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INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE FINALIZES SUMMARY REPORT

Brussels, BELGIUM— The United States joined more than 100 other nations in finalizing and approving a climate change science Summary for Policy Makers (SPM) today in Brussels, Belgium. The SPM is a summary of a more than 1,000-page technical report on the potential impacts of climate change that will be released later this spring.

“The underlying technical report represents a significant effort by thousands of scientists who surveyed the current state of the rapidly evolving field of climate science impacts,” said Dr. Sharon Hays, the leader of the U.S. delegation at the meeting and Associate Director for Science at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. “We worked hard alongside many of these scientists and other nations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to finalize a summary report that accurately reflects the scientific information in the underlying technical report.”

Working Group II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) acted to finalize its contribution to its Fourth Assessment Report. The Working Group II portion of the assessment report examines the latest scientific environmental and socioeconomic literature on climate impacts and adaptation. The report describes both observed effects of climate change on natural systems, as well as a wide variety and broad range of scenarios projecting future impacts over decades and centuries. The report also discusses how natural and human adaptation could reduce projected impacts. While not as advanced as the physical science underlying the Working Group I Report released in February, the science of climate change impacts is rapidly improving and increasingly important.

The SPM was approved on a line-by-line basis by participating nations over the past week. This report, consisting of three Working Group contributions and a Synthesis Report, will be released in the fall.

The United States plays a leading role in advancing climate science. The President has requested and Congress has appropriated substantial funding for climate-related science, technology, observations, international assistance and incentive programs – on the order of \$35 billion since 2001. About \$12 billion of this amount went to climate change science observations and research.

IPCC reports are drafted and reviewed by thousands of scientists who are leading experts in their fields from around the world and contain extensive scientific and technical information and analysis. The drafts go through both expert and government reviews. U.S. government climate science experts led the U.S. review of the draft. The U.S. delegation to the Working Group II meeting included climate science experts from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Department of Commerce’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of State.

The IPCC was established under the auspices of the United Nations Environmental Programme and the World Meteorological Organization to periodically undertake comprehensive and objective assessments of scientific and technical aspects of climate change. The first IPCC Assessment Report was completed in 1990, the second in 1995, and the third in 2001. IPCC's Working Group III will meet in Bangkok, Thailand April 30-May 3, and their report is expected to be issued Friday, May 4. It will review global and regional emissions trends and socioeconomic aspects of climate change.

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