



# Is there a need for an IPBES?

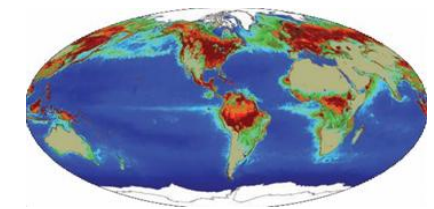
Chris Field

April 2010

IPCC WGII  
<http://www.ipcc-wg2.gov/>



DEPARTMENT OF  
**GLOBAL ECOLOGY**





# Lessons from the IPCC

- History and structure of the IPCC
- Government buy-in
  - Philosophical
  - Financial
- Community buy-in
- Government meddling
- Target





# Formation of the IPCC

- AGGG – UNEP, WMO, ICSU, 1986
- Our Common Future, 1987
- Planning for UN Conference of Environment and Development
- Ozone assessment and Montreal Protocol
- WMO and UNEP call for climate assessment, 1987
- 28 countries met to form the IPCC, November 1988
  
- Bolin, B 2007. A History of the Science and Politics of Climate Change: The Role of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, 277 pp.



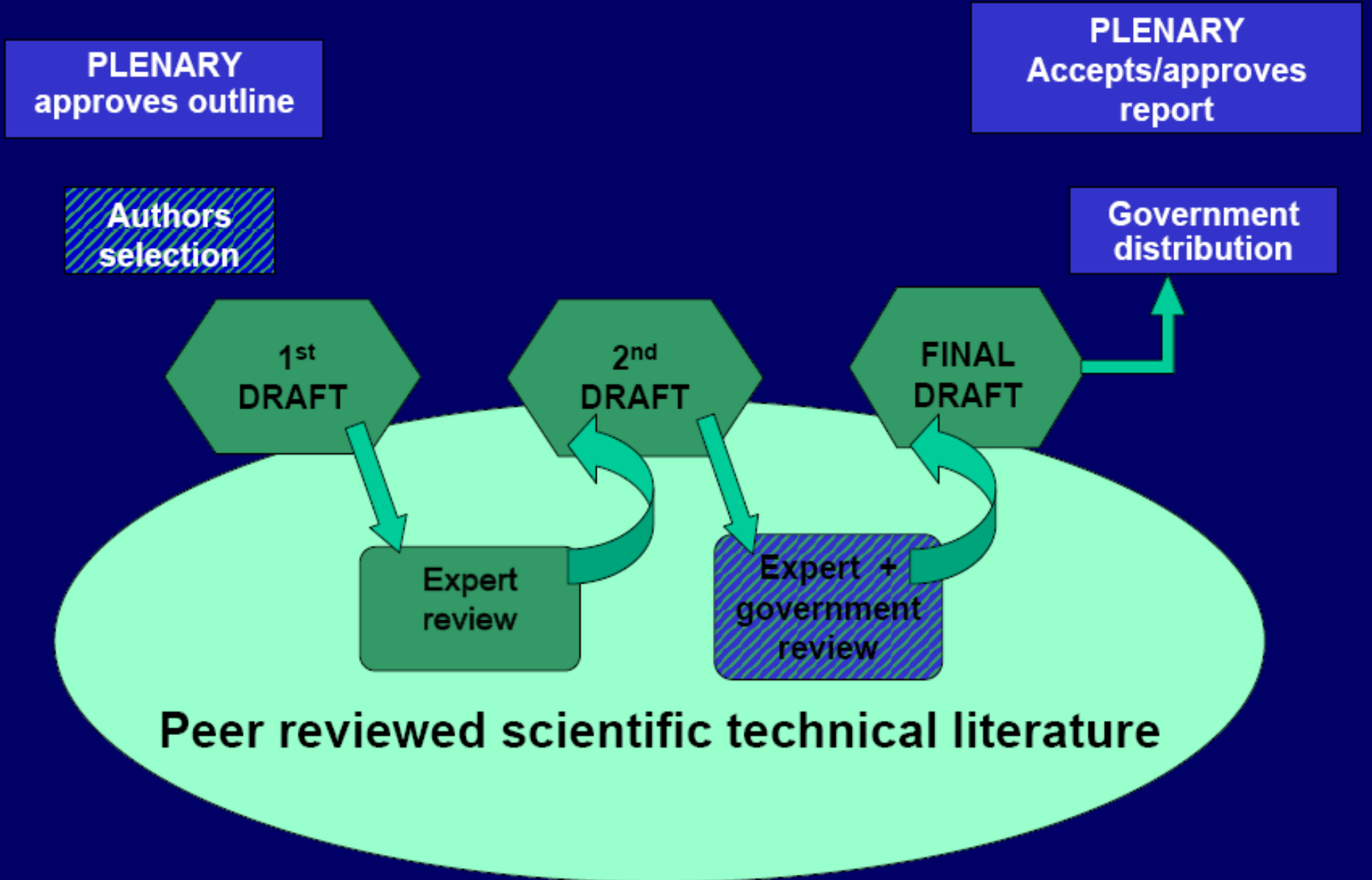
# IPCC

- 3 working groups
  - WGI: The Physical Science Basis
  - WGII: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability
  - WGIII: Mitigation of climate change
  - TFI: Task force on inventories
- Assessment reports in 1990, 1995, 2001, & 2007
- Small secretariat and TSUs



# IPCC: role of governments

- Ownership (at arm's length)
  - Elect the leadership
  - Nominate authors
  - Approve reports
- Financial support
  - Trust fund
  - WG TSUs
  - Travel
  - In-kind



**PLENARY**  
approves outline

**PLENARY**  
Accepts/approves  
report

**Authors  
selection**

**Government  
distribution**

**1st  
DRAFT**

**2nd  
DRAFT**

**FINAL  
DRAFT**

**Expert  
review**

**Expert +  
government  
review**

**Peer reviewed scientific technical literature**



# IPCC: response of governments

- Buy-in



# Community buy-in

- Gold-standard
- Attention of the media
- Until last year: gradual success with “It’s real”
- Missed opportunities for clear and effective communication



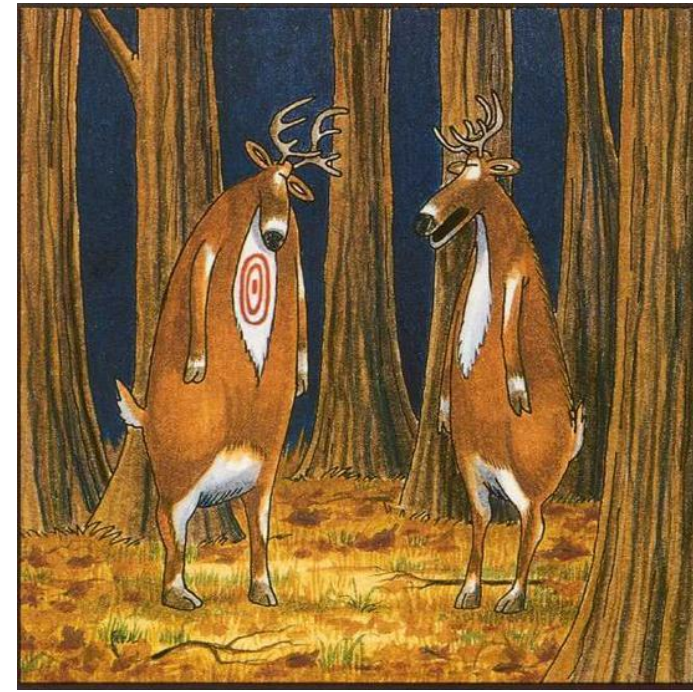
# Government meddling

- The lean
- The stall
- The innocent
- The purist



# Target

- 1995: “discernable impact”
- 2001: “hockey stick”
- 2009: “climate-gate”
- 2010: “Sea-level-gate”



Bummer of a birthmark, Hal.  
Gary Larson

## OPINION

# IPCC: cherish it, tweak it or scrap it?

As calls for reform intensify following recent furores about e-mails, conflicts of interest, glaciers and extreme weather, five climatologists propose ways forward for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Their suggestions range from reaffirming the panel's governing principles to increasing the number and speed of its publications to replacing the volunteer organization with a permanently staffed structure.

## Split into three panels

**Mike Hulme**

Coordinating lead author, lead author, review editor (AR3), University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK

Much has changed since the late 1980s when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was designed, notably the nature of scientific practice and its relationship with society. How the world's knowledge communities are mobilized to enlighten policy deliberations also needs to be different. The assessments published by the IPCC have firmly elevated anthropogenic climate change to one of the major international political issues of our time. But they have made this impact by drawing in an ever-widening sub-



STR/AFP/GETTY

An IPCC meeting: the panel will publish its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), in 2014.



# Lessons for an IPBES

- Government buy-in invaluable
- Independence invaluable
- Doable?