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# PREFACE

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Signature of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by around 150 countries in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 indicated widespread recognition that climate change is potentially a major threat to the world's environment and economic development.

The ultimate objective of the Convention is the stabilisation of greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The Convention also calls for all Parties to commit themselves to the following objectives:

- to develop, update periodically, publish and make available to the Conference of the Parties (COP) their national inventories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks, of all GHG not controlled by the Montreal Protocol.
- to use comparable methodologies for inventories of GHG emissions and removals, to be agreed upon by the COP.

The *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Guidelines (Revised Guidelines)* are intended to assist all Parties in implementing these objectives.

Since 1991, development of the *Revised Guidelines* has been undertaken by the Working Group 1 of the IPCC under the *IPCC/OECD/IEA Programme on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*. The objectives of the programme are:

- to develop and refine an internationally-agreed methodology and software for calculation and reporting of national GHG emissions;
- to encourage widespread use of the methodology by countries participating in the IPCC and Parties to the UNFCCC;
- to establish a data management system for collection, review and reporting of national data.

The *Revised Guidelines* are approved internationally and developed through an international process which has included:

- wide dissemination of drafts and collection of comments from national experts;
- testing of methods through development of preliminary inventories;

- country studies which ensure that methods are tested in a wide variety of national contexts;
- technical and regional workshops held in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Central Europe and Western Europe;
- informal expert groups convened to recommend improvements on specific aspects of the methodology.

The *1995 Guidelines* were approved in November 1994. In March 1995, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted the *Guidelines* for the preparation of National Communications by Annex I Parties of the Convention. These *Guidelines* were more recently recommended for use by non-Annex I Parties at COP 2, July 1996.

Recognising that the *Guidelines* are a living document, the IPCC approved a second phase of activity in 1994. The *Revised Guidelines* now include revised methodologies and default data for Fuel Combustion, Industrial Processes, Agricultural Soils, Land-Use Change and Forestry, Waste and Methane from Rice Fields. Several additional methodologies for the estimation of halofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorinated hydrocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), ozone and aerosol precursors, and direct GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) are in the *Revised Guidelines*.

Over the coming year, the Programme will continue to work on methods development, including assessment, monitoring, and validation of the *Revised Guidelines*. Unlike earlier programmes, products will no longer focus on revisions of the *Revised Guidelines*, as no major changes to the methods are anticipated for three to five years, with the possible exception of the land-use change and forestry sector. The new mode of operation places emphasis on the following areas:

- evaluation of the quality of national greenhouse gas inventory data;
- comparative scientific and technical analysis of alternative greenhouse gas inventory methodologies and their implication for policy;
- further methodological work in the area of land-use change and forestry;
- continued harmonisation with other international and national greenhouse gas inventory methodologies;
- updating emission factors and default data in all source/sink sectors of the *Revised Guidelines*.

Another area of general activity will be field testing of the IPCC Methodology. The object of this activity is to ensure that country experience gained through the implementation of the *Revised Guidelines* is incorporated into methods development and into future reiterations of the *Revised Guidelines*.