March 21, 2023

ICSF Critique of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Synthesis Report, Summary for Policymakers (AR6 SYR SPM), and of the Irish Government's Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23)

1. Summary ICSF Position

The Irish Climate Science Forum (ICSF) finds the IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report, Summary for Policymakers (SPM), just released, to be seriously flawed in failing to reflect the latest objective climate science and observations. This latest SPM is a synthesis of several previous IPCC reports which ICSF had duly critiqued as flawed. It is beyond belief that IPCC, after six Assessment Reports over 35 years, still is unable to predict future climate with any certainty, while real-world observations point to only a modest further 1ºC warming to 2100. ICSF therefore suggests that IPCC now be disbanded.

ICSF accordingly rejects this latest IPCC Synthesis Report SPM as an appropriate basis for truly sustainable Irish Government policymaking and urges that its Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) be fundamentally reviewed in the light of objective climate science, the imperatives of energy and food security and of economic affordability. Flawed IPCC science has unfortunately led to absurd mitigation-based policymaking that will only damage the economy and do virtually nothing for climate. Well-focused adaptation to the modest warming is the way forward in the coming decades. Similar policy comments will apply to other jurisdictions.

ICSF expands its case below, making reference to its highly relevant lectures by world-leading scientists and engineers (based up by their detailed research), as listed in the Annex.

2. There are serious flaws in the IPCC Synthesis Report SPM:

ICSF finds the following serious flaws with the IPCC Synthesis Report SPM:

- The SPM presents five widely-diverging models for future climate scenarios, indicating that IPCC is still unable to predict climate change to 2100 with any certainty, an incredible failure after six Assessment Reports over 35 years. Ongoing temperature observations provide very clear evidence the average of the IPCC models significantly exaggerates warming and in particular that the upper scenarios (the SSP3-7.0 and SSP5-8.5 scenarios, the lattermost showing almost 5°C warming by 2100) are highly implausible[3,4,5,8.9.21].

- The SPM implies a most likely 3°C Equilibrium Climate Sensitivity (ECS, defined as the global temperature rise due to doubling of Green-House Gas levels), despite multiple independent ECS estimates of less than 1.5°C[21]. The latest science points to a climate sensitivity of only 1°C[1,5]. IPCC has inexplicably ignored evidence of low ECS.

- Seen in real-world context, current warming therefore presents no significant threat; the global temperature is thankfully gradually recovering from that of the Little Ice Age (now about 1.1ºC above its 1850 minimum), one of the coldest periods in the last 2,000 years[13]. The planet has benefitted from that temperature increase.

- Ongoing satellite temperature data, the most comprehensive and accurate available, confirms an average global rate of temperature rise over the last 40 years of just on 0.13°C per decade[3,4,21]. This points to about 1°C further rise by 2100, then reaching a temperature similar to those of the Minoan, Roman and Medieval Warming Periods (which IPCC incidentally has tried to obliterate in its flawed "hockey-stick" graph).

- The SPM models fail to understand the logarithmically-decreasing GHG influence of CO2 as its atmospheric concentration further increases[2,7,20]. The first 100ppm of CO2 causes some 80% of its GHG-effect (thankfully making Earth habitable), each increment thereafter successively less, and at the current level of 410ppm, it is already in saturation[5,21]. Thus, adding more anthropogenic CO2 will actually cause only very modest GHG-induced further warming to which the world can prudently adapt.

- Bearing in mind that the global CO2 level of 410ppm is almost 50% above the pre-industrial level of 280ppm[1,16], the likely doubling of GHG levels to 560ppm by 2100 would imply less than 0.5°C further rise due to the anthropogenic influence by 2100[7,8]. Real-world observations again categorically disprove the IPCC models.

- Looking at opposite situation, reducing future emissions through mitigation will have practically imperceptible impact on climate. Even IPCC itself quietly recognises the minimal effect of mitigation over decades, as anthropogenic CO2 is only a tiny part of the global centuries-long Carbon cycle[8,14,17, 20, 21].

- As a reality-check on the non-effectiveness of mitigation, the COVID-19 pandemic reduced global GHG emissions by about 6% in 2020, which reduction had negligible influence on global atmospheric CO_2 concentration, and by implication, had negligible influence on climate[8,11,14,19].

- The SPM incorrectly claims that the rate of rise in global temperature post 1970 is unprecedented, despite it having been just as rapid in the years 1910-1945, with global cooling between 1945 and 1978[1,5,19], that cooling in itself flatly contradicting the IPCC assertion that all modern warming is GHG-related.

- Paleoclimate records infer similar rates of temperature rise in previous warming periods[13], these prior warming periods evidently not driven by the then-prevailing GHG levels[18]. IPCC fails to recognise this disconnection between widely-varying GHG and planetary temperature variations in past geological periods[13]. In general, IPCC chooses to ignore evidence of natural climate variability, another serious flaw[13,18].

- In particular, as regards agriculture-related emissions, the SPM ignores the latest research by independent scientists, most notably Professors William Happer and William van Wijngaarden who have now proven that the warming from nitrous oxide and methane will be insignificant (being less than 0.1ºC/century)[1,2,7,17,20].

- The SPM refers to supposedly catastrophic global mean sea level rise through cherry-picking data. One hundred years of real-world tide gauge readings indicate a linear rate of rise of only 1-2 mm/year, while some 30 years of satellite altimetry data indicates a rate of rise of about 3mm/year[1,3,19], neither dataset with any evidence of acceleration. Even taking the higher figure implies only 25cm further rise by 2100; IPCC models with up to 90cm of sea-level rise by 2100 are grossly exaggerated.

- Alleged trends in so-called "extreme weather events" are frequently cited in the SPM, as these also were in the SPM of the Working Group 1 Report. However the rigorous data analysis in the detailed chapters of that WG1 Report indicates no evidence of increasing trends in flooding, drought (meteorological or hydrological), wildfires, tropical cyclones, winter storms, thunderstorms, tornadoes, hail, lightning or extreme winds, while there is some evidence for increasing heat-waves, heavy precipitation and droughts (ecological and agricultural), not surprisingly, given a mildly warmer planet[6,8,9]. This data also undermines the SPM thesis that these events will worsen as further warming occurs. The Synthesis Report SPM is erroneous on both counts.

- As a further related comment, IPCC "fingerprint attribution studies" of so-called extreme weather events have now been demonstrated to be systematically flawed from a statistical perspective[6,9], a point which IPCC has never understood.

- As regards SPM comments on the cryosphere, the real-world observations are that Arctic ice has declined since 1979, but been on average stable over the last 15 years. The Greenland ice sheet status is similar to that of the 1880s. Both the Arctic and Greenland were warmer in the past centuries, but recovered. The Antarctic is now experiencing record cold temperatures. Naturally-occurring glacier retreat regularly reveals vegetation and historical artefacts from previous warm periods[1,3,8,18,19].

- Though not specifically elaborated in the SPM, the pacific small islands are not disappearing, there are no significant issues with ocean warming or acidity, coral reefs are recovering and polar bears are thriving. The SPM lacks scientific balance.

- Finally, IPCC fails to explain that the slightly increased global CO2 levels are actually enhancing photosynthesis and global crop yields, in turn helping alleviate continuing under-nourishment, which unfortunately is still rife in developing regions[2,7,20].

In summary, the SPM implied message of there being a "climate crisis", is not at all supported by the many above-cited arguments[5,16]; on the contrary real-world observations indicate only modest further warming of about 1ºC to 2100. The SPM mantra for *"deep, rapid and sustained emissions reduction"* is pie-in-the-sky; adaptation is the way forward. It appears that IPCC scientific objectivity is being compromised by group-think and geopolitics[5,8,9,10,11,14,16, 21].

3. Implications for the Irish Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23)

Ireland's CAP23 espouses the view that mitigation towards 2050 Net-Zero will somehow "save the planet"; on the contrary, it would have imperceptible impact on Climate. Specifically:

- The *"Carbon Budget and Technical Report"* by the Irish Climate Change Advisory Council modelled the proposed Irish GHG mitigation trajectories to 2050 found that, if ever achieved, these would reduce global temperature by *only a few thousandths of a degree*.

- The estimated costs of an Irish illusory 51% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 was estimated by the IMF as €200bn by 2030, equating to around €100,000 per household between now and then[10,12,21]. Such action can hardly be justified in the context of a towering national debt and funding needs on housing, health and other social issues.

- The drive towards 80% renewable generation is fatally flawed, as large-scale energy storage options will not be viable before 2030[15,21]. Wind and solar energy generation are not only intermittent (non-dispatchable), disrupting grid stability, but also inefficient in use of space and materials, particularly precious metals[12,15,21]. There is little understanding of the major transmission and distribution grid reconfigurations required to absorb renewables, while simultaneously providing the likely doubled grid loading arising from the assumed electrification of transport and heating[10,12,15].

- There is an alarming erosion of national energy security relating to the decline of the Corrib gas field, Ireland's sole indigenous supply. It is incomprehensibly naïve to delay the construction of an LNG import terminal. Ireland's over-reliance on the UK gas interconnectors is already verging on the imprudent, and will likely lead to energy blackouts before 2030[10,15,16,21]. Ireland, as all other countries, needs affordable, reliable and secure energy supply for a sustainable future.

- As previously mentioned, on agriculture-related emissions, IPCC has neglected the latest climate science on methane and nitrous oxide. There is therefore absolutely no scientific basis for curtailing agriculture in Ireland[1,2,7,17,20], particularly in the context of the ideal Irish temperate farming climate and increasing global food insecurity.

- Prudent adaptation to whatever modest climate change occurs in the coming decades, would make pragmatic economic, engineering and social sense. In the Irish context, this should most appropriately focus on selected projects which may be necessary for flood control, coastal erosion, water supply and infrastructure resilience.

Specifically, ICSF urges the Government to authorise of the construction of an LNG import terminal to guarantee essential and affordable Irish energy security, consistent with European practice. It also urges Government to grow, rather than curtail, the Irish agricultural sector in the context of global food security. ICSF wishes Ireland to enjoy a truly sustainable future.

4. Conclusion

In summary, ICSF rejects this flawed IPCC Synthesis Report as a basis for Government policy and urges that the Climate Action Plan 2023 be urgently reviewed. National policy needs to adhere to objective climate science, with highly-selective mitigation based on solid economic, engineering and social pragmatism, complemented by well-focused adaptation to whatever modest climate trends emerge in the coming decades.

About the ICSF:
Founded in 2016, the Irish Climate Science Forum (www.ICSF.ie) promotes realism in climate science and prudence in climate/energy policy. ICSF sees the imperative of informing climate/energy policymaking in the best long-term national interest, without any vested interests. To ensure objectivity, ICSF is entirely self-funded and receives no funding from any specific enterprise or sector; ICSF has no political affiliations. ICSF now cooperates with world-leading multi-disciplinary professionals in more than 30 countries through the Dutch-based CLINTEL think-tank (www.CLINTEL.org), and has with them organised a lecture series by leading international scientists and engineers, see https://www.icsf.ie/lecture-series.
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Annex: Reference List of ICSF/CLINTEL Lecture Recordings:

Ref	Lecturer, Date	Title, Link
1	**Prof Ray Bates,** Oct 21, 2020	"Methane Accounting in the EU, its Implications for Ireland – The Good News" **https://youtu.be/0bLKBrWMnf0**
2	**Prof William van Wijngaarden**, Nov 25, 2020	"Methane and Climate Change" **https://youtu.be/rqP-lwf2tb8**
3	**Dr John Christy** Jan 21, 2021	"Testing Climate Claims – Update 2021" **https://youtu.be/D2Cd4MLUoN0**
4	**Dr Roy Spencer** Mar 3, 2021	"Is there a Climate Crisis? Reviewing the Evidence" **https://youtu.be/j80PhHJbZcs**
5	**Emeritus Prof Dick Lindzen** Mar 21, 2021	"The Imaginary Climate Crisis - How can we change the Message?" **https://youtu.be/GD8SXP02h4c**
6	**Dr Ross McKitrick** May 12, 2021	"Climate Policy – when Emotion meets Reality" **https://youtu.be/5oD_WrfxR1Y**
7	**Prof Will Happer** June 23, 2021	"Climate, CH4, N2O and CO2 - the Good News for Agriculture" **https://youtu.be/o5HYbAkVXuU**
8	**Dr Steven Koonin** Sept 22, 2021	"Unsettling the Science" **https://youtu.be/AM4IAAhAf4A**
9	**Dr Roger Pielke Jr** Oct 27, 2021	"What does IPCC AR6 say on Scenarios and Extreme Weather?" **https://youtu.be/4wamPyDhwEY**
10	**Dr Benny Peiser**, Dec 1, 2021	"After COP26, with a looming energy crisis, is there a realistic alternative to Net Zero?" **https://youtu.be/CmgZmqP5XC0**
11	**Dr Patrick Moore**, Feb 10, 2022	"Fake Invisible Catastrophes and Threats of Doom" **https://youtu.be/dll5EgDgRMI**
12	**Prof Michael J Kelly**, March 23, 2022	"The Cost of Achieving Net Zero in Ireland" **https://youtu.be/wCaJnZleRIc**
13	**Tom Gallagher, Roger Palmer.** April 20, 2022	"Lessons from Paleoclimate – Conveniently Ignored by the IPCC" **https://youtu.be/pj-lu1i317E**
14	**David Siegel,** May 18, 2022	"Get to know the real cause of Global Warming – and zap your Eco-Anxiety" **https://youtu.be/-ZQ9ZpkEwr4**
15	**Dr Lars Schernikau** June 22, 2022	"How to Make Future Energy Affordable, Reliable and Sustainable". **https://youtu.be/PoCgc-cbC0M**
16	**Jim O'Brien** Aug 31, 2022	"Climate Change – an Existential Threat or Not?" **https://youtu.be/RBGSofNUAuI**
17	**Dr Tom Sheahen** Sept 21, 2022	"Methane – the Irrelevant Green-House Gas". **https://youtu.be/CqWv26PXqz0**
18	**Prof Wyss Yim** Oct 26, 2022	"Volcanic Eruptions, a Driver of Natural Climate Variability – ignored by IPCC" **https://youtu.be/OITIMXR_tSw**
19	**Prof Ole Humlum** Dec 7, 2022	"The State of the Climate – Based on Real Observations" **https://youtu.be/nU9UblitEWg**
20	**Prof William van Wijngaarden** Jan 24, 2023	"Do Agricultural Emissions of GHG Affect Climate?" **https://youtu.be/rBI16fV8kms**
21	**Viscount Christopher Monckton of Brenchley** Mar 1, 2023	"The Uneconomics of Net-Zero" **https://youtu.be/KGqEhc70Emw**