

**Committee for the Expert Review of Synthesis and Assessment Product 4.3:
“The Effects of Climate Change on Agriculture, Land Resources,
Water Resources, and Biodiversity”**

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Whitten Building Room 108
Washington, D.C.
February 5-6, 2008**

The Committee for the Expert Review of Synthesis and Assessment Product 4.3, *The Effects of Climate Change on Agriculture, Land Resources, Water Resources, and Biodiversity*, convened at 9:00 A.M. on February 5, 2008 in room 108 of the USDA Whitten Building in Washington, D.C. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public.

CERSAP Members Present:

- Thomas Lovejoy (CERSAP Chair) - The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment
- J. Roy Black - Michigan State University
- David Breshears - University of Arizona
- Brian Helmuth - University of South Carolina
- Frank Mitloehner - University of California, Davis
- Harold Mooney, Stanford University
- Dennis Ojima – Heinz Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment
- William Sommers - George Mason University
- Carol Wessman (via telephone) - University of Colorado

Global Change Program Office staff present:

- Margaret Walsh
- William Hohenstein

Authors present:

- Peter Backlund
- Jerry Hatfield (via telephone)
- Tony Janetos
- Dennis Lettenmaier (via telephone)
- Mike Ryan
- David Schimel (via telephone)

Tuesday February 5, 2008

Following announcements and introductions, the schedule for Synthesis and Assessment Product 4.3 (SAP 4.3), *The Effect of Climate Change on Agriculture, Land Resources, Water Resources, and Biodiversity* was reviewed. Since the Committee for the Expert Review of Synthesis and Assessment Product 4.3 (CERSAP) last met in June 2007, SAP 4.3 has been revised according to comments made by the CERSAP. Additionally, it has undergone public comment and interagency technical review, and has been revised in response to more than one thousand comments received during those phases of report development.

Each of the chapters was introduced, followed by CERSAP discussion on chapter contents and possible improvements.

Chapter	Speaker
Executive Summary & Abstract	Peter Backlund
Introduction	Tony Janetos
Agriculture	Jerry Hatfield
Land Resources	Mike Ryan
Water Resources	Dennis Lettenmaier
Biodiversity	Tony Janetos
Synthesis	Peter Backlund

Discussion topics included revising certain language of the overarching findings to clarify intended meaning, the necessity of noting specifically that adaptation had been excluded from the scope of the report and was not discussed, the listing of multiple or additional stressors in some systems, possible restructuring of some sections for readability, and the addition of specific citations not already included in the draft.

The committee noted that the report was generally well done and that its findings were well founded. A list of potential improvements was started for continuation on Day 2, including decisions on what the committee would like to recommend regarding reorganization of the land resources chapter; whether changes were needed to clarify differences between climate, weather, and variability; and whether section 3.5.4 in the land resources chapter was within the report's scope.

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

The committee revisited three issues left unresolved from the previous day.

1. The committee agreed that reorganization of the land resources chapter to separate the discussions of forests and arid lands, with a common introduction and findings section, would be their suggestion to the authors.
2. Upon review, the committee decided that more clarification distinguishing weather, climate, and variability in the report would be desirable.
3. The committee concluded that, with changes including the deletion of the final sentence and some rewording, section 3.5.4 on carbon sequestration was within the scope of the report and useful to include.

The committee then reviewed the list of comments for consideration by the authors for revising SAP 4.3. Many of the comments were editorial or easy changes. Other suggestions included a more explicit framing of the features that distinguish SAP 4.3 from other climate impact reports, structural changes to the Land Resources chapter, and organizational issues related to content in the Biodiversity chapter. The list of requested changes was given to the report's authors to address.

The committee reviewed the seven questions posed in its charter regarding the quality of SAP 4.3, and decided that the report met the standards set for it under most categories. Those

categories requiring a second examination based on a redrafted document included adding more specific information about the intended audience, more explicit mention of the inability of the report's authors to address adaptation due to the definition of scope, more information in the Executive Summary to make it more complete with regard to the rest of the document, and an overall recommendation regarding the report's disposition.

CERSAP agreed to draft a recommendation on the disposition of SAP 4.3 upon seeing the final version. The committee expected that they would be likely to recommend that the report be forwarded into the interagency clearance process and adopted as a technically credible and well supported examination of the current scientific understanding of climate change effects on the natural resources and ecosystem services documented in SAP 4.3.

The committee adjourned at 12:00 p.m.