



CAN Briefing CAN Expectations from Governments During the Approval of the IPCC 1.5°C Report

Prelude

Climate Action Network supports the Paris goal to limit warming to 1.5°C as a matter of survival for all. The science is clear: limiting warming to 1.5°C is not only a moral imperative, but technically feasible and economically beneficial. Stabilising warming to 1.5°C by cutting emissions in the near term will help realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and alleviate poverty and inequality.

Introduction

The Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C will be approved in Korea during the first week of October. CAN supports the IPCC as the world's foremost scientific authority on climate change. The importance of the 1.5°C report lies in its assessment of current knowledge on global and regional climate change, impacts and risks at 1.5°C global warming above pre-industrial levels and its focus on potential policy and technical solutions and their link to overall sustainable development and poverty eradication. The report also provides new insights on the impacts that may be avoided with global warming of 1.5°C compared to 2°C or higher. The barriers to fighting climate change are political and now more than ever we need political leaders of every stripe to acknowledge and take actions to curb our current emission trajectory that threatens to breach crucial tipping points and cause irreversible impacts.

Last year saw the highest anthropogenic carbon emissions in history. The concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere are already the highest we have seen over the course of human history. The science is clear and it calls for unprecedented action.

Our dependence on fossil fuels has pushed us on a dangerous warming pathway. However, we are observing an extraordinary rise in the deployment of low- and zero carbon technologies across various sectors and lowering costs on renewable energy; energy-efficient appliances and lighting; low/zero carbon buildings; storage of energy; grid technologies; and sustainable land management. This enables us to significantly reduce carbon emissions in an increasingly cost-effective manner. Although we are edging closer to the possibility of meeting the 1.5°C target, strong and bold political will from policies and strategies that favor zero-carbon development is critical. Governments must send the right policy signals to create the enabling environments sub-national actors like high emitting industry, financial institutions, cities, and civil society need to take the action they are committed to.

The IPCC 1.5 C report has tremendous potential to underpin the discourse and debate on enhancing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2020. Although several developing countries have committed to extraordinary actions, the collective NDCs, particularly those of large polluting nations, are woefully inadequate to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement.

CAN Priorities

CAN urges all governments to approve the IPCC 1.5 report, including the crucial content in the SPM, as informed by the latest climate science.

Following the approval of the IPCC 1.5C report, **CAN expects governments to strongly promote and support the presentation of the scientific results during pre-COP and the UNFCCC COP24 in Poland, as well as its integration in the Talanoa Dialogue conclusions and the Paris rulebook.**

CAN urges governments to use IPCC report to present the findings of the Report to national parliaments over the next two years with the purpose of enhancing and strengthening national NDCs by 2020 at the latest.

- The impacts of climate change at temperature increases higher than 1.5°C will pose a much greater risk of triggering ‘tipping points’, compared to previous assessments¹. Global ecosystems and established Earth System Dynamics like ocean currents that surpass such tipping points might face irreversible climate impacts that threatens land productivity; biodiversity; species survival; food security; damage infrastructure; and impact human livelihoods and health significantly. These impacts can be avoided by limiting global warming to 1.5°C.
- Collective action is required to limit warming to 1.5°C. This is clearly demonstrated by recent economic and technological trends. The full decarbonization of the energy sector by 2050 at the latest and replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources, supported by energy efficiency in all economic activities is key to prevent dangerous climate change and avoid negative externalities of industrial energy-related emissions that cause air, water, and soil pollution. Fossil fuels emit roughly two thirds of all GHG and are responsible for most of the 4 million premature deaths from air pollution at an external cost of about 5% global GDP annually.² Cost-effective opportunities also exist in other sectors, including the rapid halting of illegal and commodity-driven deforestation that is responsible for 12% of total greenhouse gas emissions globally.
- Delaying stronger and more ambitious action now and relying on future development of more powerful carbon removal technologies to compensate for a potential

¹ Dosio, A., Mentaschi, L., Fischer, E., and Wyser, K. 2018. Extreme heat waves under 1.5 °C and 2°C global warming. *Environ. Res. Lett.* 13.; <http://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2018-08-06-planet-at-risk-of-heading-towards-hothouse-earth-state.html>

² IMF: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp15105.pdf>; WHO: <http://www.who.int/airpollution/en/>

temperature overshoot between now and then is not an option. It is more likely to increase risks of tipping points and run-away climate change.

- Alongside the need to cut carbon dioxide emissions, slashing potent gases and pollutants such as methane, hydrofluorocarbons and black carbon must be a priority and should be included in revised national climate targets.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero, preferably by 2040 and by 2050 at the latest, is the only way to limit global warming to 1.5°C. This move to decarbonisation must involve all stakeholders and follow the principles of equity and just transition, taking into account the impact on vulnerable communities and workers in energy and industrial sectors.
- Governments must raise their ambition and enhance their NDCs by 2020. More ambitious targets are required to achieve 1.5°C. The current suite of NDCs is more likely to exacerbate global warming to 3°C.
- Limiting global warming to 1.5°C brings co-benefits and will support the achievement of global sustainability and anti-poverty targets as outlined in the agreed Sustainable Development Goals³.
- Developed countries must provide the necessary financial support to developing countries to enable them to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. This includes enhanced means for adaptation and mitigation, as well as fostering equity-based schemes for Loss and Damage that makes provision for populations in developing countries already suffering the impacts of climate change.
- The most environmentally, socially and economically cost-effective option to sequester carbon emissions is through Natural Climate Solutions, based on photosynthesis. Natural Climate Solutions should be focused on the complete halting of deforestation and degradation of lands, their ecological restoration and enhancement. Natural Climate Solutions also target sustainable low-carbon farming and forestry.
- Meeting the 1.5 C objective requires significant changes in the lifestyle of the growing middle class around the world. This includes a shift towards a low-carbon lifestyle.
- New low-carbon materials that supports the “circular economy” should be developed and mainstreamed throughout national policies. That includes intensifying and growing investments in research, development and demonstration projects.

³ Sustainable Development Goals: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>