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PROGRESS REPORTS

Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report

(Prepared by the Chair of the IPCC)

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

PROGRESS REPORTS

Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report

The following is a report on activities undertaken by the Synthesis Report (SYR) of the Sixth Assessment Report, since the Fifty-Fourth Session (bis) of the IPCC in December 2021.

1. Development of the Synthesis Report Pre-draft

The Core Writing Team (CWT) developed the SYR Pre-draft from January to May 2021, which was submitted for an eight-week internal review ending in July 2021. The internal review was open to the CWT, the SYR Scientific Steering Committee (SSC), Working Group (WG) authors and members of the Technical Support Units (TSUs). 52 reviewers provided 1,905 comments. The CWT examined these comments and considered how to respond at the CWT-2 meeting in August 2021.

2. CWT-2 Meeting

CWT-2 was held virtually from 16 to 20 August 2021. The main objective was to take into account the comments from the internal review, address cross-sectional issues, and adapt the draft to the revisions of the underlying WG reports. Among the cross-sectional issues were: treatment of regional information, equity and just transitions, carbon budgets, net zero and negative emissions. Section Facilitators (SFs) led the Section meetings. The SSC provided overall advice and guidance, especially for cross-sectional issues.

A detailed work plan was established for the development of the SYR First Order Draft (FOD) and schedules for the remaining task of the SYR, including bi-weekly Section team calls and dedicated figures/subsection calls while the CWT authors work on the preparation of the SYR FOD.

3. Development of the SYR Summary for Policymakers

The SFs developed a draft of key messages for each SYR Section in a series of workshops held in June and July 2021. These key messages formed the basis for the straw person structure of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM), developed by the Chair, the SFs and the SYR TSU, with feedback from the SYR SSC and communications specialist. The CWT organised a Questions & Answers session on the SPM structure and a two-day SPM writing workshop in October 2021 to build a narrative within the straw person structure. Members of the CWT, SYR SSC, SYR TSU and TSU Working Groups (WGs), as well as the IPCC Secretary, were present. A draft SYR SPM was then prepared by the SYR SPM writing team, consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chairs, WG Co-Chairs, SFs, IPCC Secretary, SYR and WG TSUs members, and some CWT members. An internal review and revisions of the draft SPM text and figures were carried out in December 2021.

4. SYR FOD Government and Expert Review

The SYR FOD was submitted for Government and Expert Review for ten weeks, from 10 January to 20 March 2022. The SYR FOD received 10,424 comments: 4,848 on the SPM, 242 on the overall Longer Report, 86 on Section 1, 2,175 on Section 2, 1,385 on Section 3, and 1,688 on Section 4. The CWT would consider all the comments at its CWT-3 meeting from 25 to 28 April 2022 in Dublin.

5. CWT-3 Meeting

The objectives of the CWT-3 were to develop an action plan to provide initial responses to all review comments, identify critical issues for figures and cross-sectional elements, allocate responsibilities to authors for each subsection and figure, revise Headline Statements, and develop a detailed work schedule for the Final Government Distribution (FGD). The Irish government hosted the CWT-3 meeting which was held in person from 25 to 28 April 2022 in Dublin, with online arrangements for all

CWT-3 sessions for participants who had difficulties in travelling. The IPCC Secretariat made the necessary logistical arrangements, with the valuable assistance of the host government, including the conference venue and support facilities, visa and travel arrangements for participants.

A total of 62 participants were able to attend the CWT-3. This was a crucial milestone as it was the first face-to-face meeting of the CWT, SYR SSC, Review Editors (REs), EWT, and the SYR TSU since work on the Synthesis Report began. The in-person CWT-3 meeting would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the Irish government. The IPCC Secretariat expertly managed the online aspect of the plenary and various concurrent meetings. The presence of WG TSU members has also been beneficial in facilitating meetings and providing technical and rapporteur support.

Spanning four days, relevant agreements were reached at CWT-3 on what remained to be done to include government and expert comments on the FOD and to produce a revised draft.

The REs participated throughout CWT-3. The Chair convened a session dedicated to REs to highlight that REs' role is crucial to ensure that all substantive comments from governments and experts are duly considered, to advise the CWT on how to handle contentious/controversial issues, and to ensure genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the SYR text. The meeting confirmed the allocation of two REs for each part of the SPM and Section of the Longer Report, as well as for the general comments on the SPM and the Longer Report.

Regarding the structure and high-level content of the SPM, critical re-structuring was recommended: parts C and D of the FOD SPM were swapped. The figures also were significantly modified, with five new figures proposed, to reflect the approved Working Group II and III reports.

A "helicopter group" and an "eagle eye group" were set up to review SPM figures (helicopter group) and the text of the SPM and the Longer Report (eagle eye group) for ensuring consistency across Sections, between SPM and Longer Report, and within SPM. The two groups consist of WG Co-Chairs or Vice-Chairs.

Initial discussions took place at CWT-3 on the insertion of a Box in Section 1 presenting the key concepts of the SYR.

6. SYR SSC Meetings

Since March 2021, the Chair has convened a total of 16 SSC meetings. The meetings have considered updates on the development of the SYR, guidance on the draft SYR and preparations for CWT meetings. The SFs were also invited to participate in the SSC meetings, which allowed for an efficient exchange of ideas on the SYR.

7. SYR Schedule

The IPCC Bureau, at its 62nd Session held virtually on 2 June 2022, recommended a schedule for the preparation of the SYR, with its approval session to take place in late 2022/early 2023. It noted the Chair's decision to establish a High-Level Consultative Group (HLCG) with the participation of the Chair, the Vice-Chairs, the IPCC Secretary and the SYR TSU head, to immediately initiate consultations with the authors and the SSC to reach consensus on how to complete the work within the recommended schedule. It also agreed to share this recommendation and the schedule for the SYR preparation and approval with the Panel with a view to seeking agreement by the end of June 2022.

In total, 8 HLCG meetings were held between 3 June and 2 August 2022, producing actionable recommendations. These include conducting a series of consultations with authors and the SSC to address the support and resource needs of authors, and reaching consensus on a revised schedule for the SYR.

Following the recommendations of the HLCG, the SYR TSU conducted a survey of authors regarding their availability in the months leading up to March 2023. The CWT authors, EWTs, REs, as well as Vice-Chairs, WG Co-Chairs, and the heads of the WG TSUs indicated their availability week by week. The results of the survey showed that authors were willing to contribute to the SYR until March 2023. The results also indicated a sufficient level of author availability and balance across WGs, regions and gender until March 2023. The HLCG noted the outcome of the survey and recognised its usefulness. The detailed survey results of author availability by week have been provided to the SFs to assist them in fulfilling their role.

In addition, the HLCG recommended that the helicopter group established at CWT-3 be made operational to provide scientific oversight of the SYR figures; and that the composition of the eagle eye group be completed and made operational to ensure consistency of the SYR key messages with the WGs reports. Following this recommendation, both groups have been made operational and are contributing to the SYR. The task of the helicopter group was extended to also supervise the Longer Report's figures.

The HLCG confirmed that the process is progressing. It also acknowledged and praised the valuable contribution of the SFs.

Between May and July 2022, extensive and thorough consultations were held with the SYR authors and the SSC to define support for the needs of the authors and to reach consensus on the SYR schedule, especially with the guidance of the HLCG. During May-July 2022, the SYR TSU held 35 consultative meetings on SYR schedule with SYR authors, SFs, SSC, Vice-Chairs, WG Co-chairs, and the IPCC Secretary. In particular, it was recognized that the authors need sufficient time to incorporate the comments provided by governments and experts during the FOD, and sufficient time to prepare the final version of the draft SYR in order to include the final comments from governments after the FGD and to prepare the final version of the SYR for the approval session.

Consultations with the authors and the SSC included also the order of completion of the SPM and the Sections of the Longer Report. It was considered that the most appropriate approach to ensure coherence between the two documents was to work on the Longer Report first and, once a scientifically robust level had been reached, build the SPM from the Longer Report. This approach could be accompanied by a brief review of the content of the SPM at an early stage in order to take stock of the status of the SYR and to have an overview of the SPM and the Longer Report.

Consultations with SYR authors also covered the modalities of the approval plenary. The approval plenary will take place in person, with the availability of remote access for those who are unable to participate in person. It will follow the usual process, with the Chair, who will preside over the meeting, assisted by the IPCC Secretary and the SYR TSU on the podium. Depending on the parts of the text to be approved, the Chair will invite relevant Panel members, Bureau members (Vice-Chairs, WG Co-Chairs, WG Vice-Chairs), SFs and authors to the podium from the floor or virtually to support the approval of the text. The approved text will be the result of a consensus between governments and authors. In particular, the WG Co-Chairs and TSUs will play an important role in the completion of the final government draft being prepared, as well as in the final phase - after final government comments - of the preparation of the version of the SYR to be presented to the approval plenary.

Further consultations confirmed that the Vice-Chairs, WG Co-Chairs and TSUs have been and will be, until the end of the SYR finalisation process, heavily involved in this process. The HLCG will continue to provide guidance.

On the basis of the consultations with the SYR authors that resulted in consensus on the SYR approval dates from 13 to 17 March 2023 and FGD dates from 21 November 2022 to 15 January 2023, the IPCC Secretariat consulted with the IPCC Bureau for agreement and after receiving the Bureau's agreement, the IPCC Secretariat sent the document for approval by the Panel, which expressed support for the above SYR approval and FGD dates.

8. Section Meetings

The authors continue to work on revising the SYR, taking into account comments from governments and experts received during the review period. The SYR Sections meet on a rotating basis once a week. The SFs facilitate the work of the authors and ensure that deadlines are met. Work on the SYR figures continues actively and figure meetings are held every week.

The figures of the SPM will be tested with the National Focal Points and the IPCC Bureau on criteria of clarity, accessibility and usability. This user test will inform the authors on how to improve the graphical part of the SPM.