Welcoming Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Elisabeth LAURIN, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations Office in Geneva

Distinguished Ambassadors,

Distinguished Chair of IPCC,

Distinguished representatives of UNEP and WMO,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea for having initiated this meeting with the support of the Geneva Environment Network and I would like to welcome Professor Hoesung Lee, the new chair of IPCC.

In the fight against global warming, which is one of the greatest causes of our time, the role of science has been and remains fundamental.

Thanks to the scientific community, reality of climate change and its human origin is no longer challenged. The credit goes to IPCC which has accomplished, since its creation in 1988, an exceptional job and was awarded a Nobel prize for peace in 2007.

Its five reports have provided mitigation and adaptation analysis and enabled policy makers to take the right decisions.

Beyond the observation, the scientific community has played and plays an essential role of alert and guidance.

IPCC reports are not just a mere analysis of the causes of global warming and a diagnosis of the situation; they are a call for action by recalling:

- firstly, the consequences and costs of inaction,
- secondly the possibility to act to curb the trend of global warming and
- thirdly the urgency of the situation.

It is through science that we know in fact that a warming of 3, 4 or even 5 degrees C corresponds to the scenario of inaction and would lead to all dangers for our planet.

It is through science that we know that the effects of climate disruption would affect more violent parts of the world, but none would be spared.

It is through science that we know that the cost of non-decision, first to the poorest, would be exorbitant.

The COP president has all these elements in mind when, together with the UNFCC Parties, he finally reached an agreement in Paris last December.

But the Paris agreement is not the end of the story: it is just the beginning of a new one.

We know that, for the moment, intended national determined contributions – the well-known INDCs, will lead to around 3 degrees.

So further work has to be done to meet the Paris target of 2 degree or 1.5 degree. For that, we need, and I will quote the Paris agreement, “the best available science”.

France will support your work, Mr Chair, and is glad that Madame Valérie Masson Delmotte has been elected as Vice Chair of working group 1 on the physical science basis.

We already know that one topic of the incoming program of work will be on oceans; France is very committed to this topic and we organized, together with Monaco and Morocco, a conference on ocean last week here in Geneva.

Before concluding, I would like also to stress the urgency to ratify the Paris Agreement as soon as possible so that it could enter into force before 2020 because, as IPCC stressed it many times, there is an urgent need for action. France is happy to announce it is the first developed country to have ratified the Paris agreement.
As a conclusion, I would say that Mr Chair of IPCC, we are pleased to have you here in Geneva and we are looking forward hearing your presentation.

I would like to thank you all for your attention.