

Group SUR submission on Research and Systematic Observation (RSO)

Views on possible themes for the 16th meeting of the RSO (SBSTA 60)

Suggested theme: Exchanging views on scientific findings and on research gaps and needs related to the implications of different emission metric choices to climate change policies.

Group SUR welcomes the conclusions of SBSTA 58 on Research and Systematic Observation (paragraphs 42 – 55 of FCCC/SBSTA/2023/4), noting the invitation to Parties and relevant organizations to submit their views on possible themes for the sixteenth meeting of the Research Dialogue, to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 60.

In paragraph 43 of FCCC/SBSTA/2023/4, SBSTA noted the importance of discussion under the RSO agenda item on scientific advances and on research gaps and needs relevant to supporting work under the Convention and its Paris Agreement.

SBSTA also noted in paragraph 50 of FCCC/SBSTA/2023/4 scientific advances, knowledge gaps and research needs related to some relevant issues, including the implications of different emission metric choices to climate change policies.

In June 2023, during the in-session workshop on findings on emission metrics contained in the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC, Parties shared views and experiences on this issue, which evidences the importance of this issue for the development and monitoring of climate policies.¹

Considering those conclusions, SBSTA encouraged Parties, research programmes and organizations, and the scientific community to take action to address the gaps and needs referred to above.

Group SUR is of the view that the Research Dialogue is the appropriate forum to promote in-depth discussions on scientific advances, knowledge gaps and research needs related to the implications of different emission metric choices to climate change policies.

Hence, looking for addressing the implications of different emission metric choices to climate change policies, Group SUR believes that discussing the findings on emission metrics contained in the IPCC AR6 is vital to disseminate scientific advances on the issue, supporting to fulfill the knowledge and research gaps and needs after identifying them more clearly so far. Our Group understands these in-depth discussions as extremely relevant to supporting work under the Convention and its Paris Agreement. These discussions should be guided by the finding contained in the IPCC AR6 Summary for Policymakers Report (Contribution of Working Group I):

The choice of emissions metric depends on the purposes for which gases or forcing agents are being compared. The Report contains updated emissions metric values and assesses new approaches to aggregating gases.

¹ Report available at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbsta2023_inf02.pdf

At the same time, the proposed in-depth discussions will provide the scientific community with insights into knowledge and research needs for the work of the IPCC on emission metrics for the IPCC AR7.

There are current discussions under the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement on reducing non-carbon-dioxide emissions globally that would be favored by the theme being suggested by Group SUR to be part of the 16th meeting of the RSO. For instance, FAO released a report on methane emissions in livestock and rice systems last October, which includes a part dedicated to metrics for quantifying the impact of methane emissions. This non-exhaustive example demonstrates the usefulness of bringing organizations and experts that are discussing emission metrics to the Research Dialogue to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 60 next June.