

# S'porean nominated to bureau of UN's top climate science body

If elected in July, he will contribute to strengthening climate action

Cheryl Tan

For the first time, Singapore has nominated one of its climate scientists, Associate Professor Winston Chow, to the bureau of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to serve as a co-chair for the United Nations' top climate science body.

The IPCC publishes a series of reports that assess the scientific basis of climate change, its impact and future risks, as well as possible options for countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions and implement the necessary adaptation measures.

This helps governments to develop climate-related policies and contribute to global climate action under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Prof Chow is nominated to the IPCC Bureau as a developing country co-chair, where he will contribute to Working Group II focusing on the impact of climate change on the planet, and possible adaptation measures, for the upcoming seventh assessment report cycle (AR7), which will commence in July, said the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE) on Monday.

The 34-member IPCC Bureau provides guidance on the scientific and technical aspects of IPCC assessments and gives advice on management and strategic issues. Elections will be held in July.

"Given his extensive experience in this field, Prof Chow is well qualified to contribute to advancing the science of climate change, and shape practical recommendations on how governments and societies can effectively adapt to climate risks and enhance climate resilience," said MSE.

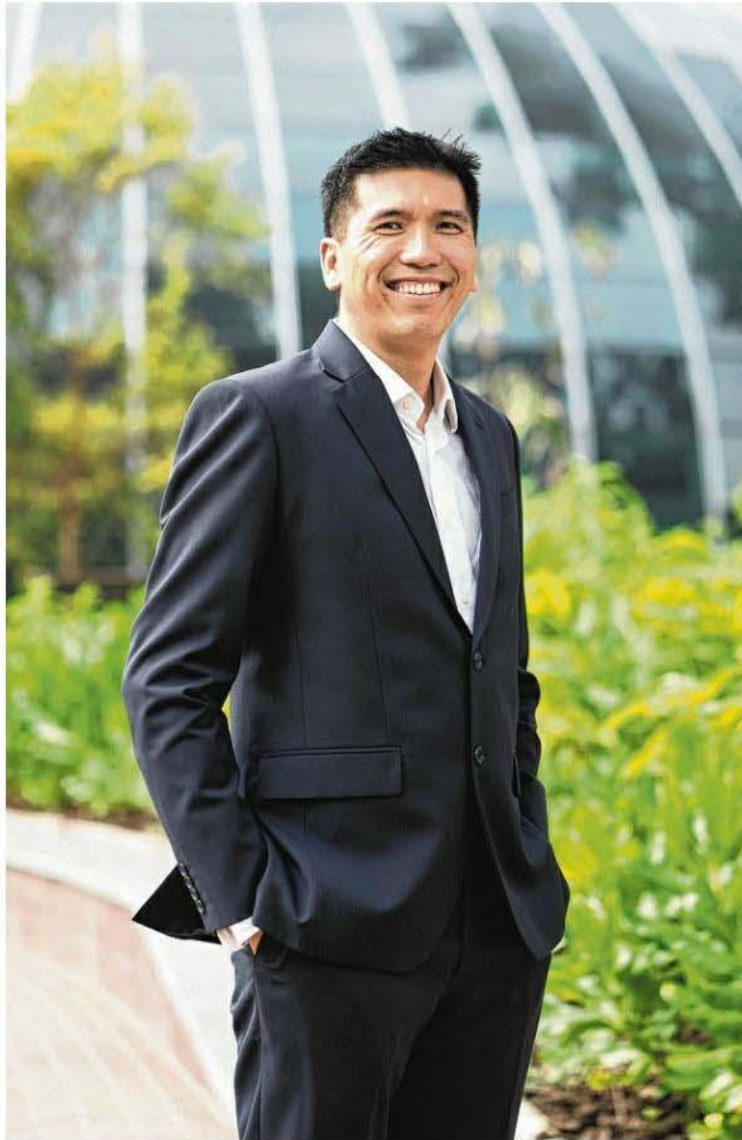
This is particularly so "given that the IPCC has decided to include a Special Report on Cities and Climate Change in the AR7 cycle, which is an area in which he has done much research and field work", it added.

Prof Chow said: "If elected, I will do my utmost to build on the work of past IPCC reports and contribute to strengthening climate action over the next climate assessment cycle."

IPCC reports are published every six to seven years, to ensure that the scientific aspects of climate change are continuously updated according to the latest available data. This would also ensure more accurate predictions of future climate scenarios, such as expected temperature rise from global warming, for example.

Each report comprises content from three working groups. Aside from Working Group II, Working Group I looks at the physical aspects of climate change, such as temperature rise, while Working Group III focuses on ways to mitigate climate change.

There are also special reports that zero in on particular issues, such as the ocean and its related ecosystems, as well as the links between climate change and land.



Much of Associate Professor Winston Chow's research work centres on climate change risk and vulnerability in urban cities, with a focus on adapting to and mitigating heat, especially in island cities like Singapore. PHOTO: SMU

## WELL QUALIFIED

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## MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

on Associate Professor Winston Chow's nomination to the IPCC Bureau as a developing country co-chair, where he will contribute to Working Group II focusing on the impact of climate change on the planet, and possible adaptation measures, for the upcoming seventh assessment report cycle, which will commence in July.

Prof Chow, who is an associate professor of urban climate at Singapore Management University's College of Integrative Studies, has

been actively involved in contributing to the IPCC reports, which is now in its sixth assessment report cycle (AR6).

He was a lead author for the chapters titled "Cities, Settlements and Key Infrastructure" and "Cities and Settlements by the Sea" as part of the Working Group II reports, which looked at the impact of climate change on urban infrastructure and coastal cities, as well as possible adaptation measures.

To ensure that climate change data and scenarios used in the IPCC reports are transparent, consistent and of high quality, Prof Chow is also a member of the panel's Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments.

Aside from his work with the IPCC, much of Prof Chow's research work centres on climate change risk and vulnerability in urban cities, with a focus on adapting to and mitigating heat, especially in island cities like Singapore.

Since 2017, he has been helping the Cooling Singapore initiative, where various research groups work together to develop solutions to address the perennial urban heat problem here.

Prof Chow said: "In this assessment cycle (AR6), my IPCC colleagues and I have worked tirelessly to ensure that the assessment reports accurately reflect the escalating risks to lives and li-

velhoods if we exceed the 1.5 deg C threshold."

The AR6 Synthesis Report was launched on March 20 – bringing together the findings from six major reports since 2018 – to highlight the challenges humanity could face if action is not taken urgently, as well as to provide a handbook for nations to pursue sustainable development.

As the team of global scientists puts together the upcoming AR7 report, Prof Chow said the world's climate challenges will soon be "manifold and complex".

This underpins the need for governments to "take urgent actions to combat climate change, enhance climate adaptation, and minimise the impacts and risks to societies", he added.

MSE said that Prof Chow's leadership role in the IPCC Bureau could play a part in Singapore's efforts to contribute to global cooperation and advance international climate science.

In addition to participating in the IPCC plenary sessions, Singapore hosted the IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report Scoping Meeting and the 57th session of the IPCC Bureau Meeting in October 2019.

Singapore also hosted senior IPCC officials and authors in 2014 for a presentation and discussion of key findings and implications for South-east Asia.

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