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REPORTS

IPCC Carbon Footprint

(Submitted by the Secretary of the IPCC)

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Background

At its 37th Session (Batumi, Georgia, 14-18 October 2013), the Panel considered the matter of reducing the carbon footprint of IPCC activities. It was decided that the work on this issue should go on and that the IPCC Secretariat would continue studying and mapping out the options and alternative models to reduce the carbon footprint of IPCC activities, taking into account the viewpoints expressed by Panel members, and that the Panel would eventually decide how to move forward on this subject when there is more clarity on the next steps.

The IPCC also considered this matter at its 39th Session (Berlin, Germany, 7-12 April 2014) where it was noted that among many examples of the ongoing efforts to reduce IPCC activities' carbon footprint, the paper smart system introduced during the Plenaries is only one of them and the IPCC Secretariat is engaged in that exercise on an ongoing basis. Furthermore at its 40th Session (Copenhagen, Denmark, 27-31 October 2014), the IPCC noted a document on "IPCC carbon footprint: taking stock and moving forward".

Salient efforts and progress made in recent years to reduce the IPCC's carbon footprint include:

- Increasing use of WebEx teleconferences for meetings such as those for the IPCC Executive Committee, the Communications Action Team (CAT) and Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impacts and Climate Analysis (TGICA);
- Reducing the consumption of paper in IPCC meetings; and
- Holding back-to-back meetings in a number of instances;
- Joining the WMO carbon offsetting scheme of purchasing certified emission reduction (CER) units through a joint procurement initiative with UNFCCC in order to offset emission related to any travelling supported by the IPCC Trust Fund as well as emissions related to the premises of the IPCC Secretariat.

The 2015 edition of "Moving towards a climate neutral UN"¹ does not discriminate data for IPCC. However, emissions related to IPCC premises, travel-related emissions and the environmental impact of meetings are assumed to be the major contributors to the IPCC carbon footprint. The IPCC Secretariat is located at the premises of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in Geneva which has very low levels of emissions per m², and those are being offset as mentioned before. There is no data regarding the levels of emissions of the premises of the Technical Support Units.

The way forward to further reducing the IPCC carbon footprint

1. Regarding locations and venues for meetings the IPCC Secretariat and the Co-Chairs as appropriate, will evaluate how to best implement the guidance provided in the UNEP's Green Meetings Guide². A report in this regard will be submitted to the Panel at its 45th Session.
2. The Secretariat will keep the IPCC Plenary informed on the implementation of the IPCC carbon footprint policy.

¹ <http://www.greeningtheblue.org/sites/default/files/MTCNUN-24.11.15-sequential.pdf>

² <http://www.unep.org/pdf/GreenMeetingGuide.pdf>