



Harvard Project on Climate Agreements



Stanford
Environmental & Energy
Policy Analysis Center

Assessment and Communication of the Social Science of Climate Change: Bridging Research and Policy

**A workshop hosted by the
Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change (MCC)**

Berlin, Germany

Wednesday-Friday, February 18-20, 2015

- Agenda -

Assessment and Communication of the Social Science of Climate Change: Bridging Research and Policy

Purpose of the workshop: The completion of the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC provides a good opportunity to reflect on lessons learned and discuss options for future assessments of research on climate change policy. The workshop will explore how social-science research on climate change might be better assessed, with a view to making this research more accessible and useful to policy makers. Chatham House rules will apply.

Workshop objectives: 1) Reflect on the recent experience of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), capturing those aspects of the process that have been effective and those that could be improved. 2) Consider the advantages and disadvantages of alternative climate-science assessment processes and what might be learned from assessments in other domains. 3) Consider how the results of social-science research on climate change can be better communicated to and used by policy makers (via the assessment process). 4) Consider how the IPCC can improve its interface to the social scientific communities. 5) Consider how structural changes to the IPCC process can improve its usefulness to the broad user community.

Communication of workshop results: The workshop organizers place great importance on the effective communication of workshop outputs (within the constraints of Chatham-House rules) and envisage capturing constructive insights in a briefing document that will be released to relevant constituencies shortly after the workshop. A more detailed report will be released in late 2015.

Participants: 1) Social scientists who participated in AR5 and earlier Assessment Reports; 2) Participants in other assessment processes; 3) Users and potential users of climate assessments (e.g., policy makers, climate negotiators, senior staff of international governmental organizations).

Agenda summary: 1) Two keynote talks (one from a participant in the IPCC process, the other from a user of IPCC reports); 2) brief presentations, with responses, organized in three sessions on: (i) substantive priorities for future assessments, (ii) institutional reform options, and (iii) connecting research outputs and policy; 3) Three breakout groups will distill proposals for improving the IPCC process and processes independent of the IPCC.

Role of the IPCC: "The role of the IPCC is to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation. IPCC reports should be neutral with respect to policy, although they may need to deal objectively with scientific, technical and socio-economic factors relevant to the application of particular policies." ([Principles Governing IPCC Work](#), par. 2)

Wednesday, 18 February

Session 1 – Introductions and Keynotes Moderator: Robert Stavins	
14.00 – 14.45	Welcome and round of self-introductions <i>Ottmar Edenhofer (MCC), Carlo Carraro (FEEM), Charles Kolstad (Stanford University), Robert Stavins (Harvard University)</i>
14.45 – 15.00	Setting the scene and agenda of workshop <i>Rob Stavins (Harvard University)</i>
15.00 – 15.20	Talk: A supply-side perspective on climate policy assessment: Lessons learned; future priorities and options. <i>Ottmar Edenhofer (MCC)</i>
15.20 – 15.40	Talk: A demand-side perspective on climate policy assessment: Lessons learned; future needs and priorities. <i>Halldór Thorgeirsson (UNFCCC)</i>
15.40 – 16.15	Response 1: Charles Kolstad (<i>Stanford University</i>) Response 2: Marianne Fay (<i>World Bank</i>) Response 3: Jairam Ramesh (<i>Future Earth Engagement Committee</i>) Response 4: David Reidmiller (<i>United States Department of State</i>)
16.15 – 17.15	Discussion
17.15	End of Day 1
From 17.45	Reception and light dinner (at The Ritz Carlton)

Thursday, 19 February

Session 2 – Substantive Priorities for Future Assessments of Social Science Climate Research Moderator: Carlo Carraro	
8.45 – 9.15	Speaker 1 [10 minutes]: Charles Kolstad (<i>Stanford University</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: David Warrilow (<i>Govt. United Kingdom</i>) Discussion
9.15 – 9.45	Speaker 2 [10 minutes]: Keywan Riahi (<i>IIASA</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Geoffrey Heal (<i>Columbia University</i>) Discussion
9.45 – 10.15	Discussion
10.15 – 10.30	Short Break
Session 3 – Connecting Assessments and Policy for Climate Change: Dialogue, Communications, Outreach, Credibility Moderator: Ottmar Edenhofer	
10.30 – 11.00	Speaker 1 [10 minutes]: Karen Dodds (<i>Govt. Canada</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Mariana Conte Grand (<i>Universidad del CEMA</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Nicole Wilke (<i>Govt. Germany</i>) Discussion
11.00 – 11.30	Speaker 2 [10 minutes]: Brian Flannery (<i>Resources for the Future</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Jan Minx (<i>MCC, Hertie School of Governance</i>) Discussion
11.30 – 12.00	Discussion
12.00 – 12.15	Instructions for breakout group sessions: Rob Stavins
12.15 – 12.30	Group photo
12.30 – 13.15	Lunch (at Foyer)

Thursday, 19 February (cont.)

Session 4 – Institutional Options for Future Assessments of Social Science Climate Research	
Moderator: Charles Kolstad	
13.15 – 13.45	Speaker 1 [10 minutes]: David Victor (<i>UCSD</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Christiane Textor (<i>German IPCC-coordination office</i>) Discussion
13.45 – 14.15	Speaker 2 [10 minutes]: Maureen Cropper (<i>University of Maryland</i>) Response [5-10 minutes]: Kevin Urama (<i>Quantum Global</i>) Discussion
14.15 – 14.45	Discussion
14.45 – 15.15	Break
Session 5 - Breakout groups: Proposals for improving climate-policy assessments	
15.15 – 15.30	Further preparation for breakout groups, if needed: Rob Stavins
15.30 – 17.15	Breakout Groups Participants will break into three groups and develop short proposals for improved social-scientific assessments on climate change. Two will focus on options for reforming the IPCC. The third will address options for non-IPCC climate-policy assessment initiatives. Each proposal should clearly state how its goals would be constructively implemented in an assessment. A default assignment of participants to these groups will be proposed before lunch on Thursday, but participants will be free to change groups.
17.15 – 17.30	Reconvene briefly
17.30	End of Day 2
19.00	Dinner at restaurant (Kaisersaal)

Friday, 20 February

Session 6 – Presentation, discussion, and critiques of proposals	
Moderator: Robert Stavins	
9.00 – 9.45	Proposal 1: Improving the IPCC (Group 1) (15 minutes) Discussion
9.45 – 10.30	Proposal 2: Improving the IPCC (Group 2) (15 minutes) Discussion
10.30 – 11.15	Proposal 3: Process(es) independent of the IPCC (15 minutes) Discussion
11.15 – 11.30	Short Break
Session 7 – Wrap-up and next steps	
11.30 – 12.00	Summary, Closing Remarks, and Next Steps <i>Ottmar Edenhofer, Robert Stavins</i> Plenary discussion
12.00	Adjourn
12.00	Lunch at restaurant (Midtown Grill)