



**Statement at the opening of the Twenty Second Session of the IPCC
by
Mr M Jarraud
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New Delhi, India, 9 - 11 November 2004

Honorable Minister,
Dr Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP,
Dr Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chairman of IPCC,
Representatives of United Nations System and Partner Organizations,
Distinguished Colleagues and Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here today to address the opening of the twenty-second session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and to extend a warm welcome to all the delegates. On behalf of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and on my own, I wish to express my gratitude to Your Excellency and through you, to the Government of India, for hosting this session of the Panel. Your presence demonstrates the Government's as well as your personal commitment to the efforts undertaken by the IPCC and the world community to address the challenge of climate change and its impacts. I particularly wish to thank Dr Pachauri for heading the IPCC so successfully over the past two and a half years, and to congratulate him since we are holding this session of the IPCC in our Chairman's own country. Let me further express WMO's gratitude to the Government of India for its valuable support to WMO through the India Meteorological Department.

This Panel meeting offers an opportunity to look forward and focus on addressing the challenges that lie ahead, including the scientific input to the tenth Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to be held next month in Buenos Aires (Argentina), the International Meeting for the 10-year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA +10) for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), scheduled to be held in January 2005 in Mauritius, and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in January 2005, in Kobe (Japan).

Since the inception of IPCC in 1988 at the initiative of WMO and UNEP, its Assessment Reports and its special reports have had considerable influence on global policies related to climate change. For example, the conclusions of the IPCC's 2001 Third Assessment Report that "most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities" has had significant influence on a wide range of related policies at national, regional and international levels. Today, climate change still poses a serious challenge to policymakers but concerns have shifted from recognition of anthropogenic climate change. Indeed, policy makers are now requesting much more information on the implications of climate change. Actual climate change due to past emissions, limits of adaptation and expected impacts to threatened ecosystems are important elements of information for decision makers, but they also require information on response options, as well as their short- and long-term costs, and about the potential effectiveness of particular measures in addressing the global problem in the longer term. Information on timing of measures is also required, in order to achieve the most effective response to the climate change challenge, while ensuring that vulnerable areas and sectors become more resilient. This can only be achieved through a close cooperation among relevant experts from all three IPCC working groups, policy makers, the private sector, the public and the media. I am confident that this session will chart a way forward on how this could be achieved.

In addition to the three Assessment Reports, a number of special reports and technical papers have fulfilled the needs of major multilateral environment agreements, especially the UNFCCC, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer. The flexibility shown by IPCC should enable it to address many other issues related to global environmental change.

In this regard, I am therefore pleased that the Panel has agreed to address the major challenge related to climate change and water resources. This requires considerable resources, affordability of technologies, capacity building and sound management. These measures can only succeed if there is marked improvement in our understanding of the crosscutting relationship between climatic and hydrological systems, and the impact of climate change on water resources. For example, the WMO/IOC/ICSU Global Energy and Water Cycle Experiment (GEWEX) focuses on variability and predictability of the global energy budget and the water cycle. This requires increasingly closer collaboration between meteorologists, hydrologists and indeed all other scientists. Such multidisciplinary efforts are timely if we are to overcome water shortage and ensure water quality in the early part of the twenty-first century. Indeed, it is estimated that over the next two decades, the world will need 17 per cent more water to grow food for increasing populations in developing countries, and the total water use will increase by 40

per cent. By 2025, two-thirds of the world's population is likely to live in countries with moderate or severe water shortages.

The other Special Report on Safeguarding the Ozone Layer and the Global Climate System is also of great interest to WMO. I consider it an important signal that this report is being prepared in cooperation with the Technical and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) of the Montreal Protocol. We need to embark upon complex environmental problems in a comprehensive manner, while keeping in mind that measures intended to solve one problem may have negative side effects or aggravate other matters. Additionally, the Special Report on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage addresses new technologies that may have strong implications for mitigation strategies, and could be extremely valuable for further IPCC work.

These special reports will no doubt contribute to the preparation of the next Assessment Reports. Since its twenty-first session in Vienna last year, IPCC has taken significant steps towards the development of the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). Governments have nominated experts to contribute to this report and, from amongst those experts, excellent teams of lead authors have been selected for the preparation of the three Working Groups' contributions to the AR4. The first lead authors meetings have already been held and I understand that the process of writing the reports is already well under way.

As the authoritative scientific voice on weather, climate and water of the United Nations System, WMO is keen to contribute to the success of AR4. A number of WMO Programmes provide the framework for research that will be assessed in the IPCC report and I am certain that there will be fruitful interaction between IPCC and these WMO Programmes. This concerns, of course, all topics related to the science of the climate system, particularly that of climate observation, which is intended to be a long-term, user-driven operational system, capable of providing the comprehensive observations required for monitoring the climate system, for detecting and attributing climate change, for assessing the impacts of climate variability and change, and for supporting research oriented toward improved understanding, modeling and prediction of the climate system. WMO's observing system enables the detection of changes in the chemical and particulate composition of the atmosphere. In these respects, WMO Programmes along with the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) address the total climate system, including its physical, chemical and biological properties, as well as the associated atmospheric, oceanic, hydrologic, cryospheric and terrestrial processes.

In this respect, while working through the National Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services of its 187 Members, WMO has developed a global system of World Data Centers for the archiving and sharing of meteorological and hydrological parameters. These datasets also include information on the chemical composition of the atmosphere, particularly the greenhouse gases. Nevertheless, these sets of observations have significant gaps in space and time, particularly in the developing countries, so one of WMO's major tasks is to coordinate technical cooperation amongst its Members, in order that older data may be rescued and new sources of data may be implemented.

Over the last two decades, research into climate variability and predictability on all timescales has been the focus of international cooperation within the framework of the WMO-sponsored World Climate Research Programme (WCRP). In particular, WCRP's Climate Variability and Predictability (CLIVAR) project is extending the investigation of climate variability and predictability to larger geographic regions and longer timescales.

I am aware that, during this session, you will be considering the scope and content of a possible synthesis report for the AR4. Much preparatory work has been done and I appreciate and highly value the aim of experts involved in the IPCC process, in providing an objective and up to date assessment of the scientific, technical and socio-economic information. However, it is also important that IPCC remains aware of users' needs, if it is to provide policy relevant information. Immediately after completion of two Methodology Reports in November last year, the revision of the guidelines of the IPCC National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Programme was initiated. This part of IPCC work, which is sometimes overlooked, is a great challenge and offers tremendous value to the Convention process of the UNFCCC. I therefore wish the Co-chairs of the Task Force and the authors a successful completion of their new task.

Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to stress that, in furthering the mission of IPCC, there is need to involve more closely the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in the development and strengthening of improved observing networks, for the detection and monitoring of climate change, especially in the developing countries, over the oceans and in polar regions. This effort should be in close coordination with WMO, as well as other relevant data gathering, archiving and processing programmes and initiatives that are emerging, including the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS).

I believe that the success of the Panel over the last 16 years has been due to its strict adherence to the ideals of impartiality, transparency and scientific authority and integrity. In this way, it has been able to attract and associate most of the world's best scientists and experts working in the field of climate change, from the developing as well as developed countries.

The challenge for the Panel is to build on the momentum generated so far and to facilitate the continued involvement of scientists and experts from developed and developing countries, and from different disciplines, while ensuring their commitment and those of Governments and international organizations, to work in synergy and cost-effectively.

The success of IPCC also rests on the fact that its work has been truly independent of policy objectives. WMO has been pleased to co-sponsor the IPCC and wishes to pay tribute to all those who have made IPCC what it is today. A challenge for the Panel is, accordingly, to maintain the very high standard that we have come to expect from it and we are certain that this will be the case with the Fourth Assessment Report, to be published in 2007.

Let me finalize by expressing how proud I am to be speaking for WMO as one of the two founding organizations of IPCC.

Along 16 years of dedicated work, WMO and UNEP have shaped IPCC into what it is today – the authoritative and unbiased scientific voice on climate change and its impacts.

I wish you every success for this meeting.

Thank you.