

PRESS NOTE

Kampala, 18 November 2011—The Summary for Policymakers of the *Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* (SREX) was approved today by member governments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The Summary for Policymakers of the SREX is available at <http://ipcc-wg2.gov/SREX> and www.ipcc.ch

Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the IPCC, said today: “This summary for policymakers provides insights into how disaster risk management and adaptation may assist vulnerable communities to better cope with a changing climate in a world of inequalities”.

“It also underlines the complexity and the diversity of factors that are shaping human vulnerability to extremes--why for some communities and countries these can become disasters whereas for others they can be less severe,” he added.

Qin Dahe, Co-chair of IPCC Working Group I, which together with Working Group II was responsible for the development and preparation of the report, said: “There is high confidence that both maximum and minimum daily temperatures have increased on a global scale due to the increase of greenhouse gases.”

“Changes in other extremes, such as more intense and longer droughts are observed in some regions, but the assessment assigns medium confidence due to a lack of direct observations and a lack of agreement in the available scientific studies. Confidence in any long-term trend in tropical cyclone intensity, frequency or duration is assessed to be low,” he added.

Regarding the future, the assessment concludes that it is virtually certain that on a global scale hot days become even hotter and occur more often. “For the high emissions scenario, it is likely that the frequency of hot days will increase by a factor of 10 in most regions of the world”, said Thomas Stocker the other Co-chair of Working Group I. “Likewise, heavy precipitation will occur more often, and the wind speed of tropical cyclones will increase while their number will likely remain constant or decrease”.

“Nevertheless, there are many options for decreasing risk. Some of these have been implemented, but many have not. The best options can provide benefits across a wide range of possible levels of climate change.” said Vicente Barros, Co-chair of Working Group II.

Chris Field, the other Co-chair of Working Group II, added: “We hope this report can be a scientific foundation for sound decisions on infrastructure, urban development, public health, and insurance, as well as for planning—from community organizations to international disaster risk management.”

“I would like to thank the scientists and experts who served as authors and review editors as well as the many expert reviewers for producing a comprehensive and scientifically sound summary and report,” said Mr Pachauri.

History of this report

At the 29th Session of the IPCC held in Geneva, Switzerland in September 2008, Norway introduced a proposal, prepared with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), for a Special Report.

The IPCC Bureau at its 38th Session held in November 2008 in Geneva agreed to convene a Scoping Meeting, which took place in Oslo, Norway 23-26 March 2009. The 30th Session of the IPCC held 21-23 April 2009 in Antalya, Turkey agreed that Working Groups I and II would jointly prepare a Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters (SREX).

WGI is co-chaired by Qin Dahe of the Chinese Meteorological Administration, Beijing, China and Thomas Stocker of the University of Bern, Switzerland.

WGII is co-chaired by Vicente Barros of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Christopher Field of the Carnegie Institution for Science, Stanford, USA.

The Summary for Policymakers of the SREX was approved by the First Joint Session of IPCC Working Groups I and II in Kampala, Uganda, 14–17 November 2011 and was launched on 18 November.

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