

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEAD AUTHORS, COORDINATING LEAD AUTHORS, CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS AND REVIEW EDITORS OF IPCC REPORTS

Source: Extract from Annex 1 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work

Note:

The objective of the IPCC assessment is to produce a high quality report that is policy relevant, but not prescriptive, and that policy relevance should guide to some extent the specific subject matter that is assessed and/or the level of detail that is provided.

Lead Authors have been chosen on the basis of their scientific expertise as well as their representation of different regions and perspectives. There is an expectation that all contribute actively to the development of the Chapter, and particularly to the assessment statements that appear in the Executive Summary. It is a co-authored effort and should be approached as such. The CLAs have an added responsibility to ensure that all perspectives are discussed and that contributions from all members of the Lead Author team are solicited.

LEAD AUTHORS

Function:

To be responsible for the production of designated sections addressing items of the work programme on the basis of the best scientific, technical and socio-economic information available.

Comment:

Lead Authors will typically work in small groups on sections of the chapters, including figures and graphics, or on cross-chapter topics. For example, developing cross-chapter boxes or annexes. They are responsible for ensuring that the various components of their sections are brought together on time, are of uniformly high quality and conform to the style guidelines set for IPCC reports.

LAs are co-authors with the CLAs of their respective chapters. The task of Lead Authors is a demanding one and in recognition of this, the names of Lead Authors will appear as co-authors of the chapter in the final Report. It is essential that LAs assign the highest priority to their work, ensure its timely delivery, as well as support the rest of the chapter by reviewing all the chapter content and related material, in particular cross-cutting sections in other chapters and annexes, in accordance with their co-authorship of the assessment.

The essence of the Lead Authors' task is to assess knowledge and findings drawn from the available literature. In preparing the first draft, and at subsequent stages of revision after review, Lead Authors should clearly identify diverging or different views for which there is significant scientific or technical support, together with the relevant arguments.

It should be noted that 'assessment' goes beyond surveying or reviewing the available literature, to include application of expert judgement as to confidence or uncertainties in the knowledge that literature represents.

Lead Authors are required to address expert and government review comments when revising text and to provide a response to explain how review comments have been addressed. According to IPCC procedures, review comments and their responses become publicly available once the report is accepted by the Panel.

LAs may draw upon experts from the wider community to contribute to the development of the sections that they are responsible for. Such input is sought from experts who will subsequently be acknowledged as 'Contributing Authors'. Lead Authors will be responsible for coordinating this input and for developing text that is scientifically, technically and socio-economically sound and that faithfully represents, to the extent that this is possible, contributions by a wide variety of experts.

COORDINATING LEAD AUTHORS

Function:

The overall responsibility for coordinating the assessment undertaken by a chapter, to develop the key findings and to communicate these by means of the Executive Summary of their chapter, as well as contributing to the preparation of the Technical Summary and Summary for Policy Makers (SPM).

Comment:

Coordinating Lead Authors act as Lead Authors with the added responsibility of managing the full process of chapter development, of organizing the chapter activities during Lead Author Meetings, and of representing the chapter team at Coordinating Lead Author Meetings. They are responsible for ensuring that the Chapter is completed to a high standard and that all sections are integrated and delivered in a timely manner and conform to the style guidelines set for IPCC reports.

They are also responsible for considering the WG report as a whole, its consistency, and the integration of the report findings, including in the preparation of the SPM. It is also expected that CLAs follow the process of the full AR6 report across working groups and consider consistency with Special Reports, other WG reports and finally with the Synthesis Report.

Coordinating Lead Authors will play a leading role in ensuring that any cross-cutting scientific or technical issues that may involve several sections of a report are addressed in a comprehensive and consistent manner.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Function:

To prepare technical information in the form of text, graphics or data for integration into the chapter by Lead Authors.

Comment:

Input from a wide range of contributors is a key element in the success of IPCC assessments, and the names of all contributors will be acknowledged in the Reports.

Contributions can be solicited by Lead Authors in case there is a gap in expertise amongst the chapter team, or to address review comments for the First and Second Order Drafts. Unprompted contributions may also be considered.

Contributions should be supported with references from the Peer reviewed and internationally available literature, and with copies of any unpublished material cited. Clear indications of how to access the latter should be included in the contributions. For material available in electronic format only, the location where such material may be accessed should be cited.

Contributed material may be edited, merged and if necessary, amended by Lead Authors in the course of developing the overall chapter text.

Contributing Authors do not work directly on the development of the chapter since draft chapter material is confidential and is not available externally to the chapter teams. They also do not attend Lead Author meetings.

REVIEW EDITORS

Function:

Review Editors will assist the Working Group/Task Force Bureaux in identifying reviewers for the expert review process, ensure that all expert and government review comments are afforded appropriate consideration and response, advise lead authors on how to handle contentious/controversial issues.

Comment:

There will be two to four Review Editors per chapter. Review Editors attend the third and fourth Lead Author Meetings in person.

Responsibility for the assessment and preparation of the text remains with the Lead Authors. Review Editors must not contribute to drafting text, nor can they serve as reviewers of the chapters for which they are Review Editors.

Review Editors will oversee the review process, ensuring that all substantive comments are addressed in a balanced and transparent way. Review Editors submit two internal reports during the preparation of the report and a final report to the Working Group Session for the acceptance of the report by the IPCC. Where appropriate, they may be requested to attend Sessions of the Working Group and of the IPCC to communicate their findings from the review process and to assist in finalizing the Summary for Policymakers and Synthesis Report.

The names of all Review Editors will be acknowledged in the Reports.

AUTHORSHIP - Insights from publication ethics

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, <http://publicationethics.org/>) discussion document on what constitutes authorship (COPE Council, June 2014)¹ summarizes guidelines on authorship and basic principles to help prevent common authorship problems, highlighting discipline-specific issues.

It is expected that IPCC Lead Authors and Coordinating Lead Authors comply with the ethics of scientific authorship.

The Council of Science Editors (CSE) describes authors as follows:

« Authors are individuals identified by the research group to have made substantial contributions to the reported work and agree to be accountable for these contributions. In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which of their coauthors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. In addition, an author should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors. All authors should review and approve the final manuscript ».

While there are discipline-specific challenges to this general description, it can be adapted to the IPCC assessment context as follows:

¹ <https://publicationethics.org/news/what-constitutes-authorship-new-cope-discussion-document>

1/ Lead Authors are expected to have provided substantial contributions for which they are accountable (in terms of quality of the assessment). This can be in the form of paragraphs of text, sections, boxes, tables, figures.

Accountability belongs to Lead Authors and not to Contributing Authors; Lead Authors should check the quality of inputs from Contributing Authors.

2/ Lead Authors should be able to identify which of the other Lead Authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work and have confidence in the integrity of their contributions.

This implies that Lead Authors work beyond elements of a given section, and that chapter teams have a collective approach of the assessment, including double quality control for all chapter elements (e.g. reviewing literature, confidence statements, figures, tables etc).

3/ Lead Authors should review and approve the chapter draft

This implies that deadlines must allow an early compilation of initial inputs so that chapter teams can review the whole chapter draft; Lead Authors should review sections beyond their own and are expected to endorse the key findings as the outcome of the collective assessment process.

PLAGIARISM

As part of the TSU's work on the compilation of the report drafts before they go out for review, chapters will run through text-matching software that aims to identify any text bearing strong resemblance with existing work.

Plagiarism (copy and paste from another study without citing the study, (Ref: <https://www.springer.com/fr/book/9783658063931>) and self-plagiarism (copy and paste from one's cited work into IPCC report drafts or copy and paste of IPCC report drafts into one's papers without informing the other IPCC authors) breaches the ethics of authorship.