

# Climate science for policy: communicating with policymakers

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# Outline

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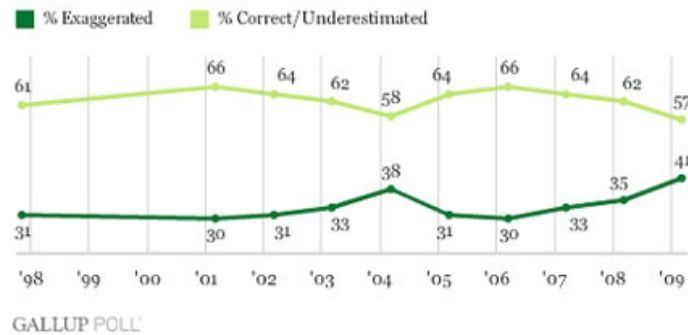
- ▣ Mechanisms for science input in global climate policy making
- ▣ Overcoming challenges in communicating climate science
- ▣ Policy mechanism update



# Public uptake of climate science

## □ Gallup poll: March 2009

*Thinking about what is said in the news, in your view is the seriousness of global warming -- [generally exaggerated, generally correct, or is it generally underestimated]?*



# Policymakers' uptake of climate science



- June 1988: Jim Hansen testimony before Congress: “global temperatures had risen beyond the range of natural variability”
- 1992: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change:
  - Enters into force in 1994
  - Currently 192 parties
- 1997: Kyoto Protocol adopted
- 2005: Kyoto Protocol enters into force
- December 2009: Copenhagen summit to finalize “post-Kyoto Framework”

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Reflects concern that “that human activities have been substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, that these increases enhance the natural greenhouse effect, and that this will result on average in an additional warming of the Earth's surface and atmosphere and may adversely affect natural ecosystems and humankind”

Has ultimate objective of stabilizing “greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.”



# Mechanisms for science input

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- National level
- Global level
  - SBSTA: Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice (reports to UNFCCC)
  - IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
  - Scientists: ICSU, International Scientific Congress on Climate Change (March 2009)
  - NGOs: such as Union of Concerned Scientists, Pew Center on Global Climate Change
  - Media/Film: Inconvenient Truth, Great Global Warming Swindle



# IPCC

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- Established in 1988 by
  - World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and
  - UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- Intergovernmental panel
  - Membership open to countries belonging to WMO and UNEP
  - Aims to be “policy-relevant but policy-neutral”
  - **Not** subsidiary to UNFCCC
- In process of preparing AR5



## IPCC Mandate (Part 1)

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- ❑ The IPCC was established to provide the decision-makers and others interested in climate change with an objective source of information about climate change.
- ❑ The IPCC does not conduct any research nor does it monitor climate related data or parameters.
- ❑ Its role is to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the latest scientific, technical and socio-economic literature produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of the risk of human-induced climate change, its observed and projected impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation.



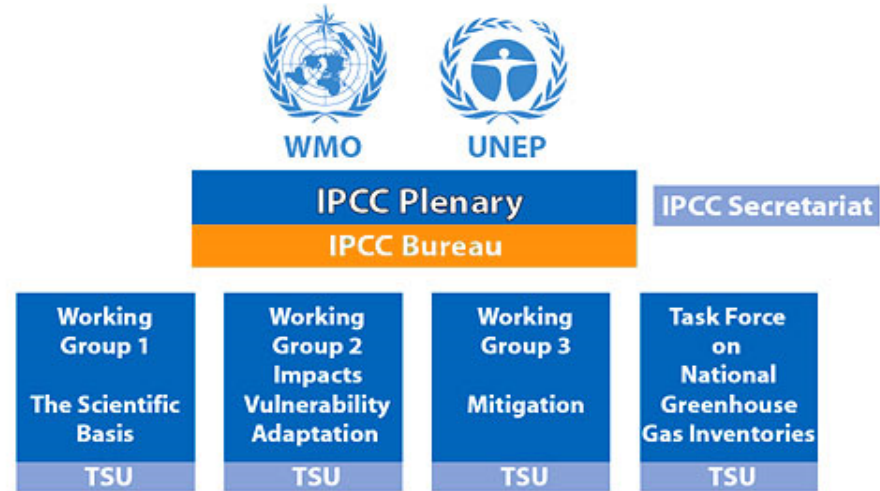
## IPCC Mandate (Part 2)

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- ▣ IPCC reports should be neutral with respect to policy, although they need to deal objectively with policy relevant scientific, technical and socio economic factors.
- ▣ They should be of high scientific and technical standards, and aim to reflect a range of views, expertise and wide geographical coverage.



# IPCC: organization of work



# Overcoming challenges in communicating climate science

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- Expressing uncertainty
- Dealing with dissent
- Managing transparency
- Communicating models
- Providing answers to policy questions
- **How will these be incorporated in scoping out AR5?** *IPCC-30 April 2009*



# Policy mechanism update

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- Kyoto commitment period: 2008-2012
- “Bali Roadmap” to Copenhagen
  - COP15 and COP/MOP5: 7-18 December 2009
  - To finalize “post-Kyoto” framework
- 2 tracks:
  - *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA)
  - *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP)
  
- *AWG-LCA 5 and AWG-KP 7 meeting in Bonn from 29 March to 8 April 2009*



# Key questions for Copenhagen

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- ▣ Aggregate scale of developed country reductions
- ▣ Commitments by some developing countries
- ▣ Flexibility mechanisms
- ▣ Monitoring, reporting and verifying
- ▣ LULUCF: Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
- ▣ REDD: Reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries
- ▣ Financing
- ▣ Adaptation

# Questions

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