

## **SOUNDBITES: OPENING CEREMONY IPCC SYTHESIS REPORT (AR5) 27<sup>TH</sup> October 2014**

### **H.E Rasmus Helveg Petersen, Minister for Climate, Energy and Building - Denmark**

Today we can measure the rising temperatures, the rising seas and our rising insurance bills, and tomorrow we'll have to measure our debt to the future generations. As fossil fuel is burning, so is the platform underneath us. We can stop the fire, or we can jump into the sea – and the first solution does cost money, and the second seems to be free, but it isn't.

It's instinctively wrong to throw garbage on other people's premises. You would never do that. It should be equally wrong to pollute the earth from tale pipes and chimneys. It ought to be socially unacceptable to set a bigger footprint on Earth than your 1 in 7 billion set of feet can justify, and I think we will soon be arriving at that. Climate change is just too dangerous to ignore.

### **H.E Kirsten Brosbøl, Minister for the Environment- Denmark**

The message from this session of the IPCC is very clear: Climate change is real. It affects peoples, people and regions differently, but it affects all of us. The expected damage is immense, and the challenge is overwhelming. Only if we act now, adopt intelligent solutions and learn from each other, we can reduce the impact that is coming.

The findings from the report are enough to send chills down anyone's spine. I wish to thank all of you who worked tirelessly to ensure this analysis for decision-makers to act upon. The evidence makes it clear that not only are the issues we need to address immense – they are also right at our doorstep.

### **Frank Jensen, Lord Mayor of Copenhagen**

We must learn from the best and the worst examples from other cities and nations to adapt them into our local conditions. I am sure if we join forces, climate change can be a huge opportunity for cities and nations. If we tackle climate change the right way, we will be able to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, create jobs, new jobs for all the youngsters, and to make our cities even more live-able. Now national leaders must take action and agree an international agreement at the Climate Cop 21 next year in Paris.

### **Mr. Jeremiah Lengoasa, Deputy Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization**

This is of course the most comprehensive assessment of climate change since the commencement of the assessment process with the founding of the IPCC by UNEP and the WMO a number of years ago. Much than 800 scientists were selected as authors and this morning I would say again that the statements from the Ministers are a clear indication that indeed there are policymakers who are listening and prepared to act.

Let me quickly refer to the latest greenhouse gas bulletin issued just over a few weeks ago, which confirms the findings of AR5 that show that concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide reached record levels in 2013 with the concentration particularly of levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increasing at the fastest rate in the last 30 years, past.

Climate science of course helps us explain the past, helps us understand the present and predict the future. This knowledge is only useful when it is understood and used and thus the communication of course is a key part of the IPCC's responsibility.

**Mr John Christensen on behalf of Executive Director of UNEP, Achim Steiner**

AR5 provides real conclusive scientific evidence that human activities continue to cause unprecedented changes in the Earth's climate with the conclusion that we need to elevate the political level and commitment if we are to potentially avoid the catastrophic effects of climate change.

Colleagues, a new global climate agreement will need to be backed by innovative bottom up action and voluntary initiatives.

**Video Message Ms. Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary, UNFCCC**

Ladies and gentlemen, friends and colleagues, Let me start by thanking Dr. Pachauri and the IPCC for inviting me to be part of the IPCC 40th Session, where the Synthesis Report of the Fifth Assessment will be adopted and approved.

I look forward to the final results of this session as the Synthesis Report is a crucial component of the complete AR5, which is proving to be the most up-to-date and influential scientific report on climate change ever released. AR5 is important for its content. It demonstrates humanity is in large part responsible for climate change. It shows everyone is vulnerable, no one is immune. It validates the 97 percent consensus within the wider scientific community.

And it shows the 2 degree limit is still within reach. But AR5 is also important because of its timing. It comes as governments are engaged in a taking the global response to climate change to the next level through a meaningful agreement in Paris 14 months from now. In the past year we have seen the private sector wake up to the physical risk of climate change and the bottom line benefits of renewable energy, energy efficiency and heightened resilience. National governments, regions and cities are putting in place policies that point growth towards low-carbon. And people are demanding action. This summary for policy makers is extremely timely, considering the building momentum. Policymakers are more receptive now than ever before. We currently have almost 500 climate change laws in more than 60 countries covering more than 85% of emissions. Right now national governments are preparing their national contributions to the new, universal climate change agreement.

The full cabinet in every country is beginning to grasp the fact that climate change is not just an environmental issue. It is a national security issue, a finance and economy

issue and a health issue and a diplomatic issue. Stable growth is simply not possible in an unstable climate. Policymakers need the best possible risk assessments that are timely, accurate and above all impartial—indeed impartiality must be at the core of this work—in order to make informed and bold decisions nationally and in the multilateral process. So today, I have a request for each of the two groups gathered here, scientists and government delegates. To scientists I say keep up the great work—your contribution is indispensable. Humanity’s best chance to truly meet the climate challenge lies with science. Science improves our understanding of the issue we face. And science increases the innovative solutions that represent a path to bending the emissions curve, achieving a long-term goal of full climate neutrality and limiting temperature rise to less than 2 degrees Celsius. You are on the right side of history and I ask you to keep researching, keep publishing, and keep the wave of climate change evidence coming. To delegates, I ask you to see the faces of citizens and people behind the numbers, behind the science. Because in the end, the IPCC is here to serve humanity as we all are—and serve decision making in ways that maximize positive outcomes for seven billion people. Dear friends, the AR5 is set to be an invaluable and irreplaceable resource to policymakers current and future. The Synthesis Report that comes from this meeting of the IPCC, alongside the full and complete AR5, can deliver crucial information to those who need it most, when it is most needed, in a manner that is critically needed. You are leaving a legacy to future policymakers, scientists and leaders of government and industry. I look forward to seeing the results of this meeting in action in Lima and on the road to Paris next year. I thank you for your very good work.

**Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the IPCC**

I cannot predict the outcome of those negotiations, but I do know that it is critical for policymakers to allow their decisions to be informed by the science. I do not envy them – their task is formidable but may I humbly suggest that they avoid being overcome by the seeming hopelessness of addressing climate change. It is not hopeless.

Much has been made of the growing peril of delaying the hard choices that need to be made to adapt to and mitigate climate change I don’t discount these challenges but the synthesis report shows that solutions are at hand and enormous strides are being made in alternative sources of clean energy. There is much we can do to use energy more efficiently, reducing and eventually emanating deforestation provides additional avenues for action. This is not to say it will be easy – it won’t. A great deal of work and tall hurdles lay ahead but it can be done. We still have time to build a better more sustainable world. We still have time to avoid the most serious impacts of climate change. But we have precious little of that time.

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