

Our ref.: 5082-09/IPCC/WGI

To designated IPCC Focal Points and
Ministries of Foreign Affairs
(if no focal point has been designated)

Geneva, 4 December 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to bring to your attention the **IPCC Workshop on Sea Level Rise and Ice Sheet Instabilities**. The workshop is being organized by Working Group I (WGI) and will be hosted by the Government of Malaysia. The workshop will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 21 to 24 June 2010. I am writing to invite you to nominate experts for consideration as participants in the Workshop.

Among the major long-term consequences of climate change is global sea level rise. A reliable projection is required in order to quantify coastal impacts and to assess the sustainability of coastal settlements around the world. In particular, small islands are already now affected by rising sea level and therefore a reliable estimate of future rates of increase of sea level is crucial. Sea level rise is caused by a number of processes with contributions from: (i) thermal expansion of the ocean, (ii) melting of glaciers and small ice caps, (iii) melting of Greenland and Antarctica, (iv) changes in ocean circulation, and (v) changes in water storage on land. Both the size and the uncertainty of each of these contributions need to be quantified in order to make a useful projection of global sea level rise and its regional expression. The largest uncertainty arises from ice sheets whose response to the warming and to changes in precipitations is not well understood.

The contribution of WGI, *The Physical Science Basis*, to the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) includes a chapter on "Observations: Cryosphere" and a separate chapter on "Sea Level Change" in which sea level changes, their causes and their regional expression will be comprehensively assessed. This chapter will also treat the role of ice sheets and potential ice sheet instabilities on past and future sea level. The assessment of regional sea level change provides important regional information relevant for impacts studies and Working Group II.

The proposal for the Workshop which was approved by the IPCC at its 31st session in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2009 is available from the IPCC WGI website (<http://www.ipcc-wg1.unibe.ch/meetings/slr/slr.html>). The purpose of the Workshop is to present the current status of the science across various disciplines, exchange the latest results, and discuss gaps in understanding. Projections of sea level rise require the combination of information from various fields and robust procedures with respect to estimating uncertainties should also be discussed in this Workshop. It is also hoped that the Workshop will serve to bring together different research communities and to stimulate the production of scientific results in preparation of the AR5.

The Workshop will produce a report that will include extended abstracts of presentations and a short summary of the key issues addressed during the meeting. This is intended to provide a carefully focused reference for the benefit of the authors of the AR5.

Given its focus on the IPCC Assessment Report and the detailed scientific and technical nature of the material to be addressed, the attendance of appropriately qualified experts is vital for the success of this Workshop. Participants will include experts from all the relevant research disciplines such as:

- Observations related to sea level rise (global mean and regional variability) from oceanographic, cryospheric and paleo-records, in particular thermal expansion of the ocean, melting of glaciers and small ice caps, changes in the mass balance of Greenland and Antarctica, changes in ocean circulation, and changes in water storage on land;
- Processes of ice sheet and ice stream dynamics, including their sensitivity to changes in the forcings and on potential irreversibility associated with ice stream or whole ice sheet instabilities;
- Modelling tools used to project sea level rise (global mean and regional variability; decadal to centennial time scale), the resulting projections, and review and constrain associated uncertainties.

A closed web site has been set up specifically for the nomination process, which can be accessed at:

URL: <http://slw.ipcc.unibe.ch/nomination/nomination.php>

Username: slw_nomination

Password: slr151

The link takes you directly to the forms-based web tool. You are encouraged to submit the web nomination form. Summary CVs in English - preferably no more than 5 pages – must be uploaded to complete the process. Nominations will also be accepted by using an XLS form that can be downloaded from this web site. The XLS forms may be submitted using the same website and must also be accompanied by a summary CV in English. Please note that the deadline for receipt of all nominations at the IPCC Working Group I TSU is **29 January 2010**.

Selection of participants will take into account the need for a balance of expertise in the areas noted above, as well as balance in geographical representation and gender. The number of experts at this workshop is restricted to approximately 120. Limited financial support will be available from the IPCC Trust Fund for representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Please note that the timetable for this meeting requires that invitations be sent to the selected invitees in March 2010. Consequently it will not be possible to take late nominations into account.

I thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Copies of this letter are being sent to the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, IPCC Contact Point(s), the Permanent Representative with WMO and Focal Point(s) of UNEP of your country for information.

Sincerely yours,



(Renate Christ)
Secretary of the IPCC