



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

Bonn, Germany, 3–9 July 2022

Item 7 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Assessing knowledge: scoping report for a methodological
assessment of the impact and dependence of business on
biodiversity and nature's contributions to people****Scoping report for a methodological assessment of the impact
and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's
contributions to people and proposals for streamlining future
scoping processes under the Platform****Note by the secretariat****Introduction**

1. In paragraph 4 of section II of decision IPBES-7/1, the Plenary approved the scoping process for a methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people (hereafter referred to as "the business and biodiversity assessment"), in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables, set out in annex I to decision IPBES-3/3 and based on the initial scoping report for the assessment, set out in section IV of appendix II to document IPBES/7/6, and decided to consider conducting the assessment over a period of two years, following a fast-track approach.
2. In paragraph 6 of section II of decision IPBES-8/1, the Plenary requested the Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, to review scoping processes in other bodies, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, with a view to making proposals for streamlining future scoping processes under IPBES.
3. The Plenary will be invited to take note of the proposals for streamlining future scoping processes under IPBES, set out in section I below, consider the scoping report set out in the annex to the present note and decide on the start of the undertaking of the assessment.

I. Proposals for streamlining future scoping processes under IPBES

4. In response to the request by the Plenary, the Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, compared the form and structure of the scoping reports of the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health (the nexus assessment) and the thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity (the transformative change assessment) and earlier IPBES assessments with the chapter outlines of the contributions by Working Groups I and II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (referred to hereafter as "the chapter outlines"), which serve as scoping reports.

5. The following main differences were identified:

* IPBES/9/1.

6. The chapter outlines indicate that they are to be considered by the authors as indicative. IPBES scoping documents do not include such a note;
7. The chapter outlines are very brief and in the form of a list of bullet points, which provide topics for each chapter and section, in no particular order. The chapter outlines of the contributions of Working Groups I and II comprised approximately 1,200 and 2,000 words respectively. In comparison, the IPBES nexus and transformative change assessment scoping reports contained approximately 6,200 words each;
8. The chapter outline for the contribution of Working Group II sets out page limits for each of the sections of the Working Group II contribution. Scoping reports of IPBES have to date not provided such information;
9. The chapter outlines contain suggested annexes, including an annex containing the list of authors and reviewers of the assessment. IPBES scoping reports have to date not included such information.
10. The scoping report for the *Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (see decision IPBES-4/1, annex I) was, at approximately 6,000 words, of a length comparable to those of the nexus and transformative change assessments. The initial scoping reports which the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel prepared for the *Assessment of Pollination, Pollinators and Food Production* and for the *Assessment of Scenarios and Models of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* were more concise, at approximately 1,700 words apiece. They included sections on scope, rationale, assumptions, utility (in the case of the Pollination Assessment) and a chapter outline, including a brief paragraph on the content of each chapter. They did not include sections with overarching questions (first included in the scoping report for the Global Assessment) or on the methodological approach (first included in the scoping report for the assessment of the sustainable use of wild species).
11. Based on the information set out in the preceding paragraphs, the Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, recommends that future scoping reports:
12. Be shorter (a maximum of approximately 3,000 words, for example) and thus include fewer and shorter sections;
13. Include indicative limits on the length of the summary for policymakers and the chapters, which would vary, depending on the nature of the assessment.
14. Shorter scoping reports would allow authors more flexibility in the development of an assessment in line with the latest available science while also reducing the time required for their review and approval by the Plenary.
15. The above recommendations have already been applied to the draft scoping report for the business and biodiversity assessment (see the annex to the present document).

II. Scoping a methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people

16. In response to paragraph 4 of section II of decision IPBES-7/1, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, assisted by a group of experts, prepared the scoping report for the business and biodiversity assessment, which is set out in the annex to the present note. An overview of the process followed for the production of the scoping report is set out in document IPBES/9/INF/10.
17. As was already noted in document IPBES/8/INF/7 on progress in scoping the methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people, it has been suggested that the start of the business and biodiversity assessment be delayed until the tenth session of the Plenary. A potential schedule of assessments until 2030 is set out in document IPBES/9/12.

Annex

Scoping report for a methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business and biodiversity and nature's contributions to people

I. Scope, rationale, timeline and geographical coverage, and methodological approach

A. Scope

1. The objective of this methodological assessment is to strengthen the knowledge base to support efforts by business to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the Sustainable Development Goals and to inform biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, processes and efforts. The assessment will categorize the dependencies and impact of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people, which include ecosystem services and other analogous concepts; assess criteria and indicators for measuring such dependencies and impacts; and assess options for action by businesses and by others, including Governments, the financial sector and civil society, that interact with business.

B. Rationale

2. Engaging businesses and the financial sector in efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and related nature's contributions to people is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and other biodiversity-related commitments. Different business sectors depend on and benefit from biodiversity and nature's contributions to people in different ways and to varying extents and have a range of positive and negative impacts on both biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.

3. Improved understanding and awareness of the dependencies and impacts of businesses on biodiversity and improved concepts and methodologies, including tools for measuring and communicating such dependencies and impacts, are important for enabling businesses to understand the risks (physical, transitional and systemic) and opportunities, and to assess and monitor their performance. Improved understanding and systematic reporting are important for promoting public accountability and transparency, improving consumer knowledge of dependencies and impacts, developing an enabling policy environment, informing regulatory agencies and guiding financing decisions and investments. Initiatives have emerged to support such efforts, but there are conflicting approaches, numerous gaps and no agreed standards for addressing dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, cumulative impact and indirect impact through supply chains, trade or substitution effects.

4. Consistency in reporting dependencies and impacts that accounts for region-specific and business-specific factors provides a basis for making comparisons of business performance against biodiversity-related goals and targets over time, as well as for comparisons between various actors and activities. Validated, standardized and business-specific metrics and indicators are important for efficient, transparent and robust environmental governance.

C. Timeline and geographical coverage

5. The assessment will be global in scope and will address issues related to all major sectors and business types. Regional adaptations and applications, including examples drawn from both past and present, will also be considered.

6. The assessment will be carried out over a two-year period.

D. Methodological approach

7. The assessment report will consist of a summary for policymakers and six chapters, each with an executive summary of the key findings most relevant to both public and private sector decision-makers. The assessment will also include key gaps in knowledge, methodologies and reporting standards.

- 49 8. The assessment will draw on scientific literature, indigenous and local knowledge and grey
50 literature, in line with the procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables,¹ including IPBES
51 assessments and relevant reports or other materials prepared by existing reporting initiatives and by
52 public and private entities. The assessment will present relevant case studies at various scales, as
53 appropriate.
- 54 9. The assessment will be consistent with the IPBES conceptual framework.²
- 55 10. The work will be carried out by a highly interdisciplinary team of experts, including
56 practitioners with expertise in the dependencies and impacts on biodiversity and nature's contributions
57 to people in different business sectors (both formal and informal), such as forestry, agriculture and
58 food systems, marine and freshwater fisheries and other uses of wild species, water, tourism,
59 pharmaceuticals, energy, infrastructure and mining. The expert team will draw from a diversity of
60 backgrounds, for example, academia, business and industry, government and civil society, and a wide
61 variety of disciplines, for example, accounting, climatology, ecology, economics, finance, gender
62 studies, hydrology, law, management science, material design and engineering, public health and risk
63 assessment. The interdisciplinary team will in turn draw from a diversity of knowledge sources, for
64 example, business and financial knowledge, governmental policy and regulatory knowledge,
65 indigenous and local knowledge, and natural and social science knowledge and expertise.
- 66 11. The task force on knowledge and data will support the experts in their work on data and
67 information and in their identification of knowledge gaps and, following the approval of the
68 assessment, promote knowledge generation to address the gaps identified.³
- 69 12. Addressing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in the assessment will be in line
70 with the IPBES approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge⁴ and
71 relevant guidance regarding its implementation provided by the task force on indigenous and local
72 knowledge.⁵
- 73 13. The task force on capacity-building will support the development and uptake of the assessment
74 in accordance with objective 2 on building capacity of the IPBES work programme up to 2030 and the
75 capacity-building rolling plan.⁶
- 76 14. The task force on policy tools and methodologies will assist in identifying and assessing
77 relevant policy tools and frameworks and will work to increase the policy and business relevance of
78 the assessment and its use in decision-making, once approved.⁷
- 79 15. The task force on scenarios and models will support the use of models and scenarios in
80 assessing the impact of business on biodiversity, and of transformative pathways in improving
81 biodiversity and business outcomes.
- 82 16. Coordination and facilitation between this assessment, the nexus assessment and the
83 transformative change assessment will be ensured to enable synergies and complementarity and to
84 avoid duplication of scope and work.
- 85 17. The summary for policymakers, which will address both public and private sector
86 decision-makers, will be available in all six official languages of the United Nations and will be
87 printed on demand, resources permitting.
- 88 18. The length of the summary for policymakers should remain within a word limit⁸ of
89 approximately 8,500 words (indicative). Indicative word limits are also provided for each chapter in
90 section II below.

¹ See decisions IPBES-3/3 and IPBES-4/3.

² See decision IPBES-2/4, annex, and decision IPBES-5/1, section III, para. 9.

³ Mandates of the task forces may be subject to change at the tenth session of the Plenary.

⁴ Set out in decision IPBES-5/1, annex II.

⁵ Mandates of the task forces may be subject to change at the tenth session of the Plenary.

⁶ Mandates of the task forces may be subject to change at the tenth session of the Plenary.

⁷ Mandates of the task forces may be subject to change at the tenth session of the Plenary.

⁸ The indicative limits to the length of the summary for policymakers and the chapters of the assessment are expressed as a number of words. They exclude literature cited, figures and tables. For reference, a laid-out page with two columns of text contains approximately 850 words. The limits indicated for the summary for policymakers and the chapters would thus correspond to the following number of laid-out pages: summary for policymakers: 10 pages; chapter 1: 12 pages; chapter 2: 15 pages; chapter 3: 15 pages; chapter 4: 24 pages; chapter 5: 18 pages; and chapter 6: 24 pages.

- 91 19. Communication and outreach will be undertaken from the outset and during the development
 92 of the assessment to build engagement with the wider knowledge community and the end users of the
 93 assessment.
- 94 20. Technical support will be provided by a technical support unit, which will work in close
 95 collaboration with the groups of experts producing other IPBES assessments and with the IPBES task
 96 forces and their respective technical support units.

97 II. Chapter outline

- 98 21. **Chapter 1: Setting the scene.** (*Indicative length ~10,200 words*) Chapter 1 will describe the
 99 purpose of the assessment and the intended audience. It will introduce the issues to be assessed in the
 100 following chapters and discuss the links between this assessment and other relevant IPBES
 101 assessments, and the ways in which this assessment links to the IPBES conceptual framework and to
 102 the achievement of the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 103 22. Chapter 1 will also present a typology of the different business sectors, including both formal
 104 and informal economic sectors, that will be used throughout the assessment, referencing existing
 105 typologies. It will frame the relationship of the dependencies and impacts of business on biodiversity
 106 and nature's contributions to people, but will leave it until later chapters to fully develop typologies of
 107 dependency (chapter 2) and impact (chapter 3). It will highlight key issues and provide definitions of
 108 important terms within the context of their use in the assessment, for example, the term "direct and
 109 indirect dependencies".
- 110 23. **Chapter 2: How does business depend on biodiversity?** (*Indicative length ~12,750 words*)
 111 Chapter 2 will describe the various ways in which businesses depend on biodiversity and nature's
 112 contributions to people, while also noting potential synergies and trade-offs with other societal goals.
 113 It will set out concrete examples of both qualitative and quantitative dependencies and describe the
 114 ways in which conserving and sustainably using biodiversity can provide benefits and opportunities
 115 for long-term business, societal and environmental sustainability, and how losing biodiversity and
 116 nature's contributions to people generates risks for business, finance and society. It will also provide a
 117 typology of the dependencies of businesses of different types and sizes on biodiversity and nature's
 118 contributions to people. The chapter will describe various existing methods and approaches that can be
 119 or have been used to identify business dependencies and interdependencies on biodiversity and
 120 nature's contribution to people and will identify common features of those approaches, important
 121 differences in framing and definitions, data requirements and common datasets, their uptake to date
 122 and implications for decision-making by businesses, investors, consumers, Governments and civil
 123 society.
- 124 24. Chapter 2 will also set out issues that arise when characterizing dependencies, such as
 125 characterizing direct and indirect dependencies, dependencies arising along the length of a supply
 126 chain, the way in which dependencies are influenced or created by policies and regulations, consumer
 127 behaviour, spatial and temporal scales of dependencies, potential conflicts between dependencies on
 128 nature's contributions to people, biodiversity conservation and restoration, and ways to address
 129 environmental justice, equality and equity issues created by dependencies.
- 130 25. **Chapter 3: How does business impact biodiversity?** (*Indicative length ~12,750 words*)
 131 Chapter 3 will consider the ways in which businesses impact on biodiversity and nature's
 132 contributions to people, accounting for direct and indirect drivers through which such impact occurs. It
 133 will address definitions, concepts and the nature of impact, creating a typology of impact. It will define
 134 the ways in which impact links to dependence, risk and opportunity and how it intersects with
 135 indigenous peoples and local communities. It will outline the implications of business impact for
 136 biodiversity and nature's contributions to people and demonstrate the need for reliable impact
 137 assessment methodologies and other tools.
- 138 26. Chapter 3 will describe the methods and approaches for assessing the impacts of business on
 139 biodiversity and nature's contributions to people, including quantitative, qualitative, proxy-based and
 140 spatially explicit approaches and scenarios. It will identify the common features of such
 141 methodologies and the ways in which they differ, and will consider the implications of these
 142 differences for decision-making. The chapter will describe the pathways of impact on biodiversity and
 143 nature's contributions to people through both direct and indirect drivers, and the best estimates of the
 144 impacts of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.

- 145 27. Chapter 3 will also discuss matter that arise when characterizing impact, which could include
146 setting references or targets against which various types of impact are assessed; potential for tipping
147 points; boundaries of impact assessment; unsustainable exploitation of natural resources; cumulative
148 or joint impact; positive, negative, direct and indirect or induced impact; and impact attribution. Data
149 requirements, the need for common data sets and sensitivity analysis will also be considered. The
150 chapter will also assess the utility of approaches currently being used by businesses to identify impact.
- 151 **28. Chapter 4: Frameworks, metrics and indicators to measure business dependence and**
152 **impact on biodiversity.** (*Indicative length ~15,300 words*) Chapter 4 will build on chapters 2 and 3
153 by assessing the status of frameworks, metrics and indicators relevant to describing the dependencies
154 and impacts of business on biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people. The chapter will present
155 an inventory of frameworks, metrics and indicators for biodiversity dependencies and impacts,
156 including an assessment of their scientific robustness. It will also discuss important gaps in applicable
157 frameworks, metrics and indicators, will develop a typology of such frameworks, metrics and
158 indicators, including relevant definitions, and present tools for assessing them.
- 159 29. Chapter 4 will also assess how various frameworks, metrics and indicators characterize issues
160 such as direct and indirect drivers, cumulative impact, spatial and temporal scales (short and long
161 term), single metric versus collections of metrics and indicators, applicable scale (site, landscape,
162 corporate, portfolio, product, supply chain and value chain), objective and audience (management
163 versus disclosure, and internal versus external) and different methods of valuation (including from
164 indigenous peoples and local community methodologies), referencing work from the IPBES values
165 assessment. Recognizing that measuring biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people at different
166 spatial and temporal scales is challenging, and that there is no “one size fits all” single framework,
167 metric or indicator which fits all contexts, the chapter will identify criteria for determining preferred or
168 appropriate, practical and science-based frameworks, metrics and indicators for different contexts.
- 169 30. The chapter will also provide guidance on the appropriate use of frameworks, metrics and
170 indicators by businesses, decision-makers, the financial sector and others, for measuring business
171 performance in managing biodiversity dependencies and impacts. The chapter will present examples
172 of ways in which frameworks, metrics and indicators have been applied, highlighting challenges
173 associated with their use, including cumulative impact and tipping points, costs of measurement, data
174 accessibility and data and knowledge gaps.
- 175 31. Chapter 4 will also illustrate how different frameworks, metrics and indicators map against the
176 IPBES conceptual framework and will demonstrate the ways in which different frameworks, metrics
177 and tools are used to assess the contribution of business sectors to the Sustainable Development Goals,
178 the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
- 179 **32. Chapter 5: Businesses as key actors of change: options for action by business.** (*Indicative*
180 *length ~20,400 words*) Chapter 5 will address the role and responsibility of businesses in
181 transformative change for a sustainable future. It will describe both challenges and opportunities for
182 action by businesses in various sectors, using the typology of sectors from Chapter 1. It will include
183 discussion of key barriers, such as gaps in knowledge and data, and ways to overcome them through
184 adoption of best practices, collaboration, capacity-building, financing and information-sharing. It will
185 discuss the influence of metrics and indicators addressed in chapter 4 on sustainable outcomes for
186 biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people.
- 187 33. Chapter 5 will also examine the role and efficacy of various approaches to promoting change,
188 including certification schemes, standards for compliance, the mitigation hierarchy, sectoral
189 guidelines, best management practices, innovative environmental or biodiversity accounting systems,
190 new business models and new technologies. The chapter will also consider synergies between
191 approaches and evidence of whether the holistic effects of combinations of approaches are effective in
192 achieving transformative change. The chapter will provide examples of collaboration in industry
193 associations, across supply chains, with indigenous peoples and local communities, and between
194 businesses within and across sectors that promote biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people. It
195 will also investigate how sustainability approaches (such as the circular green economy and
196 sustainable trade and innovation) and actions by businesses influence social norms, consumption and
197 production patterns and public policy, and what effect that influence has, both positive and negative,
198 on biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people.
- 199 34. Chapter 5 will highlight key opportunities for businesses (by sector) to improve their
200 performance, including the role of accountability and reporting, and to better align with international
201 sustainable development and biodiversity commitments.

- 202 35. Chapter 6: Creating an enabling environment for business: options for action by Governments,
 203 the financial sector and civil society. (*Indicative length ~20,400 words*) Chapter 6 will assess what
 204 Governments, the financial sector and civil society, including consumers, can do to enable and
 205 catalyse a meaningful change in the business sector to conserve biodiversity and nature's contributions
 206 to people. Businesses operate within a larger societal and legal context and can influence and be
 207 influenced by government policies, institutional processes, cultural norms, financial policies and
 208 incentives, and social licences to operate.
- 209 36. Chapter 6 will also highlight the ways in which national Governments and international
 210 organizations can reform current policies or enact new policies to provide positive incentives to
 211 enhance biodiversity and nature's contributions to people and reduce negative incentives. It will also
 212 discuss the role that Governments can play in infrastructure design, in regulation, in monitoring and in
 213 procurement to enhance biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.
- 214 37. Chapter 6 will explore the influence of the financial sector on business and of various types of
 215 financial institutions through the operation of capital markets, the influence of lenders and investors
 216 (whether directly or through markets for ownership), the influence of the insurance industry, the
 217 influence of financial analysts and whether the financial sector includes biodiversity and nature's
 218 contributions to people in its operations. The chapter will also assess a number of existing approaches
 219 aimed at reducing negative impact and promoting positive impact on biodiversity, such as
 220 environmental social governance ratings, impact and engagement funds, and exclusionary screening.
- 221 38. Chapter 6 will describe the role of non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples and
 222 local communities and consumers in monitoring government and corporate behaviour and in raising
 223 awareness of business dependency, impact and risks associated with biodiversity loss. It will also
 224 identify examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships (Governments, intergovernmental organizations,
 225 non-governmental organizations and academia) that promote business action which supports
 226 biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.

III. Timetable

- 227 39. The table below presents the overall timeline of the assessment.
 228

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Actions</i> |
|---------------------------|--|
| 2022 | |
| Third quarter | The Plenary, at its ninth session, to be held from 3 to 9 July 2022, will be invited to approve the undertaking of the business and biodiversity assessment and request the secretariat to establish the institutional arrangements necessary to establish the technical support required for the assessment to commence following its tenth session (planned for April or May 2023) |
| Third quarter | The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, through the secretariat, requests nominations of experts, including practitioners from business and the financial sector, by Governments and other stakeholders |
| Third and fourth quarters | The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel selects the assessment co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors, in line with the procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables, including by implementing the procedure for filling gaps in expertise |
| End of fourth quarter | The selection decision is communicated to nominees |
| 2023 | |
| Second quarter | Meeting of the management committee (co-chairs, members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel assigned by these bodies to the assessment) to plan first author meeting and online preparatory meetings for the expert group to prepare for the start of the assessment |
| Third quarter | First author meeting with co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors, review editors and members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel who are part of the management committee of the assessment |
| 2024 | |
| First to third quarters | Preparation of the first drafts of the chapters and outline of the summary for policymakers |
| Late first quarter | Writing workshop to advance the preparation of the summary for policymakers with co-chairs, coordinating lead authors and members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel who are part of the management committee of the assessment |
| Second quarter | First external review (8 weeks) – drafts of the chapters and of the summary for policymakers are made available for review by Governments and experts |

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Actions</i> |
|----------------------|--|
| Third quarter | Second author meeting with co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors, review editors and members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel who are part of the management committee of the assessment |
| Third quarter | Back-to-back with the second author meeting, a meeting will be held to advance the preparation of the summary for policymakers with co-chairs, coordinating lead authors and members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel who are part of the management committee of the assessment |
| 2025 | |
| Early first quarter | External review of summary for policymakers |
| Second quarter | Online writing workshop to advance the preparation of the summary for policymakers with co-chairs, coordinating lead authors and members of the Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel who are part of the management committee of the assessment |
| Third quarter | Authors finalize draft chapters and the draft summary for policymakers |
| Third quarter | Final review (6 weeks) – final drafts of the chapters and of the summary for policymakers are made available for review by Governments |
| Early fourth quarter | Consideration by the Plenary, at its twelfth session, of the summary for policymakers for approval and of the chapters for acceptance |
| Fourth quarter | Communication activities in relation to the assessment |