

Confidentiality

Guidance Note for Holders of Functions and Offices in IPCC Working Group I

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to address the issue of confidentiality. This Guidance Note provides individuals, who hold offices (Co-Chairs, Vice Chairs) and functions (Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs), Lead Authors (LAs), Review Editors (REs)) in WGI or are employed at the WGI Technical Support Unit (TSU) during the AR5 assessment cycle, with a set of recommendations to facilitate their work for IPCC, to ensure transparency and to avoid situations which could endanger the integrity of the work.

It is the IPCC practice that all drafts are confidential and should not be cited, quoted or distributed. This principle, which must be adhered to, is clearly stated when report drafts are sent out for expert and government review and also applies to the review comments and author team responses. However, upon completion of the Report, the review comments and responses are made publicly available and are retained in an open archive.

Lead Author Meetings are important steps towards the preparation and finalization of the assessment documents. They are therefore considered to be specific closed fora for predecisional discussions. As such, these discussions remain confidential and related documents including emails and preliminary versions of text or figures are not public; they should not be cited, quoted or distributed.

In order to enhance communication among the chapter authors between the meetings, chapter-specific internet fora will be available which are only accessible to the members of the chapter teams and confidentiality is protected by user-specific passwords. Additional information on the chapter forum, as well as other electronic resources provided by the TSU in support of the writing process, will be presented during the First Lead Author Meeting.

For direct conversations among two or several chapter authors, telephone conference facilities such as Skype are recommended. The TSU is looking into the possibility of offering WebEx via the IPCC Secretariat.

As has become customary in the private sector, we also recommend for IPCC-related email traffic to add to the signature of your email a note that declares the content of the mail to be confidential and intended only for the addressee. One example which is currently being used by the WGI TSU is:

This e-mail including any attachments is confidential and may be privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. If you have received it by mistake, please notify the sender by e-mail and delete this message from your system. Any unauthorised use or dissemination of this e-mail in whole or in part is strictly prohibited.

You may find it convenient to define additional email profiles with specific declarations. You are encouraged to consult with the legal advisors of your institution as to whether this is compatible with prior and local regulations.

Bern, 8 October 2010

T. Stocker & D. Qin
Co-Chairs WGI IPCC