

IPCC Technical Guidelines for Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations

Description	A set of technical guidelines for the scientist that does not seek to prescribe a single preferred method but rather a range of methods, some of which may be more suitable than others to particular tasks, but which yield comparable results across regions and sectors. The guidelines aid users in assessing the impacts of potential climate change and in evaluating appropriate adaptations. The Guidelines outline a seven step process: (1) definition of the problem, (2) selection of the methods, (3) testing of the methods, (4) selection of the scenarios, (5) assessment of biophysical and socioeconomic impacts, (6) assessment of autonomous adjustments, and (7) evaluation of adaptation strategies. A range of methods is identified at each step.
Appropriate Use	To enable comparable estimates of impacts in adaptations in different sectors or regions. Applicable to cases where the definition of the problem has yet to be clarified entirely, though some sense of the goals of the assessment, the spatial unit of study, and the temporal scope of the study is required.
Scope	All regions and sectors.
Key Output	Most suitable strategies for minimizing the effects of climate change.
Key Input	Depends on existing data and the particular objectives of the assessment.
Key Tools	General circulation models, use of the scenario data in impacts assessment (see Section 3.1) empirical analogue studies, expert judgment, economic models, biophysical models, cost-benefit analysis (see Section 3.2). Please see UNDP Handbook for more information on methods used (see summary table in Section 3.1.3). Summary of the methods used under this approach can be found in the first (FCCC/SBI/1999/11), second (FCCC/SBI/2000/15), and third (FCCC/SBI/2001/14 and Add.1) compilations and syntheses of initial national communications from non-Annex I Parties at http://www.unfccc.int/issues/commonann1.html .
Ease of Use	Depends on specific application.
Training Required	Depends on user familiarity with prescribed tools. It is likely that some training is required to complete the seven steps, particularly in using advanced quantitative models and in linking model inputs and outputs.
Training Available	No formal training currently offered though IPCC, though training may be available for particular tools the guidelines prescribe, directly from their source.
Computer Requirements	No explicit requirements for employing framework, though use of associated tools will require software and in some cases significant computing resources.
Documentation	Carter, T.R., M.L. Parry, H. Harasawa, and S. Nishioka. 1994. <i>IPCC Technical Guidelines for Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations</i> . London: Department of Geography, University College London. Also, Parry, M. and T. Carter. 1998. <i>Climate Impact and Adaptation Assessment: A Guide to the IPCC Approach</i> . London: Earthscan. Guidelines are not available electronically but, can be obtained from Department of Geography, University College London, 26 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0AP, United Kingdom.
Applications	U.S. Country Studies (see summary that follows), UNEP Country Studies (Contact Ravi Sharma, ravi.Sharma@unep.org), and UNDP National Communications Support Programme (project documents at http://www.undp.org/cc/ and http://www.gefonline.org/).

IPCC Technical Guidelines for Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations (cont.)

Contacts for Framework, Documentation, Technical Assistance	Tim Carter; e-mail: tim.carter@vyh.fi .
Cost	No cost for obtaining documentation of framework. Actual cost of conducting such an assessment can vary widely. A detailed study can cost more than several hundred thousand US dollars, although useful results can be obtained from small-scale studies costing US\$50,000-100,000.
References	Benioff, R., S. Guill, and J. Lee (eds.). 1996. <i>Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments: An International Guidebook</i> . Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers. Erda, L., W.C. Bolhofer, S. Huq, S. Lenhart, S.K. Mukherjee, J.B. Smith, and J. Wisniewski (eds.) 1996. <i>Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation in Asia and the Pacific</i> . Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.