

# Climate Change, Adaptation, and IPCC

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## *IPCC*

Climate warming has now been qualified by the IPCC (Intergovernmental panel on Climate Change) as unequivocal. The main factor for the warming since 1950 has been identified: greenhouse gases (GHGs) from human activities. The habitability of the planet is at stake, with impacts felt or projected on about every ecosystem or human activity. There will be significant, often adverse, impacts on many ecological systems and socio-economic sectors, including food supply and water resources, and on human health. Mitigation, i.e. seriously reducing emissions or enhancing sinks of greenhouse gases is needed if one wants to stabilize the temperature. But that will not prevent quickly enough many negative consequences of climate change of happening. Adaptation measures are therefore essential to complement mitigation actions, even if one can adapt only up to a point, and at a cost. For too long, adaptation has been perceived as the enemy of mitigation. Actually, both need to be integrated, in a sustainable development and climate-friendly framework. In this context, one aspect we will focus on in this talk is the assessment and communication of uncertainties related to climate change, particularly in the area of adaptation. The huge number of scientific articles about climate science (in the broadest sense) makes essential the need for an honest broker assessing the available scientific, technical, and socio-economic information, in a policy-relevant but non-prescriptive way. That is the role IPCC has filled over the last 23 years. It does not hold the truth, but, with the help of thousands of scientists and experts, it is seeking it. Without IPCC, policy-makers at all levels would be left with an extremely large mass of unusable and sometimes contradictory information, and would have much more difficulty to act. The way the IPCC assesses and communicates uncertainties will be described. The next Assessment Report of the IPCC (AR5), to be finalized in 2014, will once again provide the most reliable source of scientific information on climate issues. The Moscow Conference will help feed some of the best new ideas on adaptation into this process. With your help, the AR5 will be the best IPCC report ever.