

**Intergovernmental Science-Policy  
Platform on Biodiversity and  
Ecosystem Services**Distr.: General  
3 November 2014

Original: English

**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy  
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services  
Third session**

Bonn, Germany, 12–17 January 2015

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

**Initial work programme of the Platform: guides on  
assessments, policy support tools and  
methodologies, and preliminary guides on scenario  
analysis and modelling and the conceptualization  
of values****Draft catalogue and guidance on policy support tools and  
methodologies (deliverable 4 (c))****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. In decision IPBES-2/5, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, supported as necessary by a task-specific expert group, to develop a catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies and to provide guidance on how the further development of such tools and methodologies could be promoted and catalysed in the context of the Platform. The draft catalogue and guidance are submitted to the Plenary for review at its third session (see annexes I and II). Additional information on the selection, composition and work of the expert group is set out in the note by the secretariat entitled “Update on deliverable 4 (c): policy support tools and methodologies” (IPBES/3/INF/8).

**II. Proposal for a catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies**

2. The draft catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies is set out in annex I to the present note. The draft catalogue includes the following:

- (a) An introduction setting out the purpose, aim and general features of the proposed catalogue in the context of the Platform;
- (b) A definition and typology of policy support tools and methodologies in the context of the Platform;
- (c) A description of the users, functions and operations of the proposed catalogue.

3. The Plenary may wish to consider the proposal for a catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies with a view to:

- (a) Approving the draft catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies so that the secretariat, in consultation with the Panel and the Bureau, can begin implementation and operationalization;

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\* IPBES/3/1.

(b) Providing further guidance on the focus and functionality of the proposed catalogue in order to enhance its policy relevance.

### **III. Preliminary guidance on policy support tools and methodologies in the context of the Platform**

4. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, with support from the expert group, have also begun to develop guidance on how the function of policy support could be implemented in the work programme. The guidance is preliminary and further direction will be required from the Plenary. It focuses on the following:

(a) The catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies (deliverable 4 (c));

(b) Deliverables directly addressing specific policy support tools and methodologies (deliverables 3 (c) and (d)).

5. The Plenary may wish to consider the preliminary guidance on how to implement the function on policy support tools and methodologies with a view to:

(a) Approving the guidance on supporting the implementation of the catalogue through the interrelations among work programme deliverables;

(b) Approving the extension of the mandate of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies so that they can support the implementation of the catalogue;

(c) Providing further guidance to catalyse the further development of policy support tools and methodologies.

## Annex I

### **Draft catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. There is a wide range of policy support tools and methodologies available for different purposes at different stages of the policy cycle. However, it is often difficult for decision makers and practitioners to access information relating to such tools and methodologies and to identify how relevant they might be.

2. The draft catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies is proposed as an innovative, dynamic and evolving online platform with the following main goals:

(a) To enable decision makers to gain easy access to tailored information relating to policy support tools and methodologies with a view to better informing and assisting the different scales and phases of policymaking and implementation;

(b) To allow a range of users to provide input to the catalogue and assess the usability of tools and methodologies in their specific contexts, including the necessary resources and types of outputs that can be obtained, and thus help to identify gaps in the tools and methodologies.

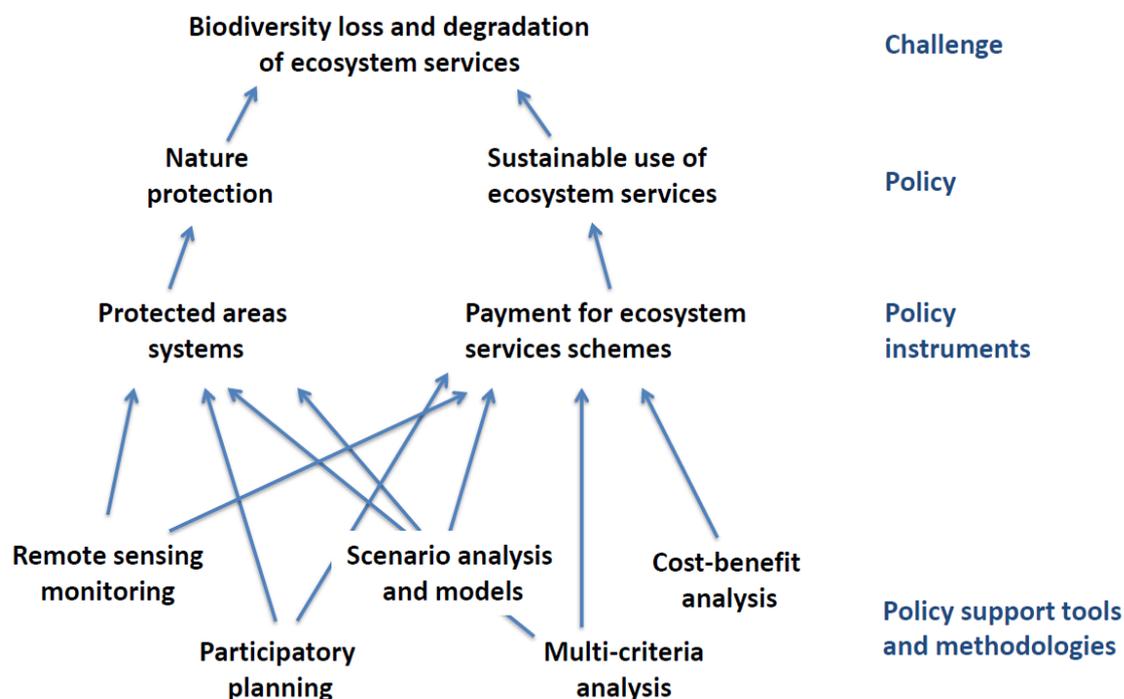
3. The goals will be achieved through the development of an online platform designed around the processes and functions of the Platform and with a user-focused approach. Rather than being simply a repository of information relating to available policy support tools and methodologies, the online catalogue will enable users to add, suggest and rate tools. This will lead to the creation of a community of practice, where diverse decision makers, practitioners, research scholars and other social groups, including indigenous and local communities, can interact and build networks with peers to refine and develop policy support tools and methodologies. In this context, the catalogue should be considered an ongoing and dynamic activity in the context of the Platform.

#### **II. Definition and typology of policy support tools and methodologies in the context of the Platform**

4. For the purposes of this guide, policy support tools and methodologies are defined as approaches and techniques based on science and other knowledge systems that can inform, assist and enhance relevant decisions, policymaking and implementation at the local, national, regional and international levels to protect nature, thus promoting nature's benefits to people and a good quality of life.

5. In addition, it is important to comprehend the context of policy support tools and methodologies. Figure I illustrates the interrelation of policy formulation, policy instrument design and implementation, and policy support tools and methodology for biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystem services.

Figure I  
**Policy support tools and methodologies can help to shape policy instruments to address biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystem services**



6. The expert group has developed a typology of policy support tools and methodologies, aggregating individual tools into seven families. Each family addresses different requirements, types of decisions, decision-making institutions or policymaking cultures in the development, implementation and adaptation of sound policy for the benefit of people and nature. The box below provides a list of these families and gives examples of tools and methodologies for each one.

#### Proposed families of policy support tools and methodologies, with examples

1. Assembling data and knowledge (including monitoring): data collection and databases, indicators, oral history, mapping of ecosystem services, population dynamics.
2. Assessment and evaluation: management effectiveness, trend analysis, scenarios, identification and assessment of indigenous and local community conserved areas, quantitative modelling, accounting, life-cycle assessment, deliberative valuation, cost-benefit analysis, trade-off analysis.
3. Public discussion, involvement and participatory process: expert interviews, stakeholder consultation, field observation, focused group discussion, mass media communication, cultural mapping and implications for policy goals and criteria, social media tools.
4. Selection and design of policy instruments: policy analysis, identification of missing instruments, instrument impact evaluation, ex-ante evaluation of options and scenarios, designing of individual territory sets or systems of protected areas, policy mix analysis.
5. Implementation, outreach and enforcement: audits, risk-based enforcement effort, process standards (e.g. International Standards Organization (ISO)), monitoring, reporting and verification.
6. Training and capacity-building: handbooks, manuals, guides, e-learning resources, education, workshops, knowledge sharing.
7. Social learning, innovation and adaptive governance: strategic adaptive management, social learning theory.

7. Policy support tools and methodologies can be directly related and reflected according to a wide range of possible application contexts. In the context of the Platform, and within the catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies, the main focus will be the following:
- (a) The conceptual framework of the Platform and its various components;
  - (b) The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
8. Other applications include, but are not limited to:
- (a) Phases of the policy cycle (e.g., agenda setting and review, policy design and decisions, policy implementation);
  - (b) Geographical or administrative scale of application (e.g., global, regional, national, subnational, indigenous and local communities; rural versus urban areas);
  - (c) Biological or ecological context (e.g., types of ecosystem services, ecosystems or biomes addressed);
  - (d) Socioeconomic context (e.g., markets and private sector relations, informal economy and livelihood security, civil society, state intervention in provision of public goods and vulnerable communities);
  - (e) Specific problem or challenge addressed (e.g., issues related to perverse incentives, missing information, market failure, lack of appropriate/equitable legal frameworks, absence of risk management options);
  - (f) History of use (e.g., tools and methodologies can be categorized based on whether they are in a pilot phase or already under full implementation);
  - (g) Environmental policy and governance context (e.g., decision-making process, governance structure, public involvement in the decision-making process).

### **III. Description of the proposed catalogue**

#### **A. Users of the Platform’s catalogue**

9. The catalogue is aimed at a range of users, including decision makers, practitioners and other social groups, who will have a dual role as beneficiaries and contributors. Based on the aims of the catalogue and the Platform, five target groups are proposed:

- (a) Target group 1: the Platform (Plenary, Bureau, Panel and secretariat, task forces and expert groups). The governing and administrative bodies of the Platform are “internal users” and also general administrators of the catalogue. In order to fulfil the above functions, this target group will oversee the continued monitoring and updating of the catalogue. As such, their roles include the following:
  - (i) To approve and adopt the catalogue and support the implementation strategy; to receive, evaluate, refine and systematize the information generated at various stages; and to update the catalogue;
  - (ii) To establish the internal links, by means of a business plan, to other functions of the Platform and to the specific actions and deliverables that are decided each year for the Platform based on a yearly review of the catalogue and its results;
  - (iii) To decide on assessments relating to tools and methodologies for specific decision-making processes, ecosystems, regions, knowledge systems, user groups, stakeholders and topics;
- (b) Target group 2: strategic institutional partners of the Platform (e.g., Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations system). Their main function will be to provide feedback on the catalogue and promote its use in their respective constituencies through processes as defined by the organizations/conventions;
- (c) Target group 3: knowledge holders on policy-support tools and methodologies (expert groups under the Platform, universities, scientists and scientific organizations, indigenous and local knowledge holders). Their main function will be to develop, update and populate the tool pages of the catalogue to ensure the credibility and relevance of the information available in the catalogue. This group will use the catalogue as a platform for broader networking;

(d) Target group 4: member countries. The member and observer countries of the Platform and their national, regional and local authorities are anticipated to be the main users of the catalogue as they have direct responsibility for the policies aimed at ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and related ecosystem services. Member countries will use the catalogue actively in the context of specific political and administrative frameworks, help customize it and communicate and encourage its broader use. They will also support the Platform by providing regular feedback on the content and use of the catalogue;

(e) Target group 5: other (potential) users. This group includes a wide variety of users (non-governmental organizations, conservation and development practitioners, indigenous and local communities, youth groups, businesses, local authorities, media, etc.) whose main roles will be to use, evaluate and provide feedback on the catalogue.

## **B. Functions of the catalogue**

10. The catalogue serves two sets of functions. The first goal of the catalogue, namely to provide decision makers and those implementing the decisions with easy access to information on policy support tools and methodologies, is considered the most essential. For this goal, a number of functions are needed, including the following:

(a) To allow users to browse, search, identify and retrieve relevant policy support tools and methodologies and information relating to them;

(b) To allow the design of online functionality for the target groups. The catalogue will be designed from the perspective of the needs and requirements of users. The aim is to make the catalogue as accessible as possible to ensure its use by decision makers;

(c) To strengthen user networking. The catalogue will have a strong networking function, allowing users working with policy support tools and methodologies to identify each other more readily and share experiences on developing or using policy support tools with peers.

11. The second goal of the catalogue is to allow users to input tools and methodologies from their specific contexts for others to assess their usability and to help identify gaps in tools and methodologies in order to spark the development of new ones. To achieve this goal, the catalogue should facilitate the following:

(a) Allow for submission of information on policy support tools and methodologies;

(b) Share lessons learned. Users of the catalogue will be encouraged to assess tools and methodologies by sharing their experience;

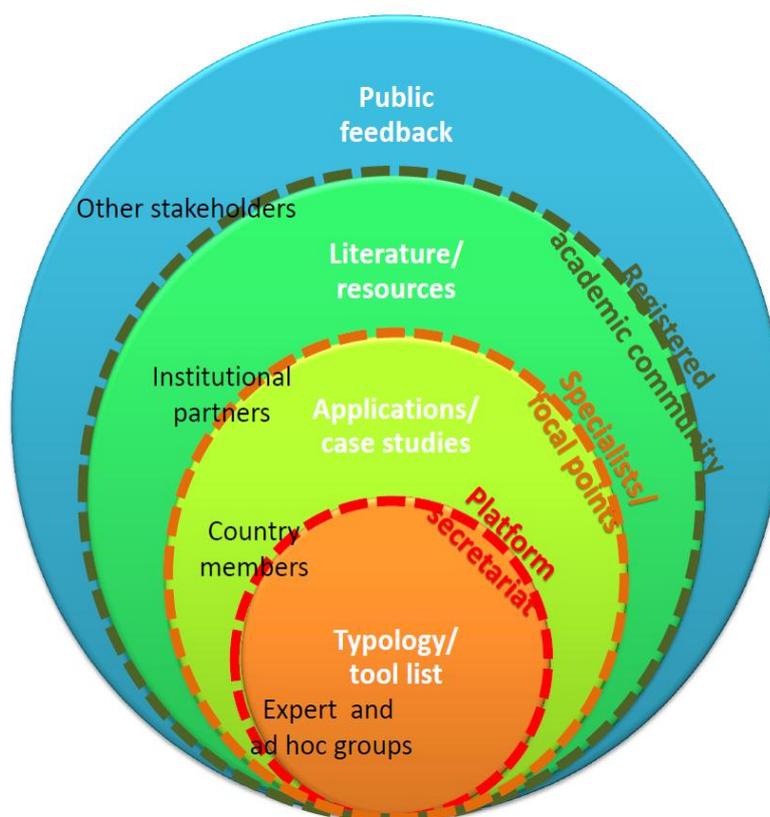
(c) Allow for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the catalogue. Mechanisms will be put in place to monitor and evaluate knowledge products and track the effectiveness of the catalogue in meeting its objectives, particularly its effectiveness in bridging the gaps between science, policy and practice;

(d) Provide information to the Plenary of the Platform. Annual reports to the Plenary will outline the results of the lessons learned and the progress made with the catalogue. This will allow the Platform to identify gaps in tools and methodologies and develop new ones.

## **C. Contents and quality control**

12. The catalogue will be designed to adapt to an ever-changing context by facilitating collaborative content creation, maintenance, support and quality control (see fig. II).

Figure II  
A dynamic representation of content and inputs to the catalogue



13. The catalogue has four layers of content (see fig. II), each of which should be maintained by relevant stakeholders. At the core, there is a policy support tool list created and organized according to the seven families of policy support tools, administered and periodically revised by the Platform secretariat and its permanent team of experts (target group 1). Each tool will be presented in detail, including its purpose and function(s), the match between the tool and the Platform framework, the resources and skills needed for its application, the stage of the policy cycle at which the tool could be applied, the context(s) in which the tool has been or could be used, and supporting literature and resources. The applications/case studies represent practical examples of how a given tool or methodology can be applied, and are to be administered by knowledge holders specialized in designing or applying it (target groups 3 and 4). The catalogue will not be complete if it is deprived of ways of receiving input and feedback from users belonging to the broader community (target group 5). This public feedback layer has the highest degree of permeability and allows registered users of the catalogue to assess, comment on and propose new content regarding specific policy support tools or methodologies.

14. Since stakeholders will have diverse expertise, contributions from different sources will be assessed using a simple registration form asking users for contact details and the rationale for wanting to provide input. The catalogue will be moderated using a common set of criteria to determine whether suggested input can be added to the catalogue. Such content moderators should be selected through a nomination process overseen by Panel members.

15. The policy support tools and methodologies will be accessible through various catalogue entry points or filters that can be used individually or collectively to refine the search to the type of user, the stage of the policy cycle at which the policy support tool or methodology is required, the fit with the conceptual framework of the Platform, the policy goal pursued by the user, the context in which the policy-support tools and methodologies can be applied and the corresponding Aichi targets.

## **D. Strategy for implementation of the catalogue**

16. The most feasible option for the implementation of the catalogue is to nest it within the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) web portal currently being developed by the United Nations Development Programme. The portal aims to facilitate access to the work of network participants who are developing capacity in the interface between science, policy and practice with a view to supporting the Platform and enabling effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide, implementing the three Rio Conventions and related multilateral agreements in a way that contributes to long-term human well-being and sustainable development. The proposed catalogue of policy tools and methodologies could be an integral part of the BES-Net web portal, but managed as a separate module, following the required processes and principles of the Platform, and clearly visible as a Platform product (logo and overall branding). This could help BES-Net to develop deeper layers of content with input from the Platform's expert groups. As potential areas for collaboration emerge, options for the structure, management and monitoring of the BES-Net web portal will need to be refined to suit the needs of the Platform. Relevant provisions have been included in the terms of reference for the web portal.

17. Once the catalogue is nested on the BES-Net portal, population of the catalogue will involve a stepwise approach. Initially, communication will be among a core team of experts from within the Platform (target group 1) who will be responsible for inputting initial content and evaluating the structure and content of the catalogue. There will then be a trial and error stage with a broader range of users (target group 3) and a presentation of the catalogue in intergovernmental meetings (target group 2). The feedback received in these meetings will be incorporated into the catalogue development and discussed by the core group of experts (target group 1). Once the catalogue is deemed fit for purpose, a longer period aligned with the timeline for the other Platform deliverables will be set aside to provide induction and training for the use of and feedback on the catalogue by "specialized" stakeholders, reflecting the users targeted in the catalogue (target groups 4 and 5). Continual efforts will be made to interface with other expert groups and task forces of the Platform to ensure synergies between interrelated Platform deliverables.

18. To ensure the above stepwise approach for populating, updating and supporting the catalogue, it is proposed to continue the work of the expert group on the catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies in 2015/2016.

## Annex II

### Preliminary guidance on policy support tools and methodologies in the context of the Platform

#### I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to decision IPBES-2/5, the work programme of the Platform for the period 2014–2018 is designed to implement the goal, functions and operating principles of the Platform in a coherent and integrated manner through a set of interlinked deliverables. Each of the four functions of the Platform (i.e., access to and management and generation of knowledge; undertaking of assessments; facilitation of the use of policy support tools and methodologies; provision of capacity-building) is to be addressed by the four objectives of the work programme and their interlinked deliverables.

2. The original text defining the functions of the Platform states: “The Platform supports policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development” (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, annex I, appendix 1, para. 1 (d)). The following provides preliminary guidance on how policy support tools and methodologies are to be best identified, made accessible and further developed in the context of the work programme and its deliverables. As further outlined below, it is proposed to focus in particular on:

- (a) The catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies (deliverable 4 (c));
- (b) Deliverables directly addressing specific policy support tools and methodologies (deliverables 3 (c) and (d)).

#### II. The catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies

3. The catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies (see annex I), would be the centrepiece of the policy support function and the one with which all other relevant deliverables would interrelate. The catalogue would be the place where all identified policy support tools and methodologies are compiled and presented according to a coherent and policy-relevant framework, and through which decision makers gain access to these tools and methodologies. The catalogue depends on other deliverables of the work programme, as follows:

- (a) Work on capacity-building (deliverables 1 (a) and (b)) should take into account needs related to the use of policy support tools and methodologies. In addition, the catalogue should be aimed at providing relevant material and guidance needed to build that capacity;
- (b) Work on indigenous and local knowledge systems (deliverable 1 (c)) should identify policy support tools and methodologies that exist in indigenous and local knowledge systems with the view to including them in the catalogue. Conversely, the catalogue should provide the means to better understand and provide access to such tools, building the contribution that indigenous and local knowledge makes to the policymaking process;
- (c) Work on knowledge and data (deliverable 1 (d)) should provide guidance on the use of indicators in the context of policy support tools and methodologies, and on the design and functionality of the catalogue. It should also work towards enabling access to and management of the knowledge and data needed to apply identified policy support tools and methodologies;
- (d) Regional assessments (deliverable 2 (b)), the global assessment (deliverable 2 (c)) and thematic assessments (deliverables 3 (a) and (b)) should play a major role in identifying and assessing the availability, effectiveness and replicability of current and emerging policy-relevant tools and methodologies relevant to the scope of the assessments. Guidance on how to address the dimension of policy support tools and methodologies within these assessments is included in the guide on assessment (deliverable 2 (a)). Relevant work done during an assessment could be made available through the catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies;
- (e) Deliverables directly addressing specific policy support tools and methodologies (deliverables 3 (c) and (d)) are expected to make significant contributions to the identification and assessment of current and emerging policy support tools and methodologies and should interrelate closely with the catalogue. The catalogue will facilitate the dissemination of the tools and methodologies assessed.

4. To coordinate the interaction between the catalogue and the respective deliverables and to oversee the external contributions, it is proposed to extend the mandate of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies until 2018 with a view to supporting the Panel and the Bureau in fulfilling this role of oversight and quality control. With one proposed meeting of 20 experts per year, the suggested extension of the mandate of this expert group would incur additional costs of around \$255,000 over the remaining four years of the work programme.

### **III. Deliverables directly addressing specific policy support tools and methodologies**

5. Another important means to implement the Platform's mandate of policy support is through the deliverables directly addressing specific policy support tools and methodologies, such as those on scenario analysis and modelling (deliverable 3 (c)) and on diverse conceptualizations of value (deliverable 3 (d)). They are composed of two phases: a methodological assessment and the anticipated promotion and further development of relevant tools and methodologies. The assessment will help to identify and assess the current and emerging policy support tools and methodologies and provide the substantive grounds to improve access to and use of particular tools and methodologies. Based on insights gained from the assessments, the Plenary is then to decide on ways and means to promote and catalyse the further development of tools and methodologies identified as needing special attention.

6. While clear rules of procedure exist for the assessment phase of these deliverables, rules of procedure guiding the second phase and the promotion and further development of relevant tools and methodologies are still to be drawn up. As requested by decision IPBES-2/5, and based on earlier discussions (IPBES.MI/1/INF/5/Add.1), the Panel and the Bureau, supported by the expert group, have started to develop guidance on how to implement that part of the Platform's mandate. The possible options currently being discussed include the following:

(a) Establishing processes to develop, test and customize policy-relevant tools and methodologies within the remit of the Platform. Such processes could be undertaken by ad hoc expert groups or the secretariat and might involve entrusting tasks to existing groups of tool developers;

(b) Outsourcing tool and methodology development, testing and customization by issuing invitations to donors, partners or other existing institutions and tool developers to take action and report back to the Plenary on progress.

7. As indicated, the development of guidance on this aspect of the Platform is still in progress. It is suggested that the Panel and the Bureau, supported by the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies, and in consultation with the expert groups working on deliverables 3 (c) and (d), will continue developing this guidance for consideration at the fourth session of the Plenary.

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