

**GRULAC OPENING DECLARATION**  
**(Sunday July 3, 2022)**

*Thank you, Madame Chair.*

*GRULAC is happy finally to meet you all in person, once again. We would like to thank the Government of Germany and the City of Bonn for receiving the Plenary once more, as well as the Secretariat for the preparation of this meeting.*

*GRULAC acknowledges the excellent coordination carried out by the Bureau, the MEP and the Secretary of IPBES of the various activities reported, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated challenges.*

*Since the beginning of IPBES, GRULAC has been an ally and promoter of the Platform. GRULAC's commitment to support the Platform has been reflected in the participation of many experts as authors and reviewers, its participation in the various online dialogues organized by the Secretariat, as well as hosting the Sixth Plenary Session in Medellín, Colombia, the TSU of the values assessment in Mexico, and TSU of the Regional Assessment of the Americas in Colombia.*

*GRULAC particularly recognizes and welcomes the progress made on the preparation of the assessment on the sustainable use of wild species and the assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization on multiple values of nature and its benefits, which will without a doubt be of great value to governments, academia, indigenous peoples, local communities and decision makers in addition to global negotiations under the CBD.*

*We highlight the relevance of the sustainable use assessment for our region, given the need for GRULAC countries to enhance sustainable use of wild species in a manner that contributes to the conservation of biodiversity, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the objectives of relevant multilateral environmental agreements. This provides a unique opportunity to understand the interlinkages between sustainable use and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. As the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities amongst and within countries, this assessment represents an important tool to raise awareness on how enhanced sustainable use can support our national efforts.*

*However, we emphasize the need to continue improving the mechanisms to effectively close the gap between knowledge and policy-making so that IPBES products are adopted and achieve the expected impacts. We call on the Platform to continue and increase support to members in their needs for capacity building to improve the relevance of the assessments for Latin American and the Caribbean, particularly with respect to the challenges faced in sourcing adequate funding. Therefore, GRULAC would like to stress the importance of addressing all six objectives of the IPBES work programme in a balanced and integrated manner. Further development of activities under objective 2 (building capacity), objective 3 (enhancing knowledge) and objective 4 (supporting policy) is critical to our region as these objectives are crucial for the appropriate uptake of IPBES deliverables.*

*Our region would further like to underscore the need to scale up scientific and technical cooperation amongst IPBES Members, including by building North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. We additionally wish to draw attention to the need to review procedures and criteria for author selection to facilitate the participation of experts and practitioners, including indigenous and traditional knowledge as well as ILK holders, particularly from Latin America and the Caribbean, and to improve the dissemination of the Platform's results. We underline the need to review the policies for translations into the six UN languages to ensure equal participation in the IPBES processes.*

*Finally, GRULAC appreciates the efforts of the Secretariat, the members, the MEP, the Bureau, and the experts who actively participate in assessments and working groups, to facilitate this ninth plenary session, and expresses its willingness to collaborate in the work of this meeting with a view to successfully meeting the proposed objectives.*

*Thank you, Madame Chair.*