

IPCP (Miriam) Intervention:

A robust COI policy supports the operating principles of scientific independence, credibility, relevance and legitimacy. We support the intent of the COI policy drafted by the Secretariat on OEWG.2/INF/10/Add.1. We believe that a strong COI policy comes from two elements:

(1) We support the Secretariat's policy of requiring declarations of potential conflicts of interest, particularly of a financial nature, by individuals contributing to the Panel's work, as laid out in #7. We agree that these declarations should be adjudicated by an independent COI committee as laid out in the policy. However, these declarations should separate financial interest from which COI could clearly arise, versus non-financial considerations for which COI is not necessarily the case.

(2) These declarations, with a clear vetting process, are the foundation of the COI policy – necessary but not sufficient. We suggest that COI be judged by period audits of the processes, activities and products of the Panel. These periodic audits should be conducted by an independent office to ensure compliance with the spirit of the COI policy. This need is necessitated by the numerous ways in which vested financial interests could influence or distort the Panel's work as explained by several in depth studies and summarized by Schäffer et al. 2023.