM)

The prevailing concept for water management which, however, has not been defined unambiguously. IWRM is based on four principles that were formulated by the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin, 1992: (1) fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment; (2) water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels; (3) women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water; (4) water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognised as an economic good.

### Invasive species and invasive alien species (IAS)

A species aggressively expanding its range and population density into a region in which it is not native, often through out-competing or otherwise dominating native species.

### Irrigation water-use efficiency

Irrigation *water-use efficiency* is the amount of *biomass* or seed yield produced per unit irrigation water applied, typically about 1 tonne of dry matter per 100 mm water applied.

### Isohyet

A line on a map connecting locations that receive the same amount of rainfall.

### Joint attribution

Involves both *attribution* of observed changes to regional *climate change* and attribution of a measurable portion of either regional climate change or the associated observed changes in the system to *anthropogenic* causes, beyond natural variability. This process involves statistically linking climate-change simulations from *climate models* with the observed responses in the natural or managed system. *Confidence* in joint attribution state-

ments must be lower than the confidence in either of the individual attribution steps alone due to the combination of two separate statistical assessments.

### Keystone species

A species that has a central servicing role affecting many other organisms and whose demise is likely to result in the loss of a number of species and lead to major changes in *ecosystem* function.

### Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted at the Third Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)* in 1997 in Kyoto, Japan. It contains legally binding commitments, in addition to those included in the UNFCCC. Countries included in Annex B of the Protocol (most member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and those with economies in transition) agreed to reduce their *anthropogenic greenhouse gas* emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF<sub>6</sub>) by at least 5% below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005.

### La Niña

See *El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)*.

### Landslide

A mass of material that has slipped downhill by gravity, often assisted by water when the material is saturated; the rapid movement of a mass of soil, rock or debris down a slope.

### Large-scale singularities

Abrupt and dramatic changes in the state of given systems, in response to gradual changes in driving forces. For example, a gradual increase in atmospheric *greenhouse gas* concentrations may lead to such large-scale singularities as slowdown or collapse of the *thermohaline circulation* or collapse of the West Antarctic *ice sheet*. The occurrence, magnitude, and timing of large-scale singularities are difficult to predict.

### Last Glacial Maximum

The Last Glacial Maximum refers to the time of maximum extent of the *ice sheets* during the last glaciation, approximately 21,000 years ago.

### Leaching

The removal of soil elements or applied chemicals by water movement through the soil.

### Leaf area index (LAI)

The ratio between the total leaf surface area of a plant and the ground area covered by its leaves.

### Legume

Plants that fix nitrogen from the air through a symbiotic relationship with bacteria in their soil and root systems (e.g., soybean, peas, beans, lucerne, clovers).

**Likelihood**

The likelihood of an occurrence, an outcome or a result, where this can be estimated probabilistically, is expressed in this Report using a standard terminology, defined in the Introduction. See also *uncertainty* and *confidence*.

**Limnology**

Study of lakes and their *biota*.

**Littoral zone**

A coastal region; the zone between high and low watermarks.

**Malaria**

*Endemic* or *epidemic* parasitic disease caused by species of the genus *Plasmodium* (Protozoa) and transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus *Anopheles*; produces bouts of high fever and systemic disorders, affects about 300 million and kills approximately 2 million people worldwide every year.

**Market impacts**

*Impacts* that can be quantified in monetary terms, and directly affect *Gross Domestic Product* – e.g., changes in the price of agricultural inputs and/or goods. See also *non-market impacts*.

**Meningitis**

Inflammation of the meninges (part of the covering of the brain), usually caused by bacteria, viruses or fungi.

**Meridional overturning circulation (MOC)**

See *thermohaline circulation (THC)*.

**Microclimate**

Local climate at or near the Earth's surface. See also *climate*.

**Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

A list of ten goals, including eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, improving maternal health, and ensuring environmental sustainability, adopted in 2000 by the UN General Assembly, i.e., 191 States, to be reached by 2015. The MDGs commit the international community to an expanded vision of development, and have been commonly accepted as a framework for measuring development progress.

**Mires**

*Peat-accumulating wetlands*. See *bog*.

**Mitigation**

An *anthropogenic* intervention to reduce the anthropogenic forcing of the *climate system*; it includes strategies to reduce *greenhouse gas sources* and emissions and enhancing *greenhouse gas sinks*.

**Mixed layer**

The upper region of the ocean, well mixed by interaction with the overlying *atmosphere*.

**Monsoon**

A monsoon is a tropical and sub-tropical seasonal reversal in

both the surface winds and associated precipitation.

**Montane**

The biogeographic zone made up of relatively moist, cool upland slopes below the *sub-alpine* zone that is characterised by the presence of mixed deciduous at lower and coniferous evergreen forests at higher elevations.

**Morbidity**

Rate of occurrence of disease or other health disorders within a population, taking account of the age-specific morbidity rates. Morbidity indicators include chronic disease incidence/prevalence, rates of hospitalisation, primary care consultations, disability-days (i.e., days of absence from work), and prevalence of symptoms.

**Morphology**

The form and structure of an organism or land-form, or any of its parts.

**Mortality**

Rate of occurrence of death within a population; calculation of mortality takes account of age-specific death rates, and can thus yield measures of life expectancy and the extent of premature death.

**Net biome production (NBP)**

Net biome production is the *net ecosystem production (NEP)* minus carbon losses resulting from disturbances such as fire or insect defoliation.

**Net ecosystem production (NEP)**

Net ecosystem production is the difference between *net primary production (NPP)* and heterotrophic *respiration* (mostly decomposition of dead organic matter) of that *ecosystem* over the same area (see also *net biome production (NBP)*).

**Net primary production (NPP)**

Net primary production is the *gross primary production* minus autotrophic *respiration*, i.e., the sum of metabolic processes for plant growth and maintenance, over the same area.

**Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)**

Any of several oxides of nitrogen.

**No regrets policy**

A policy that would generate net social and/or economic benefits irrespective of whether or not *anthropogenic climate change* occurs.

**Non-linearity**

A process is called 'non-linear' when there is no simple proportional relation between cause and effect.

**Non-market impacts**

*Impacts* that affect *ecosystems* or human *welfare*, but that are not easily expressed in monetary terms, e.g., an increased risk of premature death, or increases in the number of people at risk of hunger. See also *market impacts*.

**Normalised difference vegetation index (NDVI)**

A satellite-based remotely sensed measure of the 'greenness' of the vegetation cover.

**North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)**

The North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) consists of opposing variations of barometric pressure near Iceland and near the Azores. It is the dominant mode of winter *climate variability* in the North Atlantic region.

**Ocean acidification**

Increased concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> in sea water causing a measurable increase in acidity (i.e., a reduction in ocean pH). This may lead to reduced calcification rates of calcifying organisms such as *corals*, molluscs, *algae* and crustacea.

**Ombrotrophic bog**

An acidic *peat*-accumulating *wetland* that is rainwater (instead of groundwater) fed and thus particularly poor in nutrients.

**Opportunity costs**

The cost of an economic activity forgone through the choice of another activity.

**Ozone**

The triatomic form of oxygen (O<sub>3</sub>), a gaseous atmospheric constituent. In the *troposphere*, it is created both naturally and by photochemical reactions involving gases resulting from human activities (*photochemical smog*). In high concentrations, tropospheric ozone can be harmful to many living organisms. Tropospheric ozone acts as a *greenhouse gas*. In the *stratosphere*, ozone is created by the interaction between solar ultraviolet radiation and molecular oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>). Depletion of stratospheric ozone, due to chemical reactions that may be enhanced by *climate change*, results in an increased ground-level flux of ultraviolet (UV) B radiation.

**Paludification**

The process of transforming land into a *wetland* such as a marsh, a swamp or a *bog*.

**Particulates**

Very small solid exhaust particles emitted during the combustion of fossil and biomass fuels. Particulates may consist of a wide variety of substances. Of greatest concern for health are particulates of less than or equal to 10 nm in diameter, usually designated as PM<sub>10</sub>.

**Peat**

Peat is formed from dead plants, typically *Sphagnum* mosses, which are only partially decomposed due to the permanent submergence in water and the presence of conserving substances such as humic acids.

**Peatland**

Typically a *wetland* such as a *mire* slowly accumulating *peat*.

**Pelagic community**

The community of organisms living in the open waters of a river, a lake or an ocean (in contrast to *benthic communities* living on or near the bottom of a water body).

**Permafrost**

Perennially frozen ground that occurs where the temperature remains below 0°C for several years.

**Phenology**

The study of natural phenomena that recur periodically (e.g., development stages, migration) and their relation to climate and seasonal changes.

**Photochemical smog**

A mix of photochemical oxidant air pollutants produced by the reaction of sunlight with primary air pollutants, especially hydrocarbons.

**Photosynthesis**

The synthesis by plants, *algae* and some bacteria of sugar from sunlight, *carbon dioxide* and water, with oxygen as the waste product. See also *carbon dioxide fertilisation*, *C<sub>3</sub> plants* and *C<sub>4</sub> plants*.

**Physiographic**

Of, relating to, or employing a description of nature or natural phenomena.

**Phytoplankton**

The plant forms of *plankton*. Phytoplankton are the dominant plants in the sea, and are the basis of the entire marine *food web*. These single-celled organisms are the principal agents of photosynthetic carbon fixation in the ocean. See also *zooplankton*.

**Plankton**

Microscopic aquatic organisms that drift or swim weakly. See also *phytoplankton* and *zooplankton*.

**Plant functional type (PFT)**

An idealised vegetation class typically used in *dynamic global vegetation models (DGVM)*.

**Polynya**

Areas of permanently unfrozen sea water resulting from warmer local water currents in otherwise sea-ice covered oceans. They are biological hotspots, since they serve as breathing holes or refuges for marine mammals such as whales and seals, and fish-hunting birds.

**Population system**

An ecological system (not *ecosystem*) determined by the dynamics of a particular *vagile* species that typically cuts across several *ecological communities* and even entire *biomes*. An example is migratory birds that seasonally inhabit forests as well as grasslands and visit *wetlands* on their migratory routes.

**Potential production**

Estimated crop productivity under non-limiting soil, nutrient and water conditions.

**Pre-industrial**

See *industrial revolution*.

**Primary production**

All forms of production accomplished by plants, also called primary producers. See *GPP*, *NPP*, *NEP* and *NBP*.

**Projection**

The potential evolution of a quality or set of quantities, often computed with the aid of a model. Projections are distinguished from predictions in order to emphasise that projections involve assumptions – concerning, for example, future socio-economic and technological developments, that may or may not be realised – and are therefore subject to substantial *uncertainty*. See also *climate projection* and *climate prediction*.

**Pteropods**

Planktonic, small marine snails with swimming organs resembling wings.

**Pure rate of time preference**

The degree to which consumption now is preferred to consumption one year later, with prices and incomes held constant, which is one component of the *discount rate*.

**Radiative forcing**

Radiative forcing is the change in the net vertical irradiance (expressed in Watts per square metre;  $\text{Wm}^{-2}$ ) at the tropopause due to an internal or external change in the forcing of the *climate system*, such as a change in the concentration of  $\text{CO}_2$  or the output of the Sun.

**Rangeland**

Unmanaged grasslands, shrublands, *savannas* and *tundra*.

**Recalcitrant**

Recalcitrant organic material or recalcitrant carbon stocks resist decomposition.

**Reference scenario**

See *baseline/reference*.

**Reforestation**

Planting of forests on lands that have previously contained forests but that have been converted to some other use. For a discussion of the term *forest* and related terms such as *afforestation*, *reforestation* and *deforestation*, see the IPCC Special Report on Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (IPCC, 2000).

**Reid's paradox**

This refers to the apparent contradiction between inferences of high plant migration rates as suggested in the palaeo-record (particularly after the last Ice Age), and the low potential rates of

migration that can be inferred through studying the seed dispersal of the plants involved, e.g., in wind-tunnel experiments.

**Reinsurance**

The transfer of a portion of primary insurance risks to a secondary tier of insurers (reinsurers); essentially 'insurance for insurers'.

**Relative sea-level rise**

See *sea-level rise*.

**Reservoir**

A component of the *climate system*, other than the *atmosphere*, that has the capacity to store, accumulate or release a substance of concern (e.g., carbon or a *greenhouse gas*). Oceans, soils, and forests are examples of carbon reservoirs. The term also means an artificial or natural storage place for water, such as a lake, pond or *aquifer*, from which the water may be withdrawn for such purposes as irrigation or water supply.

**Resilience**

The ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organisation, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change.

**Respiration**

The process whereby living organisms convert organic matter to *carbon dioxide*, releasing energy and consuming oxygen.

**Riparian**

Relating to or living or located on the bank of a natural watercourse (such as a river) or sometimes of a lake or a tidewater.

**River discharge**

Water flow within a river channel, for example expressed in  $\text{m}^3/\text{s}$ . A synonym for *streamflow*.

**Runoff**

That part of precipitation that does not *evaporate* and is not *transpired*.

**Salinisation**

The accumulation of salts in soils.

**Salt-water intrusion / encroachment**

Displacement of fresh surface water or groundwater by the advance of salt water due to its greater density. This usually occurs in coastal and estuarine areas due to reducing land-based influence (e.g., either from reduced *runoff* and associated *groundwater recharge*, or from excessive water withdrawals from *aquifers*) or increasing marine influence (e.g., *relative sea-level rise*).

**Savanna**

Tropical or sub-tropical grassland or woodland *biomes* with scattered shrubs, individual trees or a very open canopy of trees, all characterised by a dry (arid, semi-arid or semi-humid) *climate*.



**Scenario**

A plausible and often simplified description of how the future may develop, based on a coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about driving forces and key relationships. Scenarios may be derived from *projections*, but are often based on additional information from other sources, sometimes combined with a ‘narrative storyline’. See also *climate (change) scenario*, *emissions scenario* and *SRES*.

**Sea-ice biome**

The *biome* formed by all marine organisms living within or on the floating sea ice (frozen sea water) of the polar oceans.)

**Sea-level rise**

An increase in the mean level of the ocean. *Eustatic sea-level rise* is a change in global average sea level brought about by an increase in the volume of the world ocean. *Relative sea-level rise* occurs where there is a local increase in the level of the ocean relative to the land, which might be due to ocean rise and/or land level subsidence. In areas subject to rapid land-level uplift, relative sea level can fall.

**Sea wall**

A human-made wall or embankment along a shore to prevent wave *erosion*.

**Semi-arid regions**

Regions of moderately low rainfall, which are not highly productive and are usually classified as *rangelands*. ‘Moderately low’ is widely accepted as between 100 and 250 mm precipitation per year. See also *arid region*.

**Sensitivity**

Sensitivity is the degree to which a system is affected, either adversely or beneficially, by *climate variability* or change. The effect may be direct (e.g., a change in crop yield in response to a change in the mean, range or variability of temperature) or indirect (e.g., damages caused by an increase in the frequency of coastal flooding due to *sea-level rise*).

**Sequestration**

See *carbon sequestration*.

**Silviculture**

Cultivation, development and care of forests.

**Sink**

Any process, activity, or mechanism that removes a *greenhouse gas*, an *aerosol*, or a precursor of a greenhouse gas or aerosol from the *atmosphere*.

**Snow water equivalent**

The equivalent volume/mass of water that would be produced if a particular body of snow or ice was melted.

**Snowpack**

A seasonal accumulation of slow-melting snow.

**Social cost of carbon**

The value of the *climate change impacts* from 1 tonne of carbon emitted today as CO<sub>2</sub>, aggregated over time and discounted back to the present day; sometimes also expressed as value per tonne of *carbon dioxide*.

**Socio-economic scenarios**

*Scenarios* concerning future conditions in terms of population, *Gross Domestic Product* and other socio-economic factors relevant to understanding the implications of *climate change*. See *SRES* (source: Chapter 6).

**SRES**

The storylines and associated population, *GDP* and *emissions scenarios* associated with the Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (SRES) (Nakićenović et al., 2000), and the resulting *climate change* and *sea-level rise scenarios*. Four families of *socio-economic scenario* (A1, A2, B1 and B2) represent different world futures in two distinct dimensions: a focus on economic versus environmental concerns, and global versus regional development patterns.

**Stakeholder**

A person or an organisation that has a legitimate interest in a project or entity, or would be affected by a particular action or policy.

**Stock**

See *reservoir*.

**Stratosphere**

Highly stratified region of *atmosphere* above the *troposphere* extending from about 10 km (ranging from 9 km in high latitudes to 16 km in the tropics) to about 50 km.

**Streamflow**

Water flow within a river channel, for example, expressed in m<sup>3</sup>/s. A synonym for *river discharge*.

**Sub-alpine**

The biogeographic zone below the *tree line* and above the *montane* zone that is characterised by the presence of coniferous forest and trees.

**Succulent**

Succulent plants, e.g., cactuses, possessing organs that store water, thus facilitating survival during *drought* conditions.

**Surface runoff**

The water that travels over the land surface to the nearest surface stream; *runoff* of a drainage *basin* that has not passed beneath the surface since precipitation.

**Sustainable development**

Development that meets the cultural, social, political and economic needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Taiga**

The northernmost belt of *boreal forest* adjacent to the Arctic *tundra*.

**Thermal expansion**

In connection with *sea-level rise*, this refers to the increase in volume (and decrease in density) that results from warming water. A warming of the ocean leads to an expansion of the ocean volume and hence an increase in sea level.

**Thermocline**

The region in the world's ocean, typically at a depth of 1 km, where temperature decreases rapidly with depth and which marks the boundary between the surface and the ocean.

**Thermohaline circulation (THC)**

Large-scale, density-driven circulation in the ocean, caused by differences in temperature and salinity. In the North Atlantic, the thermohaline circulation consists of warm surface water flowing northward and cold deepwater flowing southward, resulting in a net poleward transport of heat. The surface water sinks in highly restricted regions located in high latitudes. Also called *meridional overturning circulation (MOC)*.

**Thermokarst**

A ragged landscape full of shallow pits, hummocks and depressions often filled with water (ponds), which results from thawing of ground ice or *permafrost*. Thermokarst processes are the processes driven by warming that lead to the formation of thermokarst.

**Threshold**

The level of magnitude of a system process at which sudden or rapid change occurs. A point or level at which new properties emerge in an ecological, economic or other system, invalidating predictions based on mathematical relationships that apply at lower levels.

**Transpiration**

The *evaporation* of water vapour from the surfaces of leaves through stomata.

**Tree line**

The upper limit of tree growth in mountains or high latitudes. It is more elevated or more poleward than the *forest line*.

**Trophic level**

The position that an organism occupies in a *food chain*.

**Trophic relationship**

The ecological relationship which results when one species feeds on another.

**Troposphere**

The lowest part of the *atmosphere* from the surface to about 10 km in altitude in mid-latitudes (ranging from 9 km in high latitudes to 16 km in the tropics on average) where clouds and 'weather' phenomena occur. In the troposphere, temperatures generally decrease with height.

**Tsunami**

A large wave produced by a submarine earthquake, *landslide* or volcanic eruption.

**Tundra**

A treeless, level, or gently undulating plain characteristic of the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions characterised by low temperatures and short growing seasons.

**Uncertainty**

An expression of the degree to which a value (e.g., the future state of the *climate system*) is unknown. Uncertainty can result from lack of information or from disagreement about what is known or even knowable. It may have many types of sources, from quantifiable errors in the data to ambiguously defined concepts or terminology, or uncertain *projections* of human behaviour. Uncertainty can therefore be represented by quantitative measures (e.g., a range of values calculated by various models) or by qualitative statements (e.g., reflecting the judgement of a team of experts). See also *confidence* and *likelihood*.

**Undernutrition**

The temporary or chronic state resulting from intake of lower than recommended daily dietary energy and/or protein requirements, through either insufficient food intake, poor absorption, and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed.

**Ungulate**

A hoofed, typically herbivorous, quadruped mammal (including ruminants, swine, camel, hippopotamus, horse, rhinoceros and elephant).

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

The Convention was adopted on 9 May 1992, in New York, and signed at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro by more than 150 countries and the European Community. Its ultimate objective is the 'stabilisation of *greenhouse gas* concentrations in the *atmosphere* at a level that would prevent dangerous *anthropogenic* interference with the *climate system*'. It contains commitments for all Parties. Under the Convention, Parties included in Annex I aim to return greenhouse gas emissions not controlled by the Montreal Protocol to 1990 levels by the year 2000. The Convention entered in force in March 1994. See also *Kyoto Protocol*.

**Upwelling region**

A region of an ocean where cold, typically nutrient-rich waters from the bottom of the ocean surface.

**Urbanisation**

The conversion of land from a natural state or managed natural state (such as agriculture) to cities; a process driven by net rural-to-urban migration through which an increasing percentage of the population in any nation or region come to live in settlements that are defined as 'urban centres'.

**Vagile**

Able to migrate.

**Vascular plants**

Higher plants with vascular, i.e., sap-transporting, tissues.

**Vector**

A blood-sucking organism, such as an insect, that transmits a pathogen from one host to another. See also *vector-borne diseases*.

**Vector-borne diseases**

Disease that are transmitted between hosts by a *vector* organism (such as a mosquito or tick); e.g., *malaria*, *dengue fever* and *leishmaniasis*.

**Vernalisation**

The biological requirements of certain crops, such as winter cereals, which need periods of extreme cold temperatures before emergence and/or during early vegetative stages, in order to flower and produce seeds. By extension, the act or process of hastening the flowering and fruiting of plants by treating seeds, bulbs or seedlings with cold temperatures, so as to induce a shortening of the vegetative period.

**Vulnerability**

Vulnerability is the degree to which a system is susceptible to, and unable to cope with, adverse effects of *climate change*, including *climate variability* and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate change and variation to which a system is exposed, its *sensitivity*, and its adaptive capacity.

**Water consumption**

Amount of extracted water irretrievably lost during its use (by *evaporation* and goods production). Water consumption is equal to water withdrawal minus return flow.

**Water productivity**

The ratio of crop seed produced per unit water applied. In the case of irrigation, see *irrigation water-use efficiency*. For rain-fed crops, water productivity is typically 1 t/100 mm.

**Water stress**

A country is water-stressed if the available freshwater supply relative to water withdrawals acts as an important constraint on development. Withdrawals exceeding 20% of renewable water supply have been used as an indicator of water stress. A crop is water-stressed if soil-available water, and thus actual *evapotranspiration*, is less than potential evapotranspiration demands.

**Water-use efficiency**

Carbon gain in *photosynthesis* per unit water lost in *evapotranspiration*. It can be expressed on a short-term basis as the ratio of photosynthetic carbon gain per unit transpirational water loss, or on a seasonal basis as the ratio of *net primary production* or agricultural yield to the amount of available water.

**Welfare**

An economic term used to describe the state of well-being of humans on an individual or collective basis. The constituents of well-being are commonly considered to include materials to satisfy basic needs, freedom and choice, health, good social relations, and security.

**Wetland**

A transitional, regularly waterlogged area of poorly drained soils, often between an aquatic and a terrestrial *ecosystem*, fed from rain, surface water or groundwater. Wetlands are characterised by a prevalence of vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

**Yedoma**

Ancient organic material trapped in *permafrost* that is hardly decomposed.

**Zoonoses**

Diseases and infections which are naturally transmitted between vertebrate animals and people.

**Zooplankton**

The animal forms of *plankton*. They consume *phytoplankton* or other zooplankton.

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# Appendix II: Contributors to the IPCC WGII Fourth Assessment Report

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Abeku, Tarekegn  
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
UK/Ethiopia

Abuodha, Pamela  
University of Wollongong  
Australia/Kenya

Adesina, Francis  
Obafemi Awolowo University  
Nigeria

Adger, Neil  
University of East Anglia  
UK

Agard, John  
University of the West Indies  
Trinidad and Tobago

Aggarwal, Pramod  
Indian Agricultural Research Institute  
India

Agnew, Maureen  
University of East Anglia  
UK

Agoli-Agbo, Micheline  
University of Abomey-Calavi  
Benin

Agrawala, Shardul  
OECD/France

Agricole, Will  
National Meteorological Service  
Seychelles

Ahmad, Qazi  
Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad  
Bangladesh

Akhtar, Rais  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
India

Alam, Mozaharul  
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies  
Bangladesh

Alcama, Joseph  
University of Kassel  
Germany

Allali, Abdelkader  
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fishing  
Morocco

Andrey, Jean  
University of Waterloo  
Canada

Anisimov, Oleg  
State Hydrological Institute  
Russia

Anokhin, Yuriy  
Institute of Global Climate and Ecology  
Russia

Antle, John  
Montana State University  
USA

Araujo, Miguel  
Environmental Change Institute  
Portugal

Arblaster, Julie  
National Center for Atmospheric Sciences/Bureau of  
Meteorology  
USA/Australia

Arnell, Nigel  
University of Southampton  
UK

Asanuma, Jun  
Tsukuba University  
Japan

Atlhopheng, Julius  
University of Botswana  
Botswana

Attaher, Samar  
The Central Laboratory for Agricultural Climate  
Egypt

Attri, Shiv  
India Meteorological Department  
India

Baethgen, Walter  
International Fertilizer Development Centre  
Uruguay

Bao, Manzhu  
Huazhong Agricultural University  
China

Barlow, Chris  
Mekong River Commission  
Lao PDR

Bates, Bryson  
CSIRO  
Australia

Batima, Punsalmaa  
Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology  
Mongolia

Becken, Susanne  
Landcare Research  
New Zealand

Beggs, Paul  
Macquarie University  
Australia

Beniston, Martin  
University of Geneva  
Switzerland

Berkhout, Frans  
Institute for Environmental Studies  
The Netherlands

Betts, Richard  
Met Office Hadley Centre  
UK

Bhadwal, Suruchi  
The Energy and Resources Institute  
India

Biagini, Bonizella  
National Environmental Trust  
USA/GEF/Italy

Bindi, Marco  
DISAT, University of Florence  
Italy

Black, Richard  
Sussex University  
UK

Boko, Michel  
Universite de Bourgogne  
France/Benin

Bond, William  
University of Cape Town  
South Africa

Bounoua, Lahouari  
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center  
USA

Brander, Keith  
International Council for the Exploration of the Sea  
Denmark/UK

Brenkert, Antoinette  
Joint Global Change Research Institute  
USA

Briguglio, Lino  
Foundation for International Studies  
Malta

Bristow, Abigail  
Loughborough University  
UK

Brklacich, Michael  
Carleton University  
Canada

Brooks, Nick  
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research  
UK

Brown, Barbara  
Newcastle University  
UK

Burch, Sarah University of British Columbia Canada	Clot, Bernard MeteoSwiss Switzerland
Burkett, Virginia US Geological Survey USA	Codignotto, Jorge Ciudad Universitaria Argentina
Burton, Ian University of Toronto Canada	Cohen, Stewart Environment Canada Canada
Cairncross, Sandy London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine UK	Coleman, Anthony Insurance Australia Group Australia
Callaghan, Terry Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences/Abisko Scientific Research Sweden/UK	Conde, Cecilia Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Mexico
Canadell, Josep GCTE International Project Office Australia	Confalonieri, Ulisses National School of Public Health Brazil
Canziani, Osvaldo IPCC Working Group II Co-chair Argentina	Corfee-Morlot, Jan OECD Environment Directorate France
Carter, Timothy Finnish Environment Institute Finland	Corobov, Roman Regionica Moldova
Casassa, Gino Centro de Estudios Científicos Chile	Côté, Isabelle Simon Fraser University Canada
Cayan, Dan University of California, San Diego USA	Craig, Patricia The Pennsylvania State University USA
Ceron, Jean-Paul Université de Limoges France	Cranage, Judith The Pennsylvania State University USA
Chambers, Lynda Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre Australia	Cruz, Rex Victor University of the Philippines at Los Baños The Philippines
Chhetri, Netra Arizona State University USA/Nepal	Cruz Choque, David Ministry of Sustainable Development Bolivia
Christensen, Torben Lund University Sweden	de Alba Alcaraz, Edmundo Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Mexico

de Chazal, Jacqueline  
Université catholique de Louvain  
Belgium

de Ronde, John  
Delft Hydraulics  
The Netherlands

Demuth, Mike  
Natural Resources Canada  
Canada

Denton, Fatima  
International Development Research Centre  
Senegal/The Gambia

des Clers, Sophie  
University College London  
UK

Devoy, Robert  
University College Cork  
Ireland

Dikinya, Oagile  
University of Western Australia  
Australia

Dlugolecki, Andrew F.  
Consultant  
UK

Döll, Petra  
University of Frankfurt  
Germany

Downing, Thomas  
Stockholm Environment Institute  
UK

Dube, Pauline  
University of Botswana  
Botswana

Dubois, Ghislain  
Environnement Conseil (TEC)  
France

Dunn, Matt  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research  
New Zealand

Dyurgerov, Mark  
University of Colorado  
USA

Easterling, William  
The Pennsylvania State University  
USA

Ebi, Kristie  
Exponent  
USA

Edwards, Martin  
Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science  
UK

Emori, Seita  
National Institute for Environmental Studies  
Japan

Enright, Brenna  
University of Toronto  
Canada

Estrada, Francisco  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México  
Mexico

Estrella, Nicole  
Technical University of Munich  
Germany

Falloon, Pete  
Met Office Hadley Centre  
UK

Fan, Daidu  
Tongji University  
China

Fankhauser, Samuel  
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
UK/Switzerland

Field, Christopher  
Carnegie Institution of Washington  
USA

Finkel, Adam  
Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University  
USA

Fischlin, Andreas  
Terrestrial Systems Ecology Group ETH, Zürich  
Switzerland

Fitzharris, Blair  
University of Otago  
New Zealand



Forbes, Donald Bedford Institute of Oceanography Canada	Green, Donna CSIRO Australia
Ford, James McGill University Canada	Guisan, Antoine Conservatoire et Jardin botaniques de Genève Switzerland
Francou, Bernard Institut de Recherche pour le Développement France	Gyalistras, Dimitrios Terrestrial Systems Ecology Group ETH, Zürich Switzerland
Furgal, Christopher Trent University Canada	Haeberli, Wilfreid University of Zürich-Irchel Switzerland
Füssel, Hans-Martin Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research Germany	Hales, Simon University of Otago New Zealand
Gay Garcia, Carlos Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Mexico	Hall, Jim Newcastle University UK
Giannakopoulos, Christos National Observatory of Athens Greece	Hallegatte, Stephane Stanford University USA/France
Gigli, Simone OECD/Germany	Hamlet, Alan University of Washington USA
Giménez, Juan Carlos Universidad de Buenos Aires Argentina	Hanson, Clair IPCC Working Group II TSU, Met Office Hadley Centre UK
Githeko, Andrew Kenya Medical Research Institute Kenya	Harasawa, Hideo National Institute for Environmental Studies Japan
Githendu, Mukiri Ministry of Research and Technology Kenya	Harvey, Nicholas University of Adelaide Australia
Gopal, Brij Jawaharlal Nehru University India	Hauengue, Maria Ministry of Health Mozambique
Gornitz, Vivien Columbia University USA	Hay, John The University of Waikato New Zealand
Gossling, Stefan Lund University Sweden	Hemming, Deborah Met Office Hadley Centre UK
Graham, Phil Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute Sweden	

Henderson, Roderick  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research  
New Zealand

Hennessy, Kevin  
CSIRO  
Australia

Henshaw, Anne  
Bowdoin College  
USA

Hilmi, Karim  
Institut National de Recherche Halieutique  
Morocco

Hobday, Alistair  
CSIRO  
Australia

Hoegh-Guldberg, Ove  
The University of Queensland  
Australia

Honda, Yasushi  
University of Tsukuba  
Japan

Hope, Christopher  
University of Cambridge  
UK

Howden, Mark  
CSIRO Agricultural Sustainability Initiative  
Australia

Hughes, Terence  
James Cook University  
Australia

Hughes, Lesley  
Macquarie University  
Australia

Huq, Saleemul  
International Institute for Environment and Development  
UK/Bangladesh

Hutton, Guy  
Swiss Tropical Institute, Basel  
Switzerland/UK

Iglesias, Ana  
Ciudad Universitaria  
Spain

Imeson, Anton  
Commission on Geomorphological Response to Environmental  
Change  
The Netherlands

Islam, Sirajul  
University of Chittagong  
Bangladesh

Jafari, Mostafa  
Meteorological Organization  
Iran

Janetos, Tony  
The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the  
Environment  
USA

Jeppesen, Erik  
National Environmental Research Institute  
Denmark

Jetté-Nantel, Simon  
OECD/Canada

Jimenez, Blanca Elena  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México  
Mexico

Jones, Roger  
CSIRO  
Australia

Jones, Gregory  
Southern Oregon University  
USA

Ju, Hui  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science  
China

Kabat, Pavel  
International Secretariat for Dialogue on Water and Climate  
The Netherlands

Kajfež-Bogataj, Lucka  
University of Ljubljana  
Slovenia

Kandlikar, Milind  
Harvard University  
USA/Canada

Kapshe, Manmohan  
Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology  
India

Karoly, David  
University of Melbourne  
Australia/USA

Kaser, Georg  
Institut für Geographie, University of Innsbruck  
Austria

Keller, Klaus  
The Pennsylvania State University  
USA/Germany

Kenny, Gavin  
Earthwise Consulting  
New Zealand

Killmann, Wulf  
Food and Agriculture Organization/Italy

King, Darren  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research  
New Zealand

Kirilenko, Andrei  
University of North Dakota  
USA/Russia

Kjellstrom, Tord  
University of Auckland  
New Zealand/Sweden

Klein, Richard  
Stockholm Environment Institute  
Sweden/The Netherlands

Körner, Christian  
University of Basel  
Switzerland

Kovacs, Paul  
Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction  
Canada

Kovats, Sari  
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
UK

Kundzewicz, Zbigniew  
Polish Academy of Sciences  
Poland

Lakyda, Petro  
National Agrarian University of Ukraine  
Ukraine

Lal, Murari  
CESDAC  
India

Lam, Joseph  
City University of Hong Kong  
China

Lasco, Rodel  
University of the Philippines  
The Philippines

Leemans, Rik  
University of Wageningen  
The Netherlands

Lefale, Penehuro  
World Meteorological Organization/Samoa

Lemos, Maria-Carmen  
University of Michigan  
USA/Brazil

Lewis, Nancy  
University of Hawaii  
USA

Li, Shuangcheng  
Peking University  
China

Li, Congxian  
Tongji University  
China

Lien, Tran Viet  
Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology  
Vietnam

Lin, Erda  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science  
China

Liu, Chunzhen  
China Water Information Centre  
China

Liverman, Diana  
Oxford University  
UK

Lorenzoni, Irene  
University of East Anglia  
UK

Love, Geoff  
Bureau of Meteorology  
Australia

Lowe, Jason  
Met Office Hadley Centre  
UK

Lu, Xianfu  
UNDP-GEF/China

Lucht, Wolfgang  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research  
Germany

Lunn, Nick  
Environment Canada  
Canada

Ma, Zhuguo  
Chinese Academy of Sciences  
China

MacMynowski, Dena  
Stanford Institute for International Studies  
USA

Mader, Terry  
University of Nebraska  
USA

Magadza, Christopher  
University of Zimbabwe  
Zimbabwe

Magrin, Graciela  
Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia Agropecuaria  
Argentina

Major, David  
Columbia University  
USA

Malone, Elizabeth  
Joint Global Change Research Institute  
USA

Mann, Susan  
The Pennsylvania State University  
USA

Marchant, Harvey  
The Australian National University  
Australia

Marengo, José  
CPTEC/INPE  
Brazil

Markandya, Anil  
The World Bank/UK

Martin, Eric  
Météo-France, CNRM/CEN  
France

Mastrandrea, Michael  
Stanford University  
USA

Mata, Luis Jose  
Nord-Süd Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung  
Germany/Venezuela

McGregor, Glenn  
King's College, London  
UK

McInnes, Kathleen  
CSIRO  
Australia

McLean, Roger  
University of New South Wales  
Australia

Mearns, Linda  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
USA

Medany, Mahmoud  
The Central Laboratory for Agricultural Climate  
Egypt

Menne, Bettina  
WHO Regional Office for Europe/Germany

Menzel, Annette  
Technical University of Munich  
Germany

Midgley, Guy  
National Botanical Institute  
South Africa

Miller, Kathleen  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
USA

Mills, Scott  
University of Montana  
USA

Mills, Evan  
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory  
USA

Mimura, Nobuo  
Ibaraki University  
Japan

Minns, Charles Kenneth  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Canada

Mirza, Monirul Qader Environment Canada Canada/Bangladesh	Nelson, Frederick University of Delaware USA
Misselhorn, Alison University of the Witwatersrand South Africa	Neofotis, Peter Columbia Earth Institute USA
Morellato, Patricia Universidade Estadual Paulista Brazil	Niang, Isabelle University of Dakar Senegal
Moreno, Ana Rosa Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Mexico	Nicholls, Robert University of Southampton UK
Moreno, José Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha Spain	Ninh, Nguyen Huu Centre for Environment Research, Education and Development Vietnam
Morton, John University of Greenwich UK	Nobre, Carlos CPTEC-INPE Brazil
Mortsch, Linda Environment Canada Canada	Nováky, Belá Szent István University Hungary
Moser, Susanne Union of Concerned Scientists USA	Nurse, Leonard University of the West Indies Barbados
Moulik, Tushar ERM India Pvt India	Nuttall, Mark University of Alberta Canada/UK
Muir-Wood, Robert Risk Management Solutions UK	Nyong, Anthony International Development Research Centre Kenya/Nigeria
Nagy, Gustavo Universidad de la República Uruguay	O'Brien, Karen CICERO Norway
Nakalevu, Taito South Pacific Regional Environment Programme Fiji	O'Neill, Brian IIASA/USA
Nearing, Mark Southwest Watershed Research Center USA	O'Reilly, Catherine Bard College USA
Neilson, Ron US Department of Agriculture USA	Obioh, Imoh Obafemi Awolowo University Nigeria
	Ogbonna, Anthony Heriot-Watt University UK



Oki, Taikan  
University of Tokyo  
Japan

Olesen, Jørgen  
Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences  
Denmark

Oppenheimer, Michael  
Princeton University  
USA

Osman, Balgis  
Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources  
Sudan

Ouaga, Hubert N'Djafa  
Centre Régional AGRHYMET  
Niger

Palmer, Gianna  
Wesleyan University  
USA

Palutikof, Jean  
IPCC Working Group II TSU, Met Office Hadley Centre  
UK

Parish, Faizal  
Global Environment Centre  
Malaysia

Parry, Martin  
IPCC Working Group II Co-chair, Met Office Hadley  
Centre/Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College,  
University of London  
UK

Patt, Anthony  
Boston University  
USA/IIASA

Patwardhan, Anand  
Indian Institute of Technology  
India

Patz, Jonathan  
University of Wisconsin  
USA

Payet, Rolph  
Ministry of Industries and International Business  
Seychelles

Pearce, Tristan  
University of Guelph  
Canada

Pêcheux, Martin  
Université Paris VI  
France

Penny, Guy  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research  
New Zealand

Perez, Rosa  
Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical  
Services Administration  
The Philippines

Pfeiffer, Christopher  
The Pennsylvania State University  
USA

Pfister, Christian  
Universität Bern  
Switzerland

Pittock, Barrie  
CSIRO  
Australia

Price, Jeff  
California State University, Chico  
USA

Prowse, Terry  
National Water Research Institute at NHRC  
Canada

Prudhomme, Christel  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Wallingford  
UK

Pulhin, Juan  
University of the Philippines  
The Philippines

Pulwarty, Roger  
NOAA/CIRES/Climate Diagnostics Center  
USA/Trinidad and Tobago

Ragoonaden, Sachooda  
Consultant to Indian Ocean Commission  
Mauritius

Rahman, Atiq  
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies  
Bangladesh

Rawlins, Samuel  
Retired  
Trinidad and Tobago

Reeder, Tim  
Environment Agency, Thames Region  
UK

Reist, James  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Canada

Revich, Boris  
Russian Academy of Sciences  
Russia

Richels, Richard  
Electric Power Research Institute  
USA

Robinson, John  
University of British Columbia  
Canada

Rodo, Xavier  
University of Barcelona  
Spain

Rodriguez Acevedo, Rafael  
Universidad Simón Bolívar  
Venezuela

Romero Lankao, Patricia  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
USA/Mexico

Root, Terry  
Stanford University  
USA

Rose, George  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
Canada

Rosenzweig, Cynthia  
Goddard Institute for Space Studies  
USA

Rounsevell, Mark  
Université catholique de Louvain  
Belgium

Running, Steve  
University of Montana  
USA

Ruosteenoja, Kimmo  
Finnish Meteorological Institute  
Finland

Rupp-Armstrong, Susanne  
University of Southampton  
UK

Sailor, David  
Portland State University  
USA

Saito, Yoshiki  
National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and  
Technology  
Japan

Salinger, Jim  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research  
New Zealand

Saunders, Mark  
University College London  
UK

Schmidhuber, Josef  
Food and Agriculture Organization/Italy

Schneider, Stephen  
Stanford University  
USA

Schulze, Roland  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
South Africa

Scott, Michael  
Battelle Pacific Northwest National Laboratory  
USA

Scott, Daniel  
Environment Canada  
Canada

Sedjo, Roger  
Resources for the Future  
USA

Seguin, Bernard  
National Institute for Agricultural Research  
France

Sem, Graham  
UNFCCC Secretariat/Papua New Guinea

Semenov, Serguei  
Institute of Global Climate and Ecology  
Russia

Sen, Zekai  
Istanbul Technical University  
Turkey

Sharma, Ashok  
Halcrow Consulting India  
India

Shiklomanov, Igor  
State Hydrological Institute  
Russia

Shreshtha, Arun  
Government of Nepal  
Nepal

Shukla, Priyadarshi  
Indian Institute of Management  
India

Shvidenko, Anatoly  
IIASA/Russia

Smit, Barry  
University of Guelph  
Canada

Smith, Kirk  
University of California  
USA

Smith, Joel  
Stratus Consulting  
USA

Solecki, William  
Hunter College, City University of New York  
USA

Soussana, Jean-Francois  
National Institute for Agricultural Research  
France

Sparks, Tim  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Monks Wood  
UK

Spencer, Tom  
University of Cambridge  
UK

Stone, John  
IPCC Working Group II Vice-chair  
Canada

Studd, Kate  
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development  
UK

Suarez, Avelino  
Cuban Environment Agency  
Cuba

Sweeney, John  
National University of Ireland  
Ireland

Tabo, Ramadjita  
ICRISAT/Chad

Takahashi, Kiyoshi  
National Institute for Environmental Studies,  
Japan

Tarazona, Juan  
Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos  
Peru

Taylor, Anna  
Stockholm Environment Institute  
UK/South Africa

Tebaldi, Claudia  
National Center for Atmospheric Sciences  
USA

Thayyen, Renoj  
Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology  
India

Thomson, Madeleine  
Columbia University  
USA/UK

Thuiller, Wilfred  
Laboratoire d'Ecologie Alpine UMR-CNRS  
France

Tirado, Christina  
Spain

Todorov, Alexander  
Princeton University  
USA/Bulgaria

Tol, Richard  
Economic and Social Research Institute  
Ireland/The Netherlands

Toth, Ferenc  
International Atomic Energy Authority/Hungary

Travasso, Maria  
INTA  
Argentina

Tryjanowski, Piotr  
Adam Mickiewicz University  
Poland

Tubiello, Francesco Columbia University USA/IIASA/Italy	Viner, David University of East Anglia UK
Turley, Carol Plymouth Marine Laboratory UK	Vogel, Coleen University of the Witwatersrand South Africa
van de Giesen, Nick Delft University of Technology The Netherlands	Walsh, John University of Alaska USA
van Minnen, Jelle RIVM The Netherlands	Wandel, Johanna University of Guelph Canada
van Schaik, Henk UNESCO Co-operative Programme on Water and Climate The Netherlands	Warren, Rachel Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research UK
van Vuuren, Detlef Netherlands Environment Assessment Agency The Netherlands	Warrick, Richard University of Waikato New Zealand
van Ypersele, Jean-Pascal Université catholique de Louvain Belgium	Washington, Richard Oxford University UK/South Africa
Vandenberghe, Jef Vrije University The Netherlands	Watkiss, Paul Paul Watkiss Associates UK
Vaughan, David British Antarctic Survey UK	Wiegandt, Ellen Graduate Institute of International Studies Switzerland
Velichko, Andrei Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences Russia	Wilbanks, Tom Oak Ridge National Laboratory USA
Vicarelli, Marta Columbia University USA/Italy	Wilby, Robert King's College London UK
Vilhjalmsson, Hjalmar Marine Research Institute Iceland	Wolf, Tanja WHO Regional Office for Europe/Germany
Villamizar, Alicia Universidad Simón Bolívar Venezuela	Wolf, Johanna University of East Anglia UK/Germany
Vincent, Katherine University of East Anglia UK	Wong, Poh Poh National University of Singapore Singapore
	Woodroffe, Colin University of Wollongong Australia

Woodruff, Rosalie  
Australian National University  
Australia

Woodward, Alistair  
University of Auckland  
New Zealand

Wrona, Fred  
National Water Research Institute  
Canada

Wu, Qigang  
Texas A&M University  
USA/China

Wu, Shaohong  
Chinese Academy of Sciences  
China

Yamin, Farhana  
University of Sussex  
UK

Yanda, Pius  
University of Dar-es-Salaam  
Tanzania

Yohe, Gary  
Wesleyan University  
USA

Zapata-Marti, Ricardo  
UN Economic Commission for Latin American and the  
Caribbean (ECLAC)/Mexico

Zhang, Qiaomin  
South China Sea Institute of Oceanology  
China

Ziervogel, Gina  
University of Cape Town  
South Africa

Zurek, Monika  
Food and Agriculture Organization/Germany



# Appendix III: Reviewers of the IPCC WGII Fourth Assessment Report

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Note: International organisations listed at the end.

## ALGERIA

Tabet Aoul, Mahi  
Association pour la Recherche pour le Climat et  
l'Environnement (ARCE)

## ARGENTINA

Barros, Vincente Ricardo  
Ciudad Universitaria

Bischoff, Susana  
Ciudad Universitaria

Camilloni, Inés Angela  
Ciudad Universitaria

Canziani, Osvaldo F.  
IPCC Working Group II Co-chair

Carbajo, Anibal  
Universidad de Buenos Aires

Codignotto, Jorge O.  
Ciudad Universitaria

Comesaña, Claudia Maria  
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y  
Culto

Curto, Susana I.  
National Academy of Medicine

Devia, Leila  
National Institute of Industrial Technology

Kokot, Roberto  
Universidad de Buenos Aires

Murgida, Ana Maria  
University of Buenos Aires

Neiff, Juan J.  
Centro de Ecología Aplicada del Litoral

Perez Harguindeguy, Natalia  
Instituto Multidisciplinario de Biología Vegetal (UNC-CON-  
ICET)

Rusticucci, Matilde  
Universidad de Buenos Aires

Solman, Silvina  
Ciudad Universitaria

Travasso, Maria I.  
INTA

Usunoff, Eduardo  
Instituto de Hidrologie de Llanuras

Vinocur, Marta  
Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto

Wehbe, Mónica  
Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto

## AUSTRALIA

Anderson, Rod  
Department of Sustainability and Environment

Ash, Andrew  
CSIRO

Baird, Mark  
University of New South Wales

Barnett, Jon  
The University of Melbourne

Beer, Tom  
CSIRO

Beggs, Paul  
Macquarie University

Boyle, Sharon  
Planning Institute of Australia

Brunskill, Gregg  
Australian Institute of Marine Science

Chambers, Lynda  
Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre

Churchman, Susan  
Department of Environment and Heritage South

Cleland, Sam  
Bureau of Meteorology

Cocklin, Chris  
Monash University

Coleman, Anthony  
Insurance Australia Group

Collins, Dean  
Bureau of Meteorology

Crimp, Steven  
Queensland Centre for Climate Applications

Curran, Beth  
Bureau of Meteorology

Dunlop, Michael  
CSIRO

Edwards, Spencer  
Department of Environment and Heritage

Farquhar, Graham  
Australian National University

Garnham, John  
Department of Primary Industries

Gifford, Roger M.  
CSIRO

Gitay, Habiba  
Australian National University

Grace, Peter R.  
Queensland University of Technology

Green, Donna  
CSIRO

Harvey, Nicholas  
University of Adelaide

Hayman, Peter  
South Australian Research and Development Institute

Higgins, John  
Australian Greenhouse Office

Hoy, Richard  
Electricity Supply Association of Australia

Hughes, Lesley  
Macquarie University

Jones, David  
National Climate Centre

Jones, Roger  
CSIRO

Kay, Robert  
Coastal Zone Management (Australia) Pty Ltd

Kellow, Aynsley  
University of Tasmania

Kininmonth, Bill  
Australasian Climate Research

Kjellstrom, Tord  
University of Auckland

Lough, Janice  
Australian Institute of Marine Science

Lyne, Vincent  
CSIRO

Manton, Michael  
Monash University

Marshall, Paul  
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

McKibbin, Warwick  
Australian National University

McNeil, Ben  
University of New South Wales

Meinke, Holger  
Government of Queensland

Nicholls, Neville  
Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre

Pearman, Graeme  
Monash University Sustainability Centre

Pittock, Barrie  
CSIRO

Power, Scott  
Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre

Quiggin, John  
University of Queensland

Risbey, James  
Monash University

Ritman, Kim  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Saenger, Peter  
Southern Cross University

Shearman, David  
University of Adelaide

Stone, Roger  
Department of Natural Resources

Sutherst, Robert  
CSIRO

Tapper, Nigel  
Monash University

Tong, Shilu  
Queensland University of Technology

Walker, George R.  
Aon Re Australia

Walsh, Kevin  
CSIRO

Watkins, Andrew  
Australian Bureau of Meteorology

White, David H.  
ASIT Consulting

Wiles, Perry  
Bureau of Meteorology

Wilkinson, Clive  
IUCN

Williams, Stephen E  
James Cook University

Woldring, Oliver  
NSW Greenhouse Office

Woodruff, Rosalie  
Australian National University

Younus, Aboul Fazal  
The University of Adelaide

## AUSTRIA

Glatzel, Stephan  
Universität Wien

Kaser, Georg  
Institut für Geographie

Lexer, Manfred  
University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences

Pauli, Harald  
University of Vienna

Radunsky, Klaus  
Federal Environment Agency

## BANGLADESH

Admed, Ahsan Uddin  
Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP)

Islam, Rafiqul M.  
Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Karim, Mohammed F.  
Ibaraki University

## BARBADOS

Brewster, Leo  
Barbados Coastal Zone Management Unit

Mwansa, John  
Barbados Water Authority

Trotman, Adrian  
Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology

## BELGIUM

Bogaert, Johan  
Department Environment, Nature and Energy

Halloy, Stephan  
Universidad Mayor de San Andrés

Marbaix, Philippe  
Université catholique de Louvain

Vanderstraeten, Martine  
Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs

Verhasselt, Yola  
Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences

## **BENIN**

Boko, Michel  
Universite de Bourgogne

Oyede, Lucien Marc  
Université d'Abomey-Calavi

Vissin, Expédit Wilfrid  
Université d'Abomey-Calavi

Yabi, Ibouaïma Fidele  
Université d'Abomey-Calavi

## **BHUTAN**

Namgyel, Thinley  
National Environment Commission

## **BOLIVIA**

Gonzales, Javier  
Programa Nacional de Cambios Climáticos

Paz, Oscar  
National Climate Change Programme

## **BOTSWANA**

Dube, Pauline O.  
University of Botswana

## **BRAZIL**

Ambrizzi, Tercio  
Institute of Astronomy, Geophysics and Atmospheric Sciences – USP

Cardia Simoes, Jefferson  
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul

Cotrim da Cunha, Leticia  
Max-Planck-Institut für Biogeochemie

Cunha, Gilberto R.  
Embrapa-Trigo

da Cunha Bustamante, Mercedes Maria  
University of Brasilia

Fearnside, Philip M.  
Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazonia – INPA

Kahn Ribeiro, Susana  
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Lima, Magda  
Embrapa-Meio Ambiente

Marengo Orsini, Jose Antonio  
CPTEC/INPE

Moreira, Jose Roberto  
Biomass User Network (BUN )

Moutinho, Paulo  
Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia-IPAM

Pinguelli Rosa, Luis  
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Sant' Ana, Silvio Rocha  
Fundação Grupo Esquel

## **BULGARIA**

Yotova, Antoaneta  
National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology

## **CAMBODIA**

Sum, Thy  
Ministry of Environment, Department of Planning and Legal Affairs

## **CANADA**

Alder, Jacqueline  
University of British Columbia

Amiro, Brian  
University of Manitoba

Anderson, John  
Environment Canada

Atkinson, David E. NRCan	Church, Ian Yukon Government
Barber, David G. University of Manitoba	Cohen, Stewart J. University of British Columbia
Barlund, Ilona Finnish Environment Institute	Crabbé, Philippe J. Université d'Ottawa
Bass, Brad Meteorological Service of Canada	Cross, Rob. Environment Canada
Beamish, Richard J. Pacific Biological Station	Dawson, Jaime The University of Western Ontario
Beltaos, Spyros Environment Canada	de Loe, Rob University of Guelph
Bergeron, Yves Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue	Desjardins, Raymond Independent
Bernier, Pierre Canadian Forestry Service	Douglas, Allan Canadian Climate Impacts and Adaptation
Berry, Peter Health Canada	Drexhage, John International Institute for Sustainable Development
Boileau, Pierre Environment Canada	Edwards, Patti Meteorological Service of Canada
Bourque, Alain Ouranos Consortium	Etkin, David Environment Canada
Brady, Michael Canadian Forest Service	Fernandes, Richard Canada Centre for Remote Sensing
Brisbois, Benjamin Environment Canada	Fisher, David A. Geological Survey of Canada
Bruce, James P. Canadian Climate Program Board	Flannigan, Mike Canadian Forest Service
Bullock, Paul University of Manitoba	Fleming, Richard Canadian Forest Service
Burn, Donald University of Waterloo	Forbes, Donald Bedford Institute of Oceanography
Burton, Ian University of Toronto	Gajewski, Konrad University of Ottawa
Bush, Elizabeth Science and Technology Branch, Environment Canada	Gauthier, Sylvie Canadian Forest Service
Cawkwell, Fiona University of Alberta	Harvey, Danny University of Toronto



Hill, Harvey  
Agriculture Canada

Hill, Philip  
Geological Survey of Canada

Jefferies, Robert L.  
University of Toronto

Johnson, Peter G.  
University of Ottawa

Jones-Cameron, Tracy  
Natural Resources Canada

Kerr, Jeremy T.  
University of Ottawa

Kertland, Pamela  
Natural Resources Canada

Khandekar, Madhav  
Retired

Lavender, Beth  
Environmental Adaptation Research Group

Lelasseux, Stephane  
Environment Canada

Lemmen, Don  
Natural Resources Canada

Lysyshyn, Kathleen  
Canadian Forest Service

Maarouf, Abdel R.  
Environment Canada

MacDonald, Don  
Alberta Department of Environment

Malcolm, David  
Arctic Energy Alliance

Margolis, Hank  
Université Laval

McBean, Gordon  
University of Western Ontario

Mehdi, Bano  
McGill University

Michaud, Yves  
Geological Survey of Canada

Neron, Marie-Eve  
Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation – INAC

Nuttall, Mark  
University of Alberta

Ogden, Anyslie  
Government of Yukon

Percy, Kevin  
Canadian Forest Service

Price, David T.  
Canadian Forest Service

Rousseau, Alain  
Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique

Sauchyn, Dave  
University of Regina

Savard, Martine  
Geological Survey of Canada

Schallenberg, Marc  
University of Otago

Scott, Daniel  
Environment Canada

Sharp, Martin  
University of Alberta

Sheppard, Stephan  
University of British Columbia

Simonovic, Slobodan P.  
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Singh, Bhawan  
Université de Montréal

Smith, Sharon  
NRCan

Solomon, Steven  
Bedford Institute of Oceanography

Sparling, Jim  
Environmental Protection Agency

Spittlehouse, David L.  
B.C. Ministry of Forests

Stemp, Raymond  
Alberta Department of the Environment

Stone, John  
IPCC Working Group II Vice-chair

Stratton, Tana Lowen  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Streicker, John  
Yukon College

Sydneysmith, Robin  
University of British Columbia

Taylor, Robert  
Bedford Institute of Oceanography

Thompson, Ian  
Canadian Forest Service

Trishchenko, Alexander P.  
Canada Centre for Remote Sensing (CCRS)

Trofymow, Tony  
Canadian Forest Service

Vasseur, Liette  
Laurentian University

Venema, Henry  
IISD International Institute for Sustainable Development

Victor, Peter  
York University

Wall, Ellen  
University of Guelph

Wall, Geoff  
University of Waterloo

Wheaton, Elaine  
Saskatchewan Research Council

Yin, Yongyuan  
University of British Columbia

Zawar-Reza, Peyman  
University of Canterbury

Zwiers, Francis W.  
University of Victoria

## CHILE

Carrasco, Jorge  
Dirección Meteorológica de Chile

Casassa, Gino  
Centro de Estudios Científicos

Farias, Fernando  
CONAMA

## CHINA

Chen, Xiaoqiu  
Peking University

Dong, Zhaoqian  
Polar Research Institute of China

Erda, Lin  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science

Fan, Daidu  
Tongji University

Fang, Xiuqi  
Beijing Normal University

Ju, Hui  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science

Li, Congxian  
Tongji University

Li, Ke-Rang  
Chinese Academy of Sciences

Liu, Chunzhen  
China Water Information Center

Liu, Shirong  
Chinese Academy of Forestry

Liu, Yingjie  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Luo, Tianxiang  
Chinese Academy of Sciences

Ma, Shiming  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Qin, Dahe  
China Meteorological Administration

Su, Jilan  
State Oceanic Administration

Sun, Fang  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Tao, Fulu  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Wang, Bangzhong  
China Meteorological Administration

Wang, Changke  
National Climate Centre

Wang, Futang  
Academy of Meteorological Science

Wei, Xiong  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Wu, Shaohong  
Chinese Academy of Sciences

Xiao, Fengjin  
Chinese Meteorological Administration

Xie, Liyong  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Xie, Zhenghui  
Chinese Academy of Sciences

Xiong, Wei  
Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development in Agriculture

Xu, Yinlong  
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Yan, Qilun  
National Marine Environmental Monitoring Center

Yang, Xiu  
Agrometeorology Institute

Zhai, Panmao  
China Meteorological Administration

Zhao, Yong  
China Huaneng Technical Economics Research Institute

Zhao, Zong-Ci  
China Meteorological Administration

Zhou, Guangsheng  
Chinese Academy of Sciences

Zhou, Zijiang  
National Meteorological Information Centre of CMA

## COLOMBIA

Caicedo, Jose Daniel Pabon  
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Mow, June Marie  
Fundacion Providence

Pabon Caicedo, Daniel  
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Poveda, Germán  
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

## COOK ISLANDS

Carruthers, Pasha  
Environment Service

## COSTA RICA

Campos, Max  
National Meteorological Institute

## CUBA

Diaz Morejon, Cristobal Felix  
Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment

Llanes-Reguerio, Juan  
University of Havana

Planos Gutiérrez, Eduardo  
Institute of Meteorology

Rodriguez, Carlos  
Instituto de Planificación Física de Cuba

Suarez, Avelino G.  
Cuban Environment Agency

## CZECH REPUBLIC

Halenka, Tomas  
Charles University

Pretel, Jan  
Czech Hydrometeorological Institute

## DENMARK

Beier, Claus  
Risø National Laboratory

Fjeldsa, Jon  
Zoological Museum

Halsnaes, Kirsten  
Risø National Laboratory

Meltofte, Hans  
National Environmental Research Institute

Olesen, Jørgen E.  
Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences

Pejrup, Morten  
University of Copenhagen

Porter, John R.  
The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University

### **ECUADOR**

Santos, Jose Luis  
CIFIN

### **EGYPT**

El Raey, Mohamed  
Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

El Shahawy, Mohamed  
Cairo University

Ragab, Ragab  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

### **EL SALVADOR**

Munguía de Aguilar, Martha Yvette  
Ministerio del Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

### **ESTONIA**

Kadaja, Jüri  
Estonian Research Institute of Agriculture

Kont, Are  
Institute of Ecology

### **ETHIOPIA**

Tadesse, Tsegaye  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

### **EUROPE**

Erhard, Markus  
European Environment Agency

Malingreau, Jean-Paul  
European Commission – DG Joint Research Centre

Mueller, Lars  
European Commission

Spangenberg, Joachim  
Sustainable Europe Research Institute

Troen, Ib  
Environment and Climate System, European Commission

Tulkens, Philippe  
European Commission

### **FIJI**

Veitayaki, Joeli  
University of the South Pacific

### **FINLAND**

Carter, Timothy  
Finnish Environment Institute

Clarke, Majella  
Savcor Indufor Oy

Forbes, Bruce  
University of Lapland

Fronzek, Stefan  
Finnish Environment Institute

Gastgifvars, Maria  
Finnish Environment Institute

Haanpaa, Simo  
Helsinki University of Technology

Haapala, Jari  
University of Helsinki

Hakala, Kaija  
Agricultural Research Centre

Halonen, Mikko  
Gaia Consulting Oy

Hanninen, Heikki  
University of Helsinki

Hannukkala, Antti  
MTT Agrifood Research Finland

Heikinheimo, Pirkko  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Henttonen, Heikki  
Finnish Forest Research Institute

Holmstrom, Nina  
Finnish Environment Institute

Holopainen, Jarmo  
University of Kuopio

Holopainen, Toini  
University of Kuopio

Houtsonen, Lea  
The Finnish National Board of Education

Kankaanpää, Susanna  
Finnish Environment Institute

Kasurinen, Anne  
University of Kuopio

Kauppi, Pekka E.  
University of Helsinki

Kayhko, Jukka  
University of Turku

Kellomäki, Seppo  
University of Joensuu

Kivisaari, Esko  
Federation of Finnish Insurance Companies

Kortelainen, Pirkko  
Finnish Environment Institute (SKYE)

Kuoppamäki, Pasi  
Sampo plc

Kuusisto, Esko  
Finnish Environment Institute

Laiho, Raija  
Helsinki University

Lammi, Harri  
Greenpeace

Lehtonen, Heikki  
MTT Agrifood Research Finland

Luukkanen, Jyrki  
Finland Futures Research Centre, Turku School of Economics

Makipaa, Raisa  
Finnish Forest Research Institute

Makkonen, Lasse  
VTT

Martikainen, P.J.  
National Public Health Institute

Nikinmaa, Eero  
University of Helsinki

Peltonen, Lasse  
Helsinki University of Technology

Perrels, Adriaan  
Government Institute for Economic Research

Pitkanen, Heikki  
Finnish Environment Institute

Primmer, Eeva  
Finnish Environment Institute

Rosqvist, Tony  
VTT

Rousi, Matti  
Finnish Forest Research Institute

Ruosteenoja, Kimmo  
Finnish Meteorological Institute

Saarnio, Sanna  
University of Joensuu

Selin, Pirkko  
Vapo Oy

Sievanen, Tuija  
Finnish Forest Research Institute

Silvo, Kimmo  
Finnish Environment Institute

Sopanen, Sanna  
Finnish Environment Institute

Starr, Mike  
University of Helsinki

Tapio, Petri  
Finland Futures Research Center



Vapaavuori, Elina Finnish Forest Research Institute	Hequette, Arnaud Universite du Littoral
Varis, Olli Helsinki University of Technology	Juvanon du Vachat, Regis Météo-France
Vehviläinen, Bertel Finnish Environment Institute (SKYE)	Lagadec, Patrick Ecole Polytechnique
<b>FRANCE</b>	Lavelle, Patrick Institut de Recherche sur le Développement
Bachelet, Dominique Center d'Etude Spatiale du Rayonnement	Lavorel, Sandra Université Joseph Fourier
Beaugrand, Gregory University of Lille	Lenotre, Nicole BRGM
Caneill, Jean-Yves Electricité de France	Minh, Ha-Duong CNRS
Ceron, Jean-Paul CRIDEAU (Université de Limoges-CNRS-INRA)	Moutou, Francois Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments
Chastel, Claude Académie Nationale de Médecine	Paillard, Michel IFREMER
Chevallier, Pierre Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)	Paskoff, Roland Université Lumière de Lyon
Chuine, Isabelle CNRS	Petit, Michel Conseil général des technologies de l'information
Corfee-Morlot, Jan OECD Environment Directorate	Planton, Serge Meteo-France
de Marsily, Ghislain Académie des Sciences	Reiter, Paul Pasteur Institute
Deque, Michel Météo-France / CNRM	Rodney, Alan Académie des technologies
Douguedroit, Annick Université de Provence	Rousseau, Daniel Météo-France
Dubois, Ghislain Environnement Conseil (TEC)	Sanaonetti, Philippe INSERM
Empereur-Bissonnet, Pascal National Institute of Public Health Surveillance	Saugier, Bernard Paris 11 University
Gillet, Marc Mission Interministerielle de l'Effet de Serre	Tirpak, Dennis OECD
Guillaumont, Robert Académie des Sciences	

## GAMBIA

Gomez, Bernard  
Global Change Research Unit (GCRU)

## GEORGIA

Inashvili, Medea  
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources

## GERMANY

Augustin, Sabine  
Federal Environment Agency

Badeck, Franz-Werner  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research

Benndorf, Rosemarie  
Umweltbundesamt

Bruckner, Thomas  
Technical University of Berlin

Bugmann, Harald  
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

Fuentes, Ursula  
German Federal Environment Ministry

Füssel, Hans-Martin  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Gerten, Dieter  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Glauner, Reinhold  
Institute for World Forestry

Gruenewald, Uwe  
Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus

Hain, Benno  
Federal Environment Agency

Hare, William L.  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Hasse, Clemens  
Federal Environment Agency

Hoeppe, Peter  
Munich Re

Jendritzky, Gerd  
University of Freiburg

Kartschall, Karin  
Federal Environment Agency

Kistemann, Thomas  
University of Bonn

Klotz, Stefan  
Centre for Environmental Research Leipzig-Halle

Kuhn, Ingolf  
UFZ – Centre for Environmental Research

Kulesa, Margareta E.  
Mainz University of Applied Sciences

Lange, Manfred  
University of Münster

Lemke, Peter  
Alfred-Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research

Lindner, Marcus  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Lingner, Stephen  
Europäische Akademie GmbH

Löschel, Andreas  
Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS)

Lucht, Wolfgang  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Mahrenholz, Petra  
Federal Environmental Agency of Germany

Meinshausen, Malte  
NCAR

Michaelowa, Axel  
Hamburg Institute of International Economics

Morgenschweis, Gerd  
Ruhrverband (Ruhr River Association)

Münzenberg, Annette  
German Aerospace Centre

Reisinger, Andy  
Ministry for the Environment

Renn, Ortwin  
University of Stuttgart

Rosner, Stefan  
Deutscher Wetterdienst

Sauerborn, Rainer  
Heidelberg University

Schroeter, Dagmar  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Schulz, Astrid  
WBGU

Schumann, Andreas  
Ruhr-University Bochum

Schwalb, Antje  
Institut für Umweltgeologie

Schwarzer, Klaus  
Institute of Geosciences

Settele, Josef  
UFZ

Vlek, Paul  
Center for Development Research (ZEF)

Voigt, Thomas  
Federal Environment Agency

von Storch, Hans  
GKSS Research Centre

Walther, Gian-Reto  
University of Hannover

Weimer-Jehle, Wolfgang  
University of Stuttgart

Weiss, Martin  
Federal Environment Agency

Welp, Martin  
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Windhorst, Wilhelm  
Kiel University

Wurzler, Sabine  
North-Rhine Westphalia State Environment Agency

## **GHANA**

Fobil, Julius  
University of Ghana

## **GREECE**

Matzarakis, Andreas  
Universität Freiburg

Sarafidis, Yannis  
National Observatory of Athens

Seferlis, Miltiadis  
Greek Biotope / Wetland Centre

## **HUNGARY**

Balint, Gabor  
Hydrological Institute

## **INDIA**

Alakkat, Unnikrishnan  
National Institute of Oceanography

Bhadwal, Suruchi  
The Energy and Resources Institute

Bhandari, Preety  
TERI

Bhattacharya, Sumana  
NATCOM Project Management

Chander, Subhash  
TERI

Dhiman, R.C.  
Malana Research Centre

Gopal, Brij  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Gosain, A.K.  
IIT Delhi

Kapshe, Manmohan  
Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology

Kelkar, Ulka  
TERI

Mruthyunjaya, Mr.  
National Agricultural Technology Project, ICAR

Nambi, A.  
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

Narayanan, Krishnan  
IITB

Parikh, Jyoti  
Integrated Research and Action for Development

Parthasarthy, D.  
IITB, Mumbai

Ravindranath, N.H.  
Indian Institute of Sciences

Roy, Joyashree  
Jadavpur University

Sharma, C.  
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Sharma, Upasna  
Indian Institute of Technology

Shukla, Priyadarshi  
Indian Institute of Management

Srinivasan, Govindarajan  
India Meteorological Department

Unnikrishnan, A.S.  
National Institute of Oceanography

Upasna, Sharma  
Indian Institute of Technology

Upreti, Dinesh C.  
Indian Agricultural Research Institute

## **INDONESIA**

Adiningsih, Erna  
National Institute of Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN)

Anshari, Gusti  
Tanjungpura University

## **IRAN**

Rahimi, Mohammad  
Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization

## **IRELAND**

Cullen, Elizabeth  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Donnelly, Alison  
Environmental Protection Agency

Goodman, Pat  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Holden, Nicholas  
University College Dublin

McElwain, Laura  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

McGovern, Frank  
Environmental Protection Agency

Murphy, Conor  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

O'Brien, Phillip  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Sweeney, John  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Tol, Richard S. J.  
Economic and Social Research Institute, Ireland

## **ISRAEL**

Issar, Aire S.  
Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Lavee, Hanoch  
Bar-Ilan University

Safriel, Uriel N.  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Saltz, David  
Ben Gurion University

## **ITALY**

Bindi, Marco  
DISAT-UNIFI

Campostrini, Pierpaolo  
CORILA

Colacino, Michele  
ISAC-CNR

da Mosto, Jane  
CORILA

Dragoni, Walter  
Università di Perugia

Frezzotti, Massimo  
ENEA

Killmann, Wulf  
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Lionello, Piero  
University of Lecce

Lorenzo, Genesisio  
Institute of Biometeorology, National Research Council

Maracchi, Giampiero  
Institute of Biometeorology

Mariotti, Annarita  
ENEA Climate Section

Nanni, Teresa  
National Research Council

Petriccione, Bruno  
National Forest Service

Reichstein, Markus  
University of Tuscia

Ribera d'Alcala, Maurizio  
Stazione Zoologica 'Anton Dohrn'

## JAMAICA

Clayton, Anthony  
University of the West Indies

## JAPAN

Ando, Mitsuru  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Fukushima, Takehiko  
University of Tsukuba

Harasawa, Hideo  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Hayami, Hitoshi  
Keio University

Hisajima, Naoto  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ichinose, Toshiaki  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Itoh, Kiminori  
Yokohama National University

Kabuto, Michinori  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Kawashima, Hiroyuki  
University of Tokyo

Kayanne, Hajime  
University of Tokyo

Kobayashi, Hideyuki  
Research Coordinator for Housing Information System

Matsui, Tetsuya  
Hokkaido Research Centre

Mikami, Masao  
Meteorological Research Institute

Morisugi, Hisayoshi  
Tohoku University

Nakagawa, Mitsuhiro  
Ibaraki University

Omasa, Kenji  
University of Tokyo

Onuma, Ayumi  
Keio University

Sasaki, Akihiko  
Fukushima Pref. Authority

Shinoda, Masato  
Tottori University

Takahashi, Kiyoshi  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Tanaka, Nobuyuki  
Regeneration Process Laboratory Forestry and Forest Products  
Research Institute

Tsunekawa, Atsushi  
Arid Land Research Center, Tottori University

Yamaguchi, Mitsutsune  
Teikyo University

Yamano, Hiroya  
National Institute for Environmental Studies

Yokoki, Hiromune  
Ibaraki University

Yokozawa, Masayuki  
National Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences

Yoshino, Masatoshi  
Retired

## **KENYA**

Githeko, Andrew  
Kenya Medical Research Institute

Obura, David  
CORDIO East Africa

Opondo, Mary Magdalene  
University of Nairobi

Tole, Mwakio P.  
Kenyatta University

Wandiga, Shem  
Kenya National Academy of Sciences

## **MADAGASCAR**

Ramiandrisoa, Vohanginiriana Anne Marie  
Madagascar Meteorological Office

## **MALAWI**

Bulirani, Alex  
Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment

Kamdonyo, Donald Reuben  
Director of Meteorological Services

## **MALDIVES**

Majeed, Abdullahi  
Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water

Musthaq, Fathimath  
Williams College

## **MALI**

Sokona, Youba  
Sahel and Sahara Observatory (OSS)

## **MAURITIUS**

Prithviraj, Booneeady  
Mauritius Meteorological Services

Ragoonaden, Sachooda  
Consultant to Indian Ocean Commission

## **MEXICO**

Condé, Cecilia  
Ciudad Universitaria

Flores Montalvo, Andrés  
Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE)

Lluch-Belda, Daniel  
Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noreste, S.C.

Magaña Rueda, Victor  
Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM)

Martinez, Julia  
Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE)

Martínez-Meyer, Enrique  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Matus Kramer, Arnoldo  
Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE)

Oropeza, Oralia  
Ciudad Universitaria

Osornio Vargas, Alvaro  
Ciudad Universitaria

## **MONGOLIA**

Batima, Punsalmaa  
Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology

## **NEPAL**

Adhikary, Sharad P.  
Himalayan Climate Centre

## **THE NETHERLANDS**

Abbink, Oscar  
TNO B&O

Bavinck, Maarten  
University of Amsterdam

Bouwer, Laurens Vrije Universiteit	Martens, Pim Maastricht University
Brinkman, Robert Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN	Metzger, Marc Wageningen University
Bruggink, Jos Netherlands Energy Research Foundation	Misdorp, Robert National Institute for Coastal and Marine Management
Clabbers, Bas Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	Posch, Maximilian RIVM
de Ronde, John Delft Hydraulics	Reggiani, Paolo Delft Hydraulics
de Wit, Marcel Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management	Salomons, Wim University of Amsterdam
Dietz, A.J. University of Amsterdam	Stive, Marcel J.F. Waterloopkundig Laboratorium/Delft Hydraulics
Giller, Ken Wageningen University	Swart, Rob RIVM
Haanstra, Hayo Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	van Aalst, Maarten Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre
Hettelingh, Jean-Paul National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (MNP-RIVM)	van de Giesen, Nick Delft University of Technology
Hilhorst, Thea Wageningen University	van der Meulen, Frank National Institute for Coastal and Marine Management Rijkswaterstaat-RIKZ
Jonk, Gerie Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment	van Minnen, Jelle G. RIVM
Kamil, Sasja Cordaid	van Schaik, Henk UNESCO Co-operative Programme on Water and Climate
Klein Tank, Albert Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute	Verhagen, Jan A. Plant Research International
Klok, Lisette KNMI	Vos, Claire Alterra Institute
Kram, Tom Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (MNP-RIVM)	<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>
Kwadijk, Jaap WL Delfthydraulics	Baxter, Kay Ministry for the Environment
Labohm, Hans H.J. Netherlands Institute of International Relations	Becken, Susanne Landcare Research
Marchand, Marcel Delft Hydraulics	Becker, Julia Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences



Bell, Robert  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Collins, Eva  
University of Waikato

Dymond, Stuart  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade

Fairbairn, Paul L  
SOPAC South Pacific Applied Geoscience

Gray, Warren  
Ministry for the Environment

Hales, Simon  
University of Otago

Hall, Alistair  
HortResearch

Hannah, John  
University of Otago

Hay, John  
University of Waikato

Hughey, Ken  
Lincoln University

Kenny, Gavin J.  
Earthwise Consulting Ltd

Kerr, Suzi  
Motu Economic and Public Policy Research Institute

King, Darren  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Larsen, Howard  
Ministry for the Environment

Lawrence, Judy  
Climate Change National Science Strategy Committee

Lawson, Wendy  
University of Canterbury

Maclaren, Piers  
Piers Maclaren & Associates Ltd

McKerchar, Alastair  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Mullan, A. Brett  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Plume, Helen  
Ministry for the Environment

Porteous, Alan  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Power, Vera  
Ministry for the Environment

Purdie, Jennifer  
University of Waikato

Rys, Gerald  
Ministry of Research, Science and Technology

Saggar, Surinder  
Landcare Research

Stephens, Peter  
Ministry for the Environment

Stroombergen, Adolf  
Infometrics

Waugh, John Robert  
Opus International Consultants Ltd.

Weaver, Sean  
Victoria University of Wellington

Whitehead, David  
Landcare Research

Wilson, Toni  
Ministry for the Environment

Woodward, Alistair  
University of Auckland

Wratt, David  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

## **NIGER**

Amani, Abou  
AGRHYMET Regional Center

## **NIGERIA**

Adejuwon, James O.  
Obafemi Awolowo University

Antia, Effiom E.  
University of Calabar

Nyong, Anthony  
International Development Research Centre

## NORWAY

Aaheim, Hans Asbjørn  
Center for International Climate and Environmental Research

Andersen, Cathrine  
Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning

Asphjell, Torgrim  
Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT)

Christophersen, Oyvind  
Ministry of Environment

Dalen, Linda  
Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management

Eriksen, Siri  
Center for International Climate and Environmental Research

Forland, Eirik J.  
Norwegian Meteorological Institute

Gabrielsen, Geir Wing  
Norwegian Polar Institute

Glasser, Trond Jorgen  
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Hagen, Jon Ove  
University of Oslo

Hannesson, Rögnvaldur  
Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration

Haraldsen, Vivil  
Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research

Hoel, Alf Håkon  
University of Tromsø

Hofgaard, Annika  
Norwegian Institute for Nature Research

Holmen, Kim  
Norwegian Polar Institute

Instones, Arne  
Instones Consulting Engineers

Isaksson, Elisabeth  
Norwegian Polar Institute

Kolshus, Hans  
Norwegian Pollution Control Authority

O'Brien, Karen  
Center for International Climate and Environmental Research

Okstad, Elin  
Norwegian Pollution Control Authority

Pavlov, Vladimir  
Norway Polar Institute

Roald, Lars Andreas  
Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate

Sakshaug, Egil  
NTNU

Solberg, Birger  
Norwegian University of Life Sciences

West, Jennifer Joy  
Center for International Climate and Environmental Research

Winther, Jan-Gunnar  
Norwegian Polar Institute

## OMAN

Al-Kharoosi, Ahmed bin Saeed  
Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources

## PAKISTAN

Akhtar, Nadia  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Goheer, Arif  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Iqbal, Mohsin  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Khan, Arshad  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Mudasser, Muhammed  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Niazi, Mahjabeen  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Raza, Shoab  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Shahid, Imran  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

Sheikh, Munir  
Global Change Impact Studies Centre

### **PANAMA**

Sempris, Emilio  
CATHALAC

### **PERU**

Angulo Villarreal, Lenkiza  
Intermediate Technology Development Group – ITDG

Encinas Caceres, Carla  
Consejo Nacional del Ambiente – CONAM

Garcia Vargas, Julio  
Consejo Nacional del Ambiente – CONAM

Guerra, Antonio Humberto  
Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia

Iturregui, Patricia  
Consejo Nacional de Medio Ambiente

### **PHILIPPINES**

Lansigan, Felino  
University of the Philippines Los Baños

Tibig, Lourdes  
PAGASA

### **POLAND**

Blazejczyk, Krzysztof  
Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization

Jania, Jacek A.  
University of Silesia in Katowice

Kedziora, Andrzej  
Polish Academy of Sciences

Ozga-Zielinski, Bogdan  
Institute of Meteorology and Water Management

Ryszkowski, Lech  
Polish Academy of Sciences

### **PORTUGAL**

Casimiro, Elsa  
University of Lisbon

das Neves, Luciana  
University of Porto

Figueira de Sousa, João  
Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Freitas, Maria Helena  
Universidade de Coimbra

Paiva, Maria Rosa  
Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Ramos Pereira, Ana  
University of Lisbon

Santos, Filipe Duarte  
University of Lisbon

### **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Chae, Yeo Ra  
Korea Environment Institute

Kim, Suam  
Pukyong National University

Kwon, Won Tae  
Korea Meteorological Administration

Lee, Hee Il  
Korean National Institute of Health

Lee, Hyong Sun  
Korea Institute of Environmental Science and Technology

Seong, Ki Tack  
National Fisheries Research and Development Institute

Shin, Young Hack  
Korean National Institute of Health

Sim, Ou Bae  
Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements

### **ROMANIA**

Boroneant, Constanta  
National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology

Mares, Ileana  
National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology

**RUSSIA**

Demin, Vladimir  
Kurchatov Institute

Golub, Alexander  
Environmental Defense

Groisman, Pavel (Pasha)  
National Climate Data Center

Gytarsky, Michael  
Institute of Global Climate and Ecology

Inсарov, Gregory  
Institute of Global Climate and Ecology

Kattsov, Vladimir  
Voeikov Main Geophysical Observatory

Kirilenko, Andrei  
University of North Dakota

Ogorodov, Stanislav  
Moscow State University

Sirin, Andrey  
Russian Academy of Sciences

Tsaturov, Yuri  
Russian Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environment Monitoring

**SAINT LUCIA**

Springer, Cletus  
Impact Consultancy Services Inc.

**SENEGAL**

Sarr, Abdoulaye  
Service Meteorologique National (DMN)

**SEYCHELLES**

Payet, Rolph  
Ministry of Industries and International Business

**SINGAPORE**

Wong, Poh Poh  
National University of Singapore

**SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

Lapin, Milan  
Comenius University

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Archer, Emma  
University of the Witwatersrand

Craig, Marlies  
Medical Research Council of South Africa

Otter, Luanne  
University of the Witwatersrand

Reason, Chris  
University of Cape Town

Scholes, Robert J.  
CSIR

Tadross, Mark  
University of Cape Town

Tanser, Frank  
Medical Research Council

Vogel, Coleen  
University of the Witwatersrand

von Maltitz, Graham  
CSIR

Ziervogel, Gina  
University of Cape Town

**SPAIN**

Alonso, Sergio  
University of the Balearic Islands

Anadon, Ricardo  
University of Oviedo

Gallardo Lancho, Juan F.  
CSIC

García-Herrera, Ricardo  
Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Llasat Botija, Maria-Carmen  
University of Barcelona

Llorens, Laura  
University of Girona

Martínez Chamorro, Jorge  
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente

Martinez Lope, Concepcion  
Spanish Bureau for Climate Change (OECC)

Mínguez, Ines  
Ciudad Universitaria

Pardo Buendía, Mercedes  
University Carlos III of Madrid

Peñuelas, Josep  
Center for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications

Picatoste Ruggeroni, José Ramón  
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente

Ribera, Pedro  
Universidad Pablo de Olavide

Rodo, Xavier  
University of Barcelona

Rodriguez Alvarez, Dionisio  
Xunta de Galicia

Rodriguez-Fontal, Alberto  
Ministry of Environment

Vilas Martin, Federico  
Universidad de Vigo

Wilson, Robert J.  
Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Yabar Sterling, Ana  
Universidad Complutense de Madrid

## **SRI LANKA**

Basnayake, Senaka  
Centre for Climate Change Studies

Emmanuel, Rohinton  
University of Moratuwa

Munasinghe, Mohan  
Munasinghe Institute for Development

Ratnasiri, Janaka  
Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science

## **SUDAN**

Awad, Nadir  
Partners in Environmental Sustainability

Beshir, Mohamed El Mahdi  
Consultant

El Wakeel, Ahmed Suliman  
National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

## **SWEDEN**

Albihn, Ann  
National Veterinary Institute of Sweden

Andrén, Olof  
Department of Soil Science

Bärring, Lars  
Lund University

Berglund, Linda  
Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Bergström, Sten  
Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute

Billberger, Magnus  
Swedish Road Administration

Boqvist, Sofia  
National Veterinary Institute of Sweden

Carlsson-Kanyama, Annika  
Royal Institute of Technology

Eckersten, Henrik  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Eriksson, Hillevi  
Swedish Forest Agency

Fredriksson, Dag  
Geological Survey of Sweden

Graham, Phil  
Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute

Kjellstrom, Erik  
Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute

Knutsson, Ida  
The Swedish National Institute of Public Health

Lidskog, Rolf  
Örebro University

Lillieskold, Marianne Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Clot, Bernard MeteoSwiss
Lind, Bo Swedish Geotechnical Institute	Elsasser, Hans University of Zurich
Lindgren, Elisabet Stockholm University	Fuhrer, Juerg Agroscope
Lokrantz, Hanna Geological Survey of Sweden	Grabs, Wolfgang World Meteorological Organization
Lundblad, Mattias Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Haeberli, Wilfreid University of Zurich-Irchel
Molau, Ulf University of Gothenburg	Heck, Pamela Swiss Re
Morner, Nils Axel Paleogeophysics and Geodynamics, Stockholm University	Holm, Patricia University of Basel
Näslund-Landenmark, Barbro Swedish Rescue Services Agency	Koerner, Christian University of Basel
Olsson, Mats Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Lang, Herbert Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH)
Rummukainen, Markku Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute	Romero, José Office Federal de l'Environnement, des Forêts et du Paysage
Rydell, Bengt Swedish Geotechnical Institute	Scherer-Lorenzen, Michael ETH Zürich Institute of Plant Science
Schipper, Lisa IWMI	
Sparrenbom, Charlotte Swedish Geotechnical Institute	<b>THAILAND</b> Chalermpong, Angkana Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Sternberg, Susanna Leverin National Veterinary Institute of Sweden	Dolcemascolo, Glenn Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
Ugglå, Ylva Örebro University	Garivait, Savitri King Mongkut's University of Technology
Wahlander, Johan Swedish Board of Agriculture	Henocque, Yves Thailand Department of Fisheries
Weyhenmeyer, Gesa Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Hungspreugs, Manuwadi Chulalongkorn University
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	Jarupongsakul, Thanawat Chulalongkorn University
Buerki, Rolf College of Secondary Education of St. Gallen	Lebel, Louis Chiang Mai University

Limmeechokchai, Bundit  
Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology

Manomaipiboon, Kobkaew  
Mahidol University

Pumijumnong, Nathsuda  
Mahidol University

Snidvongs, Anond  
Chulalongkorn University

Tangtham, Nipon  
Kasetsart University

Tummakird, Aree Wattana  
Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and  
Planning (ONEP)

## **TOGO**

Ajavon, Ayite-Lo  
Universite de Benin

## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

Aaron, Arlene  
Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment

## **TURKEY**

Katircioglu, Rezzan  
Ministry of Environment and Forestry

Sensoy, Serhat  
Turkish State Meteorological Service

## **UGANDA**

Bazira, Eliphaz  
Ministry of Water and Environment

Drichi, Paul  
Forest Department

## **UK**

Agnew, Maureen  
University of East Anglia

Allison, Edward  
University of East Anglia

Balzter, Heiko  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

Barlow, Jos  
Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Conservation

Benson, Charlotte  
Independent

Berry, Pam  
University of Oxford

Betts, Richard  
Met Office Hadley Centre

Boucher, Olivier  
Hadley Centre Met Office

Brooks, Nick  
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research

Cannell, Melvin G.R.  
Retired

Catovsky, Sebastian  
HM Treasury

Challinor, Andrew  
Centre for Global Atmospheric Modelling (CGAM)

Clay, Ed  
Overseas Development Institute  
UK

Collins, Matthew  
Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research

Connell, Richenda  
UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)

Convey, Peter  
British Antarctic Survey

Conway, Declan  
University of East Anglia

Cornell, Sarah  
University of Bristol

Crabbe, M. James  
University of Reading

Crick, Humphrey  
British Trust for Ornithology

Curran, James  
Scottish Environment Protection Agency



Dessai, Suraje Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research	Hemming, Deborah Met Office Hadley Centre
Dlugolecki, Andrew F. Consultant	Hindmarsh, Richard British Antarctic Survey
Dowdeswell, Julian University of Cambridge	Hope, Christopher University of Cambridge
Ekström, Marie University of East Anglia	Hossell, Jo Sustainable Land Management – ADAS
Falloon, Pete Met Office Hadley Centre	House, Jo University of Bristol
Few, Roger University of East Anglia	Ingram, John Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford
Fowler, Hayley University of Newcastle	Jackson, Derek University of Ulster
Gillett, Nathan University of East Anglia	Jeffrey, Paul Cranfield University
Goodess, Clare University of East Anglia	Jenkins, Geoff Met Office Hadley Centre
Grime, John Philip University of Sheffield	Jogireddy, Venkata Ramesh Met Office Hadley Centre
Grimmond, C Sue B. King's College London	Keatinge, W.R. University College London
Gwynne, Robert University of Birmingham	Kelly, Mick University of East Anglia
Haines, Andrew London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	Kilsby, Chris University of Newcastle upon Tyne
Hall, Jim University of Newcastle upon Tyne	Kohler, Jonathan Cambridge University
Hanson, Clair IPCC Working Group II TSU, Met Office Hadley Centre	Kovats, R. Sari London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Harley, Mike English Nature	Levermore, Geoff UMIST
Harrison, Paula A. University of Oxford	Liverman, Diana Oxford University
Hawkins, Stephen The Marine Biological Association of the UK	Livermore, Matt University of East Anglia
Haylock, Malcolm University of East Anglia	Lorenzoni, Irene Centre for Environmental Risk (CER)

Lowe, Jason  
Met Office Hadley Centre

Marsh, Terry  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

Masters, Greg  
Climate Change Research Initiative

Matthews, Robin  
Macaulay Institute

McFadden, Loraine  
Middlesex University

McGranahan, Gordon  
IIED

McGregor, Glenn  
King's College, London

McKenzie Hedger, Merylyn  
Environment Agency

Morecroft, Michael  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

Morse, Andy  
University of Liverpool

Morton, John  
University of Greenwich

Moss, Brian  
Liverpool University

Muir, Magdalena  
Environmental and Legal Services Ltd.

Murray, Tavi  
University of Wales

Nadarajah, Chitra  
Hampshire County Council

Naess, Lars Otto  
University of East Anglia

Naylor, Larissa  
Environment Agency and University of East Anglia.

New, Mark  
Oxford University

Nicholls, Robert J.  
Southampton University

Paavola, Jouni  
University of Leeds

Palutikof, Jean P.  
IPCC Working Group II TSU, Met Office Hadley Centre

Parry, Martin  
IPCC WGII Co-chair, Met Office Hadley Centre/Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College, University of London

Peck, Lloyd  
British Antarctic Survey

Pelling, Mark  
King's College London

Penning-Rowsell, Edmund  
Middlesex University

Perry, Allen  
University of Wales Swansea

Prentice, Colin  
University of Bristol

Prudhomme, Christel  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

Ravetz, Joe  
Manchester University

Reid, Chris  
Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science

Reynard, Nick  
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Oxford

Richter, Goetz  
Rothamsted Research

Rogers, David  
Oxford University

Scholze, Marko  
University of Bristol

Sheppard, Charles  
University of Warwick

Shove, Elizabeth  
University of Sunderland

Skea, Jim F.  
University of Sussex

Smith, David  
Oxford University

Spencer, Tom  
University of Cambridge

Stone, Daithi  
University of Oxford

Stott, Peter  
Met Office Hadley Centre

Street, Roger  
UK Climate Impacts Programme OUCE

Thomas, Chris D.  
University of York

Thomas, C.J.  
University of Durham

Thomas, David  
University of Oxford

Thornton, Philip  
International Livestock Research Institute

Tompkins, Emma  
Oxford University Centre for the Environment

Toulmin, Camilla  
International Institute for Environment and Development

Townend, Ian  
HR Wallingford

Turley, Carol  
Plymouth Marine Laboratory

Turner, Kerry  
University of East Anglia

Turnpenny, John  
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research

Twigg, John  
University College London

Usher, Michael  
University of Stirling

van der Linden, Paul  
IPCC Working Group II TSU, Met Office Hadley Centre

Viles, Heather A.  
University of Oxford

Viner, David  
University of East Anglia

Wadhams, Peter  
Cambridge University

Walling, Des  
University of Exeter

Warren, Rachel  
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research

Warrilow, David  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Washington, Richard  
Oxford University

Wheeler, Tim  
The University of Reading

Wilby, Robert  
King's College London

Willows, Robert  
UK Environment Agency

Wisner, Ben  
London School of Economics and Benfield Hazard Research  
Centre

Wood, Paul  
Loughborough University

Wood, Richard  
Met Office Hadley Centre

Woodward, F. Ian  
University of Sheffield

## URUGUAY

Baethgen, Walter  
International Fertilizer Development Center

## USA

Abdalati, Waleed  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Anderson, Cheryl  
University of Hawaii Social Science Research Institute

Anyah, Richard  
Rutgers University

Appling, Alison  
Carnegie Institution of Washington

Baer, Paul  
Stanford University

Barrett, Ko  
USAID – Global Climate Change Program

Barry, Roger  
University of Colorado

Berner, James  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Bernstein, Lenny  
IPIECA

Bero, James  
BASF

Biagini, Bonizella  
National Environmental Trust

Bierbaum, Rosina  
University of Michigan

Boesch, Donald  
University of Maryland

Bolton, Suzanne  
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

Booker, Fitzgerald  
North Carolina State University

Bounoua, Lahouari  
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Brown, Jerry  
International Permafrost Association

Buddemeier, Robert  
Kansas University

Burkett, Virginia  
U.S. Geological Survey

Cahill, Kim Nicholas  
Stanford University

Cahoon, Donald  
U.S. Geological Survey

Calder, John  
NOAA

Campbell, David  
Michigan State University

Canes, Michael  
Logistics Management Institute

Cantral, Ralph  
NOAA

Carey, Mark  
University of California, Berkeley

Carr, David  
University of California

Casman, Elizabeth  
Carnegie-Mellon

Cassman, Kenneth  
University of Nebraska

Changnon, Dave  
Northern Illinois University

Chapin III, Terry  
University of Alaska

Chen, Xiongwen  
Alabama A & M University

Christensen, Norman  
Duke University

Christy, John  
University of Alabama

Coelho, Dana  
University of Maryland

Desanker, Paul  
Pennsylvania State University

Comiso, Josefino  
NASA GSFC

Cutter, Susan  
University of South Carolina

Cyr, Ned  
NOAA

Dale, Virginia H.  
Oak Ridge National Laboratory

De Canio, Stephen  
University of California at Santa Barbara

DeAngelo, Benjamin  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dokken, David USGCRP	Goklany, Indur Department of the Interior
Doran, Peter University of Illinois at Chicago	Gonzalez, Patrick The Nature Conservancy
Dukes, Jeff University of Massachusetts	Gornitz, Vivien Columbia University
Dyurgerov, Mark University of Colorado	Graedel, T.E. AT&T Bell Laboratories
Eakin, Hallie University of California	Guntenspergen, Glenn U.S. Geological Survey
Ebi, Kristie L. Exponent Inc	Gurwick, Noel Carnegie Institution
Emanuel, William Oak Ridge National Laboratory	Haas, Peter University of Massachusetts Amherst
Epstein, Paul R. Harvard Medical School	Hakkarinen, Charles Electric Power Research Institute
Everett, John Ocean Associates, Incorporated	Hall, Kimberly Michigan State University
Ewel, Katherine Retired	Hamnett, Michael P. Social Science Research Institute
Forest, Chris E. Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Hansen, Lara World Wildlife Fund
Fox, Douglas G. Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere (CIARA)	Hanson, Paul J. Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Furlow, John U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Harriss, Robert NCAR/ESIG
Galvin, Kathleen Colorado State University	Harwell, Mark Harwell Gentile & Associates, LC
Gant, Mary Environmental Protection Agency	Hassol, Susan Independent
Giambelluca, Thomas University of Hawaii	Hayhoe, Katharine Texas Tech University
Glantz, Michael H. National Center for Atmospheric Research	Hegerl, Gabi Duke University
Gleick, Peter Pacific Institute	Hinzman, Larry University of Alaska, Fairbanks
Gnanadesikan, Anand Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory Princeton	Howe, Charles University of Colorado

Huntington, Thomas G.  
U.S. Geological Survey

Jacinthe, Pierre-André  
The Ohio State University

Jackson, Robert B.  
Duke University

Jacobs, Katherine  
University of Arizona

Joughin, Ian  
University of Washington

Kasischke, Eric  
University of Maryland

Kates, R.W. (Bob)  
Independent

Kavvas, M. Levent  
University of California

Kennedy, Victor  
University of Maryland

Kheshgi, Haroon  
Exxon Mobil Research and Engineering Company

Kimball, Bruce  
USDA Agricultural Research Service

Kinney, Patrick  
Columbia Mailmann School of Public Health

Kirshen, Paul  
Tufts University, Medford

Knight, Greg  
The Pennsylvania State University

Knowlton, Kim  
Columbia University

Knutson, Cody L.  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Krupnick, Alan  
Resources for the Future

Lawrimore, Jay  
NOAA

Leary, Neil  
AIACC

Lee, Henry  
John F. Kennedy School of Government

Lee, Kai N.  
Williams College

Leggett, Jane  
Environmental Protection Agency

Leiserowitz, Tony  
Decision Research

Levinson, David  
NOAA

Lewandrowski, Jan  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Lim, Bo  
United Nations Development Programme

Lins, Harry F.  
U.S. Geological Survey

Liotta, Peter  
Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy

Lipp, Erin K.  
University of Georgia

Lofgren, Brent  
NOAA

MacCracken, Michael C.  
Climate Institute

MacMynowski, Dena  
Stanford Institute for International Studies

Mahowald, Natalie  
NCAR

Major, David C.  
Columbia University

Malone, Elizabeth  
Joint Global Change Research Institute

Martello, Marybeth  
Harvard University

Maynard, Nancy  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

McCabe, Gregory  
U.S. Geological Survey

McCarthy, James J.  
Harvard University

McGuire, D. Anthony  
University of Alaska

Miles, Edward L.  
University of Washington

Mills, Evan  
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Milly, Chris  
U.S. Geological Survey

Mooney, Harold  
Stanford University

Moore, Thomas  
Hoover Institution

Morgan, Jack A.  
USDA-ARS Rangeland Resources Research Unit

Moser, Susanne C.  
Union of Concerned Scientists

Mote, Philip  
University of Washington

Murray, Maribeth  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Nadelhoffer, Knute J.  
Marine Biological Laboratory

Nierenberg, Claudia  
NOAA Office of Global Programs

North, Gerald  
Texas A&M University

O'Brien, Jim  
Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction

Ojima, Dennis  
Colorado State University

Padgham, Jon  
US Agency for International Development

Parkinson, Claire  
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Parmesan, Camille  
University of Texas

Parris, Tom  
CIESIN (Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network)

Patt, Anthony  
Boston University

Pielke Jr., Roger  
Colorado State University

Polley, Wayne  
Agricultural Research Service

Polsky, Colin  
Clark University

Potter, Bruce  
Island Resources Foundation

Price, Jeff  
American Bird Conservancy

Pulwarty, Roger S.  
NOAA/CIRES/Climate Diagnostics Center

Raskin, Paul D.  
Stockholm Environment Institute

Reed, Denise  
University of New Orleans

Reilly, John M.  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Rind, David  
National Aeronautics and Space Agency

Robock, Alan  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Rockefeller, Steven C.  
Earth Charter

Romanovsky, Vladimir  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Rose, Steven  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Rosenberg, Norman J.  
Batelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories

Rosenthal, Joyce  
Columbia University

Rosenzweig, Cynthia  
NASA/GISS



Sailor, David J.  
Portland State University

Scambos, Ted  
University of Colorado

Scheraga, Joel  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Schimmel, David  
National Center for Atmospheric Research

Schmandt, Jurgen  
University of Texas-Austin

Schwartz, Mark  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Schwing, Franklin B.  
NOAA

Scott, Michael J.  
Battelle Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Seielstad, George  
University of North Dakota

Shafer, Sarah  
U.S. Geological Survey

Shea, Eileen L.  
East-West Center

Sheffner, Ed  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Shortle, James  
The Pennsylvania State University

Siddiqi, Toufiq  
Global Environment and Energy in the 21st Century

Small, Christopher  
Columbia University

Smith, Joel B.  
Stratus Consulting Inc.

Smith, Laurence  
UCLA

Solomon, Allen M.  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Sorooshian, Soroosh  
University of California Irvine

Southgate, Douglas  
Ohio State University

Spanger-Siegfried, Erika  
Global Environment Program

Steele, John  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Svoboda, Mark  
NDM, Nebraska

Takle, Eugene  
Iowa State University

Thomas, Robert  
NASA/Wallops Flight Center

Titus, James  
US EPA

Tonn, Bruce  
University of Tennessee

Trenberth, Kevin  
National Center for Atmospheric Research

Trtanj, Juli M.  
NOAA, Office of Global Programs

Tubiello, Francesco  
Columbia University/IIASA

Tucker, Compton  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Valette-Silver, Nathalie  
NOAA

Varady, Robert  
University of Arizona

Vranes, Kevin  
Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University

Walker, Dan  
Office of Science and Technology Policy

Wang, James S.  
Environmental Defense

Watson, Chuck  
Kinetic Analysis Corporation

Webster, Mort D.  
MIT

Weller, Gunther  
University of Alaska

Weltzin, Jake  
University of Tennessee

West, J. Jason  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Wettstein, Justin  
University of Washington

Wilkinson, Robert  
University of California, Santa Barbara

Winkler, Julie A.  
Michigan State University

Winner, Darrell  
US EPA Office of Policy

Wright, Evelyn  
Independent

Yarnal, Brent  
Pennsylvania State University

Yoffe, Shira  
US Department of State

Yoshikawa, Kenji  
UAF

Zarin, Dr. Daniel J.  
University of Florida

Zeldis, John  
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

Zimmerman, Rae  
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Ziska, Lewis H.  
USDA-ARS

## **UZBEKISTAN**

Azimov, Shavkat  
Institute of Tajik Academy of Sciences

## **VENEZUELA**

Mata, Luis Jose  
Nord-Sued Zentrum fur Enmtwicklungsforschung (ZEF)

## **WESTERN SAMOA**

Kaluwin, Chalapna  
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

## **ZAMBIA**

Chanda, Raban  
University of Botswana

## **ZIMBABWE**

Magadza, Christopher H.D.  
University of Zimbabwe

Ngara, Todd  
IGES NGGIP

## **INTERNATIONAL**

Bartram, Jamie  
World Health Organization

Basher, Reid  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Bender, Stephen  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Bettencourt, Sofia  
World Bank

Bhatt, Mihir  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Bresser, Ton  
UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

Briceno, Salvano  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Callaway, John 'Mac'  
UNEP Collaborating Centre on Energy and Environment  
(UCCEE)

Colette, Augustin  
UNESCO

Corbin, Christopher  
UN Environment Programme Regional Coordinating Unit

Corvalan, Carlos  
World Health Organization

Dannenmann, Stefanie  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Domingos Freires, Filipe  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Fernández, José Luis Peña  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Fischer, Albert  
UNESCO

Fischer, Guenther  
IIASA

Ghina, Fathimath  
UNESCO

Gupta, Manu  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
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Harding, John  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Henrichs, Thomas  
National Environmental Research Institute

Leclerc, Liza  
UNEP

Llosa, Silvia  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
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Ludwig, Fulco  
UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

Markandya, Anil  
The World Bank

Mechler, Reinhard  
IIASA

Moench, Marcus  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Moudud, Hasna J  
UNEP

Nilsson, Sten  
IIASA

Noble, Ian  
World Bank

O'Neill, Brian  
IIASA

Ogawa, Hisashi  
World Health Organization

Rao, Kishore  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre

Schlosser, Carmen  
UNFCCC

Shaw, Rajib  
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
(UNISDR)

Sperling, Frank  
World Bank

Szöllösi-Nagy, Andras  
UNESCO

Troost, Dirk  
UNESCO

Uhlenbrook, Stefan  
UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

Vereczi, Gabor  
UN World Tourism Organization

von Hildebrand, Alexander  
World Health Organization

Warren, Luke  
IPIECA

## Appendix IV: Acronyms

[CO <sub>2</sub> ]	Concentration of carbon dioxide	CGE	Computable general equilibrium (model)
AAO	Antarctic Oscillation	CIESIN	Center for International Earth Science Information Network
ABM	Agent-based models	CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
AC	Air-conditioning	CMAQ	Community multiscale air quality (model)
ACIA	Arctic Climate Impact Assessment	COP	Conference of the Parties (to the UNFCCC)
AEJ	African Easterly Jet	CPPS	Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (Permanent Commission of the South Pacific)
AEZ	Agro-ecological zone	CRID	Centro Regional de Información sobre Desastres (Regional Disaster Information Centre – Latin America and the Caribbean)
AGCM	Atmospheric General Circulation Model	CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
AGO	Australian Greenhouse Office		
AIACC	Assessments of Impacts and Adaptations to Climate Change in Multiple Regions and Sectors		
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome		
AO	Arctic Oscillation		
AOGCM	Atmosphere–Ocean General Circulation Model		
APF	Adaptation Policy Framework		
AR4	Fourth Assessment Report	DAC	Development Assistance Committee
Aus	Australia	DAI	Dangerous anthropogenic interference
AVHRR	Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer	DALY	Disability adjusted life year
		DDC	Data Distribution Centre (of the IPCC)
		Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (of the UK Government)
BAU	Business-as-usual scenario	DGVM	Dynamic global vegetation model
BSATs	Brazilian semi-arid tropics	DIC	Dissolved inorganic carbon
CAA	Canadian Arctic archipelago	DJF	December, January, February
CAPRADE	Comité Andino para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance)	DMS	Dimethyl sulphide
		DOC	Dissolved organic carbon
		DPSIR	Drivers–pressures–state–impacts–response
CBA	Cost-benefit analysis	DWC	Dialogue on Water and Climate
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity		
CC	Climate change	ECCP	European Climate Change Programme
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources	ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CCD	(United Nations) Convention to Combat Desertification	EF	Ecological footprint
CCIAV	Climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability	EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
CCN	Cloud condensation nuclei	EMIC	Earth-system model of intermediate complexity
CDF	Conditional damage function	ENSO	El Niño–Southern Oscillation
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism	EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe	EPOC	Environment Policy Committee
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy	EPPA	Anthropogenic emission prediction and policy analysis

EPPA-HHL	The EPPA high-emissions scenario	IOCARIBE-GOOS	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Regional Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions
EPPA-LLH	The EPPA low-emissions scenario		Global Ocean Observing System
ET	Evapotranspiration		
EU	European Union		
EU15	The 15 countries in the European Union before the expansion on 1 May 2004	IOD	Indian Ocean Dipole
EU25	The 25 countries in the European Union after the expansion on 1 May 2004, but prior to 1 January 2007	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
EWS	Early-warning systems	IPO	Inter-decadal Pacific Oscillation
FACE	Free-air carbon dioxide enrichment	IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	ITCZ	Intertropical Convergence Zone
FFF	Food, fibre and forestry	ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
FFFF	Food, fibre, forestry and fishery	IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (World Conservation Union)
		JFM	January, February, March
GBR	Great Barrier Reef	JJA	June, July, August
GCM	General Circulation Model		
GDP	Gross domestic product	LA	Latin America
GEF	Global Environment Facility	LAI	Leaf-area index
GEOSS	Global Earth Observation System of Systems	LBA	Large Scale Biosphere-Atmosphere (experiment)
GHG	Greenhouse gas(es)	LDC	Less/Least Developed Countries
GIMMS	Global Inventory Modeling and Mapping Studies	LGA	Local government authority (Chapter 11)
GIS	Geographic information system	LGM	Last Glacial Maximum
GISS	Goddard Institute for Space Studies	LGP	Length of growing period
GLOF	Glacial lake outburst flood	LIA	Little Ice Age
GMAT	Global mean annual temperature	LPJ	Lund-Potsdam-Jena (model)
GMT	Global mean temperature	LULUCF	Land use, land-use change and forestry
GNP	Gross national product	M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
GPP	Gross primary production	MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
GPS	Global Positioning System	MACC	Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change in the Caribbean
GWP	Global Water Partnership	MAMJ	March, April, May, June
HABs	Harmful algal blooms	MARA/ARMA	Mapping Malaria Risk in Africa/Atlas du Risque de la Malaria en Afrique
HANPP	Human appropriation of net primary productivity	MASL	Metres above sea level
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	MDB	Murray-Darling Basin
HPS	Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
HYV	High-yield varieties	MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
IAM	Integrated assessment model	MER	Market exchange rates
IAS	Invasive alien species	MJO	Madden-Julian Oscillation
ICLIPS	Integrated Assessment of Climate Protection Strategies	MOC	Meridional overturning circulation
ICM	Integrated coastal management	MTE	Mediterranean-type ecosystems
ICZM	Integrated coastal zone management	NAH	North Atlantic Sub-tropical High
IFRCRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	NAO	North Atlantic Oscillation
IGBP	International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme	NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
IHDP	International Human Dimensions Programme	NBP	Net biome productivity
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis	NC	National Communication
INAP	Integrated National Pilot Adaptation Plan	NCAR PCM	National Center for Atmospheric Research Parallel Climate Model
		NDVI	Normalised Difference Vegetation Index
		NEP	Net ecosystem productivity
		NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
		NGO	Non-governmental organisation

NHT	Northern Hemisphere temperature	SLR	Sea-level rise
NPP	Net primary productivity	SM	Supplementary material
NSW	New South Wales	SoCAB	South Coast Air Basin (California)
NT	Northern Territory	SON	September, October, November
NTFP	Non-timber forest products	SPCZ	South Pacific Convergence Zone
NWMP	National Water Management Plan	SRES	Special Report on Emissions Scenarios
NZ	New Zealand	SST	Sea surface temperature
		SWE	Snow water equivalent
ODA	Official Development Assistance		
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	TAR	Third Assessment Report (of the IPCC)
		TBE	Tick-borne encephalitis
OND	October, November, December	TEJ	Tropical Easterly Jet
		TEK	Traditional ecological knowledge
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization	TGICA	Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis
PAL	Pathfinder AVHRR Land		
PDF	Probability density function	THC	Thermohaline circulation
PDI	Power dissipation index	TOGA	Tropical Ocean-Global Atmosphere
PDO	Pacific Decadal Oscillation	TOPEX	Ocean Topography Experiment
PDSI	Palmer Drought Severity Index	TWA	Tolerable windows approach
P-E	Precipitation-evaporation		
PEAC	Pacific ENSO Applications Center	UHI	Urban heat-island
PFT	Plant functional types	UK	United Kingdom
PIA	Participatory integrated assessment	UKCIP	United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme
PI-GCOS	Pacific Islands Global Climate Observing System	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
P-IND	Pre-industrial	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
PM	Particulate matter		
ppb	Parts per billion	US	United States (of America)
ppm	Parts per million	USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
PPP	Purchasing power parity		
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal	UVR	Ultraviolet radiation
Qld	Queensland	VBD	Vector-borne disease
		VOC	Volatile organic compound
RCM	Regional Climate Model		
RRA	Rapid rural appraisal	WA	Western Australia
RSLR	Relative sea-level rise	WAIS	West Antarctic ice sheet
		WAMU	West African Monetary Union
SACZ	South Atlantic Convergence Zone	WBD	Water-borne disease
SAP	Structural adjustment programme	WCRP	World Climate Research Programme
SAS	Storyline and simulation	WE	Western Europe
SBW	Spruce bud worm	WG	Working Group (of the IPCC)
SCAPE	Soft Cliff and Platform Erosion (model)	WHO	World Health Organization
SD	Statistical downscaling	WMO	World Meteorological Organization
SDSM	Statistical downscaling model	WNV	West Nile virus
SEAFRAME	Sea-level fine resolution acoustic measuring equipment	WTO	World Trade Organization
		WWW	World Weather Watch
SIDS	Small Island Developing States		





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