As already mentioned, it can be easy to allow yourself to get sidetracked in a media interview, especially if you are inexperienced and/or the reporter is experienced at manipulating the situation with difficult questions.

**Remember: establish powerful key messages which should be:**
- **Simple** – the one most important message you want to convey
- **Succinct** – so that it is easy to remember and easy to communicate
- **Memorable** – with words or phrases that grab the attention of the audience

Remember: when answering difficult questions:

**A-B-C:** – Acknowledge – Bridge – Contribute

Now take a look at the question and answer examples below, to see what type of response you could give to a reporter.

**Q. Why did your forecast go wrong?**

Before answering, firstly make sure you know if the forecast was right or wrong. If right, make sure you present the evidence that shows it was correct and provided good guidance. If it went wrong, explain why the forecast was not accurate. Was it a difficult event to forecast? Why was it difficult? If the forecast was not helpful, you could say:

A. Given the variable nature of the weather, there will always be uncertainties in the forecast detail and on this occasion, the forecast did not go exactly to plan. However, for the vast majority of the time, our forecasts provide good advice.

**Q. Your forecast said the wet season was going to start in two months time, why is it raining now?**

A. The seasonal forecast does indicate that the wet season will start in two months time and we still believe this to be the case. The rain we have today is not the start of the wet season, and is therefore a transient period of rain. The rain is forecast to continue into tomorrow, when it will become dry once again. The wet season remains on course, forecast to begin in two months, when we will see the daily cycle of rain typical of the wet season.

**Q. How transparent is the IPCC process?**

A. Anyone can apply to register to be an expert reviewer and there are thousands of people who have been involved in this process across all of the working groups. The first, second and final drafts of the reports are all published so people can see the evolution of the documents, and all the comments from expert reviewers, as well as the responses from the authors, are also published. So this is a very open and transparent process.
**Q. This latest IPCC report doesn’t tell us when a warming trend will resume? Can you?**

A. All the evidence suggests natural variability is playing the key role in the pause and we have to understand more about those natural cycles and improve their representation in models before we can say when the pause will end. We can say we do expect warming to continue in the future, but it’s not possible to say exactly when.

**Q. The slowdown in global temperature rise continues, you didn’t model it – how long before you accept the models are wrong?**

A. Many climate models feature periods of little or no warming for around a decade, and a small number include periods of around 15 years or more. We need to do more to understand and represent the natural variability in the climate system over shorter time periods, but there is very high confidence that climate models do capture the longer-term trends very well providing an accurate guide to the future.

**Q. If we are seeing a slowdown now, does that mean we will see rapid warming soon?**

A. Until we understand the exact causes of the pause and can reproduce them in models it’s not possible to say when we could see a return to more rapid warming.

**Q. We’ve seen two years in a row with more sea ice extent than the record low value of 2012. Is Arctic sea ice in the midst of a recovery?**

A. The Arctic sea ice record, which dates back to 1979, and model evidence both suggest that sea ice extent is in long-term decline.

As sea ice extent is closely tied to weather conditions, there is a great deal of year to year variability – so we would not expect to see steady year on year decline. Instead there will be peaks and troughs, with a long term declining signal. This is in line with what has been observed.

**Q. Can you explain why the ice has recovered so much since 2012?**

A. As sea ice extent is closely tied to weather conditions, there is a great deal of year to year variability. Weather patterns and events in the Arctic in any given year can either accelerate or slow ice loss. The past two years have seen conditions more conducive to ice formation and retention, while adverse weather is likely to have played a role in the record minimum seen in 2012.
Q. Antarctic sea ice is at record extent, Arctic sea ice has seen two years in a row of recovery, and global temperatures have been on pause for over a decade – is this mounting evidence that global warming is not happening?

A. With regards to Arctic sea ice, all the evidence suggests a long term decline – this year’s extent does nothing to change that.

The pause has been discussed at length by the Met Office in three papers. Conclusions from those reports suggested that the pause did not impact the long-term projections for global warming.

With regards to Antarctic sea ice, there is evidence to suggest that global warming has increased westerly circumpolar winds in the region. The winds push ice northwards, away from Antarctica increasing the overall ice extent. In the Arctic the ice is bounded by land which warms in summer and the overlying air transports that warmth to the sea ice. In the Antarctic, the ice is surrounded by ocean which does not warm as rapidly as land. It is thought that weaker regional warming (which should still melt the sea ice) is compensated by the increased circumpolar winds (increasing the sea ice extent) which means that Antarctic sea ice isn’t melting overall.

Q. Is the severe weather we have had recently due to climate change?

A. No one particular case of severe weather can be directly linked to climate change in isolation, however, the science suggests that these are the sort of conditions that are consistent with the expectations of a changing climate.

Further information can be found on the IPCC website:
www.ipcc.ch

The full AR5 report and individual chapters for WG1 (physical science basis) can be found at:

Further information can also be found on the WMO website:
https://www.wmo.int/media/?q=information-sheets
http://www.wmo.int/pages/themes/climate/causes_of_climate_change.php
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