

12 September 2013

[REDACTED]  
 FoI Manager  
 Met Office  
 Fitzroy Road  
 Exeter EX1 3PB  
 UK

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing on behalf of the Co-Chairs of IPCC Working Group I (WGI), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], in response to your email dated 02 September 2013 that was addressed to me in my function as Head of the WGI Technical Support Unit (WGI TSU), regarding a request for information under the UK FOI or EIR regulations. I understand that this request concerns the Zero Order Draft (ZOD) of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4).

IPCC WGI completed its contribution to the IPCC AR4 in 2007. Until the end of 2008, the IPCC WGI TSU was located at NOAA in Boulder, CO, USA, under WGI Co-Chairs, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were elected as WGI Co-Chairs for the AR5 cycle in September 2008 and the current WGI TSU started its operations in Bern, Switzerland, in February 2009. The current WGI TSU and Co-Chairs had no connection with the material requested at the time that it was produced but neither is there any other existing IPCC institution that is responsible for it. Therefore we have institutional responsibility to respond to legacy questions such as yours.

You asked whether IPCC WGI consents to the disclosure of the material and if not, what harm disclosure would do. The ZOD is not mentioned in the IPCC Procedures because these are informal documents developed by the WGs, not required by the IPCC Procedures, unlike all the other drafts (First, Second, Final). The type of ZOD and the method of its review are a matter for each WG but these are embryonic working documents that are incomplete and not intended for public disclosure. It is the previously stated position of the current Co-Chairs of WGI that the disclosure of such documents would erode trust in the UK as a partner in an international process. It could prejudice the UK's ability to engage in free and frank discussion in future through its experts at this crucial and early stage of assessment development.

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 IPCC WGI TSU

# ipcc

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

Working Group I (WG I) – The Physical Science Basis

21 October 2013

[REDACTED]  
Fol Manager  
Met Office  
Fitzroy Road  
Exeter EX1 3PB  
UK

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing on behalf of the Co-Chairs of IPCC Working Group I (WGI), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], in response to your email dated 09 October 2013 that was addressed to me in my function as Head of the IPCC WGI Technical Support Unit (WGI TSU). This relates to a request for information under the UK FOI or EIR regulations concerning the Zero Order Draft (ZOD) of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4).

I refer you also to my earlier response on behalf of IPCC WGI dated 12 September 2013. As stated there, the ZOD is not mentioned in the IPCC Procedures because ZODs are informal documents developed by the WGs, not required by the IPCC Procedures, unlike all the other drafts (First, Second, Final). Therefore there is no written record of an IPCC position on the confidentiality of the ZOD now, from the time of the AR4 or previously. The written statement in the IPCC Procedures about the confidentiality of drafts refers to those drafts that undergo formal review (First, Second, Final) and essentially put into writing the practice of the IPCC at the time of the AR4.

The type of ZOD and the method of its review are a matter for each WG but these are embryonic working documents that are incomplete and not intended for public disclosure. Any comments on the ZOD are also internal so WGI does not feel that any purpose is served by publishing the ZOD. The subsequent drafts, review comments and author responses are published in full, which gives a traceable account of the development of the report for those interested to follow it.

I am not aware of what drafts and comments were published following the final publication of the Third Assessment Report (TAR) in 2001. Online publication of the report itself only followed some 2 years later but was not hosted by the IPCC web site. However, it is correct that the previous IPCC Procedures only required such material to be archived for a period of 5 years following publication of a report. If you wish to follow up the development of the IPCC Procedures over the past decade and the practice with the TAR, I can only refer you to the IPCC Secretariat in Geneva.

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Head, IPCC WGI TSU

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# ipcc

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

Working Group I (WG I) – The Physical Science Basis

23 January 2014

[REDACTED]  
Fol Manager  
Met Office  
Fitzroy Road  
Exeter EX1 3PB  
UK

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing on behalf of the Co-Chairs of IPCC Working Group I (WGI), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in response to your email dated 16 January 2014 that was addressed to me at the IPCC WGI Technical Support Unit (WGI TSU). This relates to a request for information under the UK FOI or EIR regulations concerning the Zero Order Draft (ZOD) of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4).

There is not much new that I can add to my earlier responses on behalf of IPCC WGI dated 12 September and 21 October 2013. In this letter we address your question about the release of the ZODs for any of the assessment reports and also try to clarify the misapprehension of the AR5 ZOD tribunal about the IPCC policy on ZODs. The term ZOD is an informal one, used within the IPCC WGs to denote a preliminary draft of a chapter. The type of ZOD and the method of its internal review are a matter for each WG but these are embryonic working documents that are incomplete and not intended for public disclosure.

The letter to your predecessor at the Met Office dated 10 February 2012 that you mention in your email addressed the release of the AR5 ZODs at that time, part way through the assessment process. However the opinion of the WGI Co-Chairs is that there is no justification for releasing ZODs or internal review comments on them even after a report is completed because these are intended as internal working documents only. Once the report is finalised, the drafts that were submitted for expert and/or government review are made public by the IPCC. That is the First Order Draft, the Second Order Draft and the Final Draft, together with all the review comments and the author responses. This gives a full traceable account of the development of the report for those interested to follow it, from the point at which the authors felt that their draft chapter was ready to be seen by a broader expert public. Release of the ZODs would undermine the authors' confidence in the IPCC process because it would make public documents and thoughts that were not mature.

In your email, you quote from the statement of the UK Information Tribunal on the AR5 ZOD that "We note that IPCC's own policy documents do not distinguish between ZODs and other drafts and there appears to be no clear policy nor a clear rationale for why the ZODs are not published at that time." This seems to be a misunderstanding on the part of the Tribunal. I would refer you to the IPCC Principles and Procedures (Appendix A to the Principles)<sup>1</sup>: There is in fact a very clear distinction between the ZODs and other drafts and a clear rationale why they are not published. This is because the ZODs are not mentioned at all whereas a First Draft, Second Draft and Final Draft are all prescribed by the IPCC *Procedures for the Preparation, Review, Acceptance, Adoption, Approval and Publication of IPCC Reports* in paragraphs 4.3.3, 4.3.4.2 and 4.3.5.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipcc-wg1.unibe.ch/procedures/procedures.html>

The drafts referred to in paragraph 4.2 of the IPCC Procedures that are made available after the finalisation of the report are the drafts that have been submitted for formal expert and/or government review, i.e., as mentioned above the First, Second and Final Drafts, and this does not include the ZOD.

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering a signature.A black rectangular redaction box covering a name.

IPCC WGI TSU