

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to update on the status of the IPCC work programme.

On 1 November at the IPCC 40th Session government representatives approved and adopted the last element of IPCCs fifth assessment cycle, the Synthesis of the 5th Assessment Report. This report synthesizes and integrates information of the three Working Group contributions to the AR5 specifically written for the use of policymakers.

The findings of the working groups and the SYR are relevant for a range of agenda items of COP and considerations by various subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC and I hope delegates will find the IPCC information helpful in their deliberations. We will present the SYR tomorrow at lunchtime at a SBSTA-IPCC special event and tomorrow afternoon IPCC experts will talk about findings relevant for Article 2 of the Convention and the 2013-15 review of the long-term global goal in the structured expert dialogue. IPCC experts are available throughout the two weeks to respond to scientific technical questions.

The findings of the AR5 are clear and timely. Let me recall a few key statements:

Human influence on the climate system is clear and impacts on human and natural systems are already felt. I would like to highlight observed changes in many extreme weather and climate events.

Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, amplifying existing risks to people and ecosystems and create new ones, while affecting even more disadvantaged people and communities. Some of the climate change impacts will continue for centuries.

Limiting climate change would require substantial and sustained reductions in GHG emissions. Cumulative emissions of carbon dioxide largely determine global mean surface warming by the late 21st century and beyond, which means there is a limited budget. Looking at the 2 degree goal, two thirds of this budget has already been used.

We have the means to address climate change.

Adaptation and mitigation are complementary strategies for reducing and managing climate change risks. Without additional mitigation beyond those in place today, and even with appropriate adaptation warming by the end of the century will lead to high to very high risks of severe, widespread and irreversible impacts globally.

There are multiple mitigation pathways that likely limit warming to below 2 degrees relative to pre-industrial levels. These pathways require substantial reductions – you heard the IPCC chair earlier today telling us that limiting warming to less than two degrees 40-70% reduction globally by 2050 and emissions near zero by 2100. Implementing such reductions poses substantial technological, economic, social and institutional challenges, which increase with delays in mitigation. All require effective institutions and governance, innovation and investments in environmentally sound technology and infrastructure, sustainable livelihoods, and behavioral and lifestyle choice.

But near term action is critical. Substantial emissions reductions over the next few decades can reduce climate risks, increase prospects for effective adaptation, reduce costs and challenges of mitigation in the longer term, and contribute to climate resilient pathways for sustainable development.