

PRESS RELEASE

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IPCC WGIII Summary for Policymakers watered down, says Scientist Rebellion

The science has never been clearer: to have any chance of retaining a habitable planet, greenhouse gas emissions must be cut radically now. Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees and responding to the climate emergency requires an immediate transformation across all sectors and strata of society, a mobilization of historic proportions: a climate revolution.

The IPCC have avoided naming the major culprits for 30 years, which is one reason for the absence of real emissions cuts. Facts detailing the complicity of the worlds' richest countries in fuelling the climate crisis have been watered down by the IPCC's political review process. This is highlighted by a comparison of the final version of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) – the document that garners almost all attention – with an early draft of the report leaked by [Scientist Rebellion in August 2021](#). Despite the escalating climate emergency and the total absence of emissions cuts, the framing of the final version of the SPM is still alarmingly reserved, docile and conservative.

Example 1: Section B6 of the report originally stated that “institutional inertia and a social bias towards the status quo are leading to a risk of locking in future GHG emissions that may be costly or difficult to abate”. This has been replaced with “global GHG emissions in 2030 associated with the implementation of nationally determined contributions would make it likely that warming will exceed 1.5°C during the 21st century”. The final version also no longer mentions that “vested interests” and a focus on an “incremental rather than a systemic approach” are limiting factors to ambitious transformation.

Example 2: The leaked SPM stated that “within countries, inequalities increased for both income and GHG emissions between 1970 and 2016, with the top 1% accounting for 27% of income growth,” and that “top emitters dominate emissions in key sectors, for example the top 1% account for 50% of GHG emissions from aviation”. Neither statement appears in the final version.

While the SPM — being approved line-by-line by all governments — is reserved, docile and conservative, the situation is clear. “This report”, notes UN Secretary General António Guterres, “is a litany of broken climate promises. We are on a fast-track to climate disaster. We are in a climate emergency.”

Scientist Rebellion is organizing actions by hundreds of scientists in over 25 countries across the world, calling for a climate revolution. The time is now. Join us.

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