



INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE



Climate Change and Water

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Preface

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water is the sixth paper in the IPCC Technical Paper series and was produced in response to a proposal by the Secretariat of the World Climate Programme – Water (WCP-Water) and the International Steering Committee of the Dialogue on Water and Climate at the 19th Plenary Session of the IPCC which took place in Geneva in April 2002. A consultative meeting on Climate Change and Water was held in Geneva in November 2002 and recommended the preparation of a Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water instead of preparing a Special Report to address this subject. Such a document was to be based primarily on the findings of the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, but also earlier IPCC publications. The Panel also decided that water should be treated as cross cutting theme in the Fourth Assessment Report.

The Technical Paper addresses the issue of freshwater. Sea-level rise is dealt with only insofar as it can lead to impacts on freshwater in coastal areas and beyond. Climate, freshwater, biophysical and socio-economic systems are interconnected in complex ways. Hence, a change in any one of these can induce a change in any other. Freshwater-related issues are critical in determining key regional and sectoral vulnerabilities. Therefore, the relationship between climate change and freshwater resources is of primary concern to human society and also has implications for all living species.

An interdisciplinary writing team of Lead Authors was selected by the three IPCC Working Group Bureaus with the aim of achieving a regional and topical balance. Like all IPCC Technical Papers, this product too is based on the material of previously approved/accepted/adopted IPCC reports and underwent a simultaneous expert and Government review, followed by a final Government review. The Bureau of the IPCC acted in the capacity of an editorial board to ensure that the review comments were adequately addressed by the Lead Authors in the finalisation of the Technical Paper.

The Bureau met in its 37th Session in Budapest in April 2008 and considered the major comments received during the final Government review. In the light of its observations and requests, the Lead Authors finalised the Technical Paper, after which the Bureau authorised its release to the public.

We owe a large debt of gratitude to the Lead Authors (listed in the Paper) who gave of their time very generously and who completed the Technical Paper according to schedule. We would like to thank Dr. Jean Palutikof, Head of the Technical Support Unit of IPCC Working Group II, for her skilful leadership through the production of this Paper.



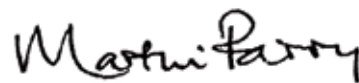
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Marilyn Anderson prepared the Index and Nancy Boston copy edited the text.

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