



Policies and Procedures of the International Resource Panel

Approved at the Nineteenth Meeting of the International Resource Panel (Paris, 15-18 November 2016)

ANNEX 3. Guidelines on External Expert Review Process

The following guidelines apply to the External Expert Review Process of the Global Assessment on Natural Resources Use and Management, Thematic Studies and Assessments and Rapid Studies and Assessments, and shall be interpreted in accordance with the Policies and Procedures of the International Resource Panel (hereinafter referred to as the IRP) and its other annexes.

Introduction

1. The purpose of the External Expert Review process is to ensure that the scientific publications of the IRP use solid data, appropriate methodologies and robust process as a means to uphold the Panel's credibility.
2. The Review Editor administers the External Expert Review process with support from the Secretariat who applies the relevant procedures, ensures efficiency, and documents the process.
3. The IRP aims at having a balanced and diverse composition of Expert Reviewers in terms of expertise, gender, and regional representation,

Review Editors

4. Review Editors are Panel members or external experts who are responsible for coordinating and ensuring the scientific integrity of the external review process of IRP scientific studies and assessments.
5. Review Editors who are not Panel members shall meet the requirements set in paragraph 11 of this Annex.
6. The Review Editors have the following roles:
 - (a) With support from the Secretariat, prepare an external review work plan.
 - (b) Ensure that Expert Reviewers receive the terms of reference and draft of the scientific study and assessment, guidance on expected outcome and deadlines, and a copy of this Annex.
 - (c) Ensure that Expert Reviewers have access to data and literature used in the preparation of the study and assessment.
 - (d) Ensure that Expert Reviewers adhere to timelines.
 - (e) Consolidate all review comments (with names expunged to ensure anonymity as per paragraph 9 of this Annex) and prepare the "Consolidated Expert Reviewer report".
 - (f) Ensure that comments are taken into account by the relevant Working Group.
 - (g) Prepare a "Review Editor report" and inform about the process to the Panel and Steering Committee.
7. Review Editors are selected through the following process:
 - (a) Members of the Panel, Working Group, Steering Committee, and Secretariat may recommend candidates.
 - (b) The Secretariat compiles the list of candidates.
 - (c) The Panel Co-Chairs review the list of candidates and select Review Editors taking into consideration requirements set in paragraph 11 of these procedures and any substantive issue identified by members of the Steering Committee, Panel, Secretariat and relevant Working Group to be considered in the review.
 - (d) The Secretariat notifies the Review Editor of the appointment.

Expert Reviewers

8. Expert Reviewers are external experts responsible for commenting on the accuracy and completeness of the scientific assessment and on the overall balance between its scientific and socio-economic content. Their main task is to consider whether, in their judgment, the evidence and arguments are sound, the methodologies used are robust and the report is responsive to the approved terms of reference.
9. Expert Reviewers are anonymous, however, due acknowledgement may be included in the final publication of the scientific assessment if so desired.

10. Expert Reviewers are not paid for their work, but incidental expenses may be met in accordance with United Nations Environment Programme rules and regulations.
11. Expert Reviewers shall meet the following requirements:
 - (a) Proven specialist knowledge and experience in one or more areas relevant to the topic of the scientific study and assessment.
 - (b) Availability to carry out a thorough review of the scientific assessment.
 - (c) No conflict of interest including direct involvement in the development of the study and assessment.
12. The Expert Reviewers have the following roles:
 - (a) Review the scientific study and assessment as per guidance provided by the Review Editor, terms of reference, draft and this Annex.
 - (b) Provide copies of literature and/or references to support their review.
 - (c) Prepare an Expert Reviewer report with the results of the review.
13. Expert Reviewers are selected through the following process:
 - (e) Members of the Panel, Working Group, Steering Committee, and Secretariat may recommend candidates.
 - (f) The Secretariat compiles the list of candidates.
 - (g) The Panel Co-Chairs review the list of candidates and select at least 5 Expert Reviewers and 5 potential replacements, taking into consideration requirements set in paragraph 11 of these procedures and any substantive issue identified by members of the Steering Committee, Panel, Secretariat and relevant Working Group to be considered in the review.
 - (h) The Secretariat notifies the Expert Reviewer of the appointment.

Review Process

14. After the Panel has declared the First Draft as ready for external review and the Review Editor and Expert Reviewers have been selected, the Review Editor prepares the peer review work plan, which includes
 - (a) Issues to be taken into account if relevant.
 - (b) Required format and timelines for submission of comments.
15. The Review Editor sends invitation letters to the Expert Reviewers attaching the work plan, terms of reference, draft of the scientific study and assessment, and a copy of this Annex.
16. Review deadlines will be set in accordance with paragraphs 76, 81 and 86 of the Policies and Procedures of the IRP.
17. The Review Editor collects the Expert Reviewer reports and sends a “Consolidated Expert Reviewer report” to the Secretariat.
18. The Secretariat sends the “Consolidated Expert Reviewer report” to the relevant Working Group.
19. The Lead Author (s), together with members of the Working Group prepare a “Response to Expert Reviewer report” document explaining how they have responded to all non-editorial reviewer comments. In cases where they disagree with the Expert Reviewer’s comments, a detailed justification or explanation must be provided.
20. The Lead Author (s) sends the “Response to Expert Reviewer report” together with a revised draft (second or final) of the study and assessment to the Secretariat.
21. The Secretariat sends the revised draft and the “Response to Expert Reviewer report” to the Review Editor.
22. The Review Editor prepares a “Review Editor report” documenting how Expert Reviewer reports have been taken into account.
23. If the Review Editor considers that all comments of Expert Reviewers have been adequately addressed, the Secretariat prepares all documentation for submission to the Panel.

24. If the Review Editor considers that comments of Expert Reviewers have not been adequately addressed, the Panel Co-Chairs are informed.
25. Panel Co-Chairs will be responsible for ensuring that further amendments to the revised draft are made by the Lead Author(s) and decide whether the Review Editor must be consulted again.
26. If consulted, the Review Editor, in consultation with the Panel Co-Chairs, decides whether to contact selected Expert Reviewers again for further clarification and discussion. Lead Authors are responsible for preparing a “Response to the Consolidated Expert Reviewer report”.
27. The revised draft (second or final), the “Consolidated Expert Reviewer report”, the “Response to the Consolidated Expert Reviewer report”, the “Review Editor report”, and the “Response to the Review Editor report” (if applicable) are presented at a Panel meeting for approval, and, if positive, subsequent publication and release of the report. Panel members who served on the Working Group recuse themselves from this process.
28. Documents listed in paragraph 27 are presented to the Steering Committee for information.