

**ROUND TABLE 1:  
UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES IN MODEL RESULTS**

MODERATOR:

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The discussions in Round Table 1 focused on three issues:

**1. IS THERE A PROBLEM IF MODELS COME UP WITH DIFFERENT RESULTS?**

The range of opinions varied quite widely. Some thought that differences are almost inevitable and hence unproblematic, while others suggested that when models work with similar assumptions and data the results tend to converge to similar answers. It was also pointed out that different results can be due to different modelling techniques (based on economic theories) employed (e.g. partial vs. general equilibrium models) and discussing these results and techniques can be quite pedagogical. Finally, one contribution suggested that the relevant question to ask is not whether results are getting more consistent, but (energy) models in general are producing ‘better’ results.

**2. ARE MODELS SUFFICIENTLY TRANSPARENT TO ALLOW TECHNICAL EXPERTS, POLITICAL DECISION-MAKERS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES?**

The issue of transparency and the absorption of different results by various audiences was only touched upon indirectly in the contributions. It was pointed out that communication of modelling results is extremely important and crucial. One comment suggested that modelling is useful for political decision-makers as long as the results point in the same direction even if the orders of magnitude vary, but problems arise if different models imply diametrically different policy recommendations. It was also suggested that policy-makers per se are not interested in the model results and the relevant clientele is the advisors to the policy-makers. The fact of frequent changes in these advisory positions constitutes an important challenge for modeller’s in their communication tasks.

**3. IF NOT, WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BY WHOM IN ORDER TO MAKE MODELS MORE USEFUL?**

Even though no clear consensus of the answers regarding the two above issues was reached, a number of general suggestions were put forward in order to increase the usefulness of model-based policy advice.

- (1) It was proposed that when differences in model results are quite large, a consensus process should be put in place in order to develop a ‘consensus figure’ which is recommended to policy-makers to take in to account when making decisions.
- (2) A need to stimulate a culture of comparison of (a) modelling techniques and (b) modelling results was identified (the policy analysis network as discussed in round table 3 further builds upon this idea).

- (3) It was suggested that modeller's need to undertake more efforts in order to present results in a normalised and standardised way to the policy world.
- (4) Specifically on the focus of the conference "Climate Negotiations and Emission Trading" it was suggested that new stakeholders (from the financial sector) need to be involved in the discussion.

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