



IPCC SCOPING MEETING

Speech by Antonio Navarra, CMCC President

Madame Minister, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a great pleasure to welcome you here, in Venice, for the Scoping Meeting of the IPCC. This is a crucial step in the process of the next Assessment Report and surely this is going to be a week of hard work for all of us.

It is difficult to underestimate the challenge we have in front of us. The environmental problems we are facing today are considerably more complex than those we had 20 or 30 years ago. Environmental questions are often difficult to define and solutions are also elusive as well. Furthermore, scientific results are often at the base of political and economic decisions that in their turn can influence the environment. The climate change challenge is the major example of this process.

I had the privilege to witness some of the early discussions and scientific efforts on climate change and climate simulations. I remember the astonishment as the results were pointing to a vast and global web of effects and impacts. I also remember the sober awareness that dawned on us when suddenly we realized that the values and problems of our cloistered research were going to be relevant to a lot of people.

Since then, the feeling that we have a special responsibility has never left us. The climate scientific community has a moral obligation toward the society to provide scientific results that are honest, accurate and timely. We need to give the best of our scientific effort and ingenuity in this quest, as so much depends on the quality and quantity of the science we are doing and we will be doing. As a whole, climate scientists have done a fantastic job and the IPCC has played a leading role in organizing and stimulating the global research efforts. All the IPCC work is based on research that is taking place in universities and research centers around the world. This research needs to be supported, we have to mobilize resources so that we will not have a scarcity of talents precisely in the moment when we will need it most, as the consequences of climate change display their potential across every facet of our societies.

Understanding and quantifying climate change requires expertise from many fields. Different communities must learn to talk to each other. It is a challenging task. In Italy, the Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, la Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, l'Universita' del Salento and other Italian research institutions, have established with the support of the Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea and of the Ministry of University and Research, the Centro EuroMediterraneo per i Cambiamenti Climatici (CMCC). It is an attempt to integrate in a single institution the expertise that is needed to understand climate change. We deal with emissions scenarios, global and regional climate modelling, agricultural impacts and coastal impacts. It is challenging, it is tiring, it is exciting. But we

are now appreciating the power of the knowledge network we have created and we have the deep satisfaction to see the relevance of our efforts growing.

We also understand that the networks should not stop at our door. We are actively seeking partnership with other institutions, within the EU and globally. We are launching new initiatives. In cooperation with the Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, and the Fondazione Cini we are starting a new International Center for Climate Governance that will be hosted here on the island of San Giorgio. Works are underway and the new facilities will open in January 2010. It is a pleasure to thank the support of the Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea that has enthusiastically embraced the idea.

It is still a small step. The questions we are facing are very tough and demanding. Sometimes we are reminded that we are “dwarves on the shoulder of giants”, well it may be true, but we are very determined and we will rise to the challenge at the best of our scientific and intellectual ability.

I would also like to thank the Ministry of the Environment for its generous and enthusiastic support and the Fondazione Cini for hosting this opening ceremony. The meeting would not have been possible without the efforts of Prof. Carlo Carraro, Director of the Division of Climate Impacts and Policy of CMCC and the active role of the Fondazione Mattei, the CMCC partner most involved in the organization of the meeting. A special thank goes to Angela Marigo, Ughetta Molin Fop, Maria Pivotti here in Venice and also to the other staff that has worked on the organization in Lecce and Bologna.

All these people have really worked hard for the success of this event and I am really looking forward to a fruitful and successful meeting.

I wish you all a rewarding experience here in Venice.