

IPBES youth workshop 2022
under the 2030 IPBES rolling work programme
19–23 October 2022

Report of the IPBES youth workshop in 2022

Introduction

1. The IPBES youth workshop was held on 19-23 October 2022 at the Isle of Vilm, Germany. It was organized in the context of objective 2 of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030, “building capacity”. The workshop was organized by the IPBES capacity-building task force and its technical support unit in collaboration with the IPBES scenarios and models task force. The workshop was hosted by the International Academy for Nature Conservation and funded by the Governments of Germany and Norway.

2. In order to facilitate youth engagement with IPBES and to develop their capacity on IPBES and its processes and products, youth and early-careers from universities and research institutions, nongovernmental organizations, as well as from organizations implementing policy and working in science-policy interfaces were invited to apply for participating in the workshop.

3. The present document provides an overview of the introduction to IPBES provided, discussions during the sessions and attendance to the meeting. More detailed information is available in the following documents:

- Notification EM/2022/24¹ – Call for nominations of participants to the IPBES youth workshop (19-23 October 2022)
- IPBES/TF/CBG/WSP/2022/1 – Agenda of the IPBES youth workshop
- IPBES/TF/CBG/WSP/2022/Other/1 – List of participants.
- IPBES/TF/CBG/WSP/2022/Other/2 – Graphic novel of the IPBES youth workshop

I. Objectives of the workshop

4. IPBES (The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) works to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development. To do this, IPBES draws on the vast capacities of the individuals, organizations and institutions already working on biodiversity and ecosystem services across the world.

5. This workshop contributed to the overarching objective of IPBES by expanding involvement in IPBES' efforts and increasing use of IPBES products, among early-career scientists, decision- and policymakers and practitioners, including representatives of different knowledge systems. The participants of the workshop came from universities and research institutions, nongovernmental organizations, as well as from organizations implementing policy and working in science-policy interfaces. Each participant represented a different youth network or organisation. The workshop supported the implementation of the IPBES capacity-building rolling plan through promoting the

¹ Notification EM/2022/24 available on IPBES webpage at this link: [em_2022_24_youth_workshop_2022_0.pdf](https://www.ipbes.net/em_2022_24_youth_workshop_2022_0.pdf) (ipbes.net)

fellowship programme and further expanding and supporting the development of communities of practice among early-career professionals inside and outside of the formal IPBES engagement.

6. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- a) Familiarize participants with the work of IPBES and explore how participants and their networks can contribute to its work programme; and
- b) Explore future scenarios of biodiversity and ecosystem services from the perspective of early-career professionals and contribute to IPBES' work on scenarios and models.

II. Participants of the workshop

7. The workshop brought together 22 early-career scientists, policymakers, practitioners (including from indigenous and local communities), who represented governments, as well as youth organisations and networks working on issues related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The participants came from 23 countries from the 5 UN regions (a list of participants and their nationalities can be found in document IPBES/TF/CBG/Workshop/2022/Other/1). As part of the preparations to the workshop, the participants were asked to prepare a short video answering the question what biodiversity means to them and include images, photos etc. from the region they work and/or live in.

8. The workshop was facilitated by the IPBES technical support unit on capacity-building and IPBES experts, including scenarios and models fellows and technical support unit. Additional contributors were IPBES Stakeholder engagement officer member and representatives of the German government. The full list of organizers, facilitators and presenters is available in document IPBES/TF/CBG/Workshop/2022/Other/1. A group photo of the participants is presented in Figure 1 below.

9. The workshop activities and discussions were recorded and visualised by Manuel Recker Graphic Recording & Illustration and AD illustrations who developed all the graphics presented in this report. The full graphic novel of the workshop is presented in document IPBES/TF/CBG/Workshop/2022/Other/2 – Graphic novel.



Figure 1: Group photo of all youth workshop participants, facilitators, and organisers.

III. Summary of sessions

A. Opening session

10. During the opening of the workshop, Hong Diem Tran (member of the IPBES technical support unit on capacity-building (TSU CB)), welcomed the participants to the workshop on behalf of IPBES and all co-organizers of the workshop, and the latter introduced themselves. The local host, represented by Lennart Kuemper-Schlake and Jutta Stadler, welcomed the participants to the Isle of Vilm, Germany. The agenda was presented and the importance of youth stakeholders in the work of IPBES was highlighted. Participants were asked to express their expectations of the workshop and how they could contribute to a successful workshop. Answers included a better understanding of IPBES' work, structure and function, sharing knowledge with fellow participants and benefiting from the diversity of participants' backgrounds and views from around the world, as well as building/extending their network. Figure 2 (on the righthand side) captured the graphic recording of the expectations and the participants' potential contributions to the workshop.

11. The opening session closed with an ice-breaking exercise to further introduce the participants to each other and encourage interaction with one another. The videos, recorded by the participants in preparation of the workshop were presented.



Figure 2: Graphic recording capturing the expectations and the participants' contribution to the workshop participants.

B. Introduction to IPBES and its role in the global science-policy interface



12. The TSU capacity-building presented a general introduction to IPBES' mission, structure and functions, specifically focusing on: 1) Assessments: Deliver global, regional and thematic assessments, and promote and catalyse support for sub-global assessments; 2) Policy support tools: Identify policy relevant tools/methodologies, facilitate their use, and promote and catalyse their further development; 3) Capacity-building: Prioritize key capacity-building needs, and provide and call for financial and other support for prioritized needs; and 4) Knowledge generation: Identify knowledge needs of policymakers, and catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge.

13. The work of IPBES on capacity-building and its implementation through the capacity-building rolling plan developed by the capacity-building task force were presented to the participants. The participants were introduced to different capacity-building activities, including the IPBES fellowship programme and the fellows and alumni network (more details below), capacity development and writing workshops, science-policy dialogues and events supporting uptake of IPBES assessments and other products and processes. Participants were then asked to elaborate on where they see themselves in the policy-science interface. Their feedback was captured by the graphic recorders and presented in the figure 3 (on the left side of this text).

Figure 3: Graphic recording capturing the participants' replies on their role within the policy-science interface.

C. Context and scope of IPBES approved and ongoing assessments

14. The participants were given a detailed introduction to the approved and ongoing IPBES assessments (the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services (values), the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity (transformative change), the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health in the context of climate change (nexus), the Impact and Dependence of Business on Biodiversity and Nature's Contributions to People (business and biodiversity) and scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services), as well as an overview about the assessment process, including the chapter structure and assessment team.

D. Desirable nature futures: perspectives from the youth

15. A considerable part of the workshop was a participatory process to collaboratively explore desirable futures for nature and society and the transformative pathways to get there, using the Nature Futures Framework.

16. The IPBES task force on scenarios and models is mandated to catalyse the development of scenarios and models by the broader scientific community to fulfil the needs of IPBES. This has included the development of the Nature Futures Framework (NFF): a flexible tool to support the development of scenarios and models of desirable futures for people, nature and Mother Earth (Figure 4). The three vertices of the triangular space of the NFF (left side of the figure) represent three distinct, but related value perspectives on nature: *Nature for Nature* (the value of nature for itself), *Nature for Society* (the value of nature for societal benefits) and *Nature as Culture/One with Nature* (relational values of nature, where societies, cultures, traditions and faiths are intertwined with nature). These value perspectives are considered a minimal set of perspectives to open-up to a diversity and plurality of perspectives on people's relationship with nature in the creation of scenarios and models (as represented by interior space of the triangle where perspectives blend and are non-mutually exclusive). Which is a

step towards addressing the full diversity of relationships with nature from knowledge systems and worldviews across the world in the creation of scenarios and models (as depicted on the righthand side of the figure 4). The NFF serves as a starting point and boundary object for scientists and practitioners to develop pluralistic scenarios of desirable nature futures. The results of NFF case studies from around the world will feed into the broader work plan of the task force, but also in future IPBES assessment reports.

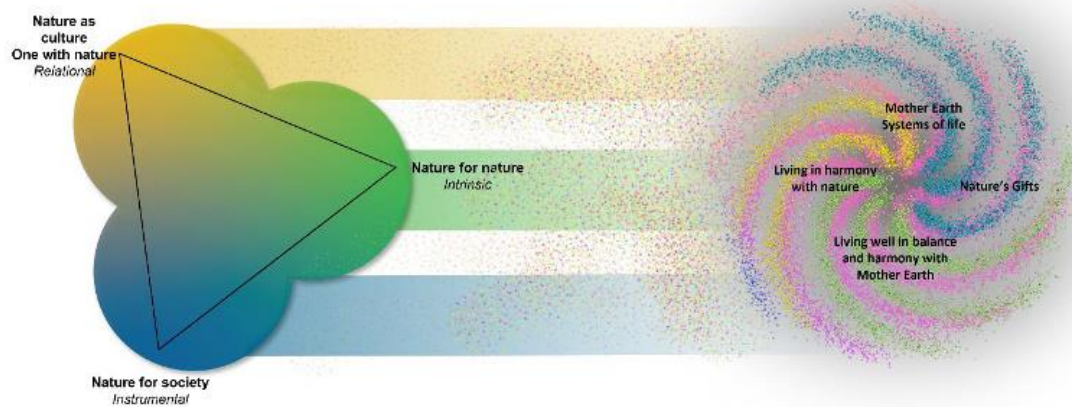


Figure 4: *The Nature Futures Framework (left) and the diverse ways people around the world value and relate with nature (right).*

17. The participants were introduced to the work of the IPBES task force on scenarios and models, including the work on the Nature Futures Framework, how it had been developed and the plan for taking it forward. After the formal presentation part, the participants were engaged in group activities to develop their visions of nature futures and the pathways to get there, as outlined below in part A, B and C. This workshop was designed to build on a previous IPBES youth workshop that used the NFF to develop positive visions of the future for nature and people (Rana et al. 2020) , in part by describing the pathways for achieving such visions – an active area of research and development for NFF-based scenarios.

The specific objectives of the participatory scenario process were to:

- Further test and expand on the NFF
- Capture a plurality of youth perspectives in visions for the future
- Capture a plurality of youth perspectives on transformative pathways towards these futures

i. Reflections and NFF exercise - preferred relationships with nature

18. The participants went through the steps described below to identify and place their nature values on the NFF triangle. The clustering exercise resulted in groups of people with similarities in why they value nature, forming the starting point for part B of the exercise (4 groups of ~8 persons). The exercise included the following steps:

a) *Spark thinking and share reflections on why nature is important to participants.* Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to make short videos to introduce themselves by sharing what nature means to them, and also to identify ‘seeds’ of desirable futures that exist in the present (see section B). The videos were shared in a plenary session of the workshop, and an app (Mentimeter) was used to let participants reflect on the following questions and jointly see the output:

- What do you think about the future?
- What are the seeds?
- Can you give an example of what biodiversity means for you?

b) Use the NFF triangle (Figure 4, left side) to identify participants' preferred relationships with nature. Participants were invited to step into a large triangular space that was depicted on the floor of the room and place themselves in the location where, based on their reflections of step 1, they felt most comfortable (Figure 5). Participants were not allowed to place themselves in the exact centre of the triangle to encourage critical thinking about the relative representation of each of the three value perspectives.



Figure 5: The participants situated on the triangle of the Nature Futures Framework on the floor (marked white lines).

c) Form groups based on individual positions within the NFF triangle. Then, participants were invited to talk to each other to explain to their neighbours why they chose their respective location. Next, they expanded their group by joining their neighbouring group. In that way, ultimately, four separate groups emerged. One in each corner of the triangle, and one between the centre of the triangle and the Nature as Culture/One with Nature corner.

ii. Group work: Pathways to desirable nature futures



19. The next phase of the workshop entailed developing pathways to desirable nature futures using the three horizons framework, previously written illustrative narratives, and the seeds identified in Part i. The three horizons framework is an approach for developing pathways from the current system to a desired future state by considering changes across three-time horizons: 1) a current, established situation, 2) a transitional period, and 3) an emerging desirable future (Sharpe et al. 2016). Participants were asked to begin by imagining a desired future state based on their group's position within the NFF triangle. To facilitate this exercise, groups were provided with illustrative narratives from a prior IPBES workshop (Durán et al. In Review). These narratives were not meant to be prescriptive, but rather give groups a starting point for creative thinking. After identifying the features of the third horizon consistent with their position in the NFF space, the groups considered what elements of that future might exist as seeds in our current world. Participants brainstormed a wide range of seeds of desirable futures prior to the workshop (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Graphic representation of the seeds that the participants thought of.

20. Seeds are "initiatives" (social, technological, economic, or social–ecological ways of thinking or doing) that exist, at least in prototype form, and that represent a diversity of worldviews, values, and regions, but are not currently dominant or prominent in the world" (Pereira 2021). These serve as important touchpoints for imagining how society might transition from the status quo to a more desirable future.

21. The next portion of the exercise entailed defining the transitions that might occur in the second horizon, including declines in undesirable features of the current system that are fundamentally unsustainable, growth of seeds, and transient dominance of certain phenomena. A key mechanism to help everyone think through these complicated ideas included a short visualisation exercise where the participants were asked to close their eyes and think what the worlds they were thinking of could look like, smell like, what everyone would be doing, what their day would look like- to put some meat on the bones of their discussion. This reflection seemed to help many of the participants in grounding what it was they were doing with the sticky notes and discussions.

iii. Performances

22. Groups synthesized and communicated their future visions and pathways through final performances of their preferred futures, using a variety of novel methods (Fig. 7, left). One group held an interview panel with ‘experts’ on how they had achieved what they did, another hosted a TV show reporting on the changes that had been made. Another group took us on a tour of a living museum of how things had been and how they changed (Figure 7, right) whilst the final group hosted a vote in their new community governance structure. The performances ended off with a reflection session on the process and outcomes and how everyone was feeling.



Figure 7: Presentation of a regional NFF group

E. Future engagement with IPBES and keeping the momentum going forward

23. Participants were shown several opportunities to get involved with IPBES on multiple scales from simply registering on the website to receive the news, to actually looking for ways to get formally involved in the process.

Involved in IPBES can be grouped into several broad categories including, with increasing level of commitment:

- Generally being informed about IPBES work and communicating and disseminating it. This does not require any formal association with IPBES, and anyone can do.

- Getting engaged in stakeholder consultations. This requires registering as a stakeholder with networks such as Open-Ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet), see registration process at ONet webspace and International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES). Contact them for further details (stakeholders@ipbes.net). This process requires registering on the IPBES website.
- Participating as a delegate or observer at IPBES plenaries which occur annually. This process requires one to be affiliated with an institution, on whose behalf they are attending the plenary. This process requires registering on the IPBES website.
- Getting involved as a reviewer on one or all chapters of the ongoing assessments.
- Participating as an IPBES expert as a fellow, a lead author, a coordinating lead author, a contributing author and other roles.
- Other roles include establishment of national or regional IPBES platforms (such as Brazilian Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, BPBES) or hosting the plenary – these are not at the individual level.

Participants discussed in plenary how they could engage with IPBES in the future and answers included:

- Promote IPBES and its work and products and actively participate in IPBES.
- Networking among individuals and youth organisations to promote and support IPBES work, including scientific publications.
- Storytelling and showcasing IPBES related work in campaigns targeting the general public.
- Build a toolkit as a guide to use the NFF.
- Present the outcomes of this workshop and IPBES in general to the participants' youth networks and home institutions.
- Public outreach and communication beyond expert circles, education in open dialogues
- Incorporation of youth reactions and actions into the NFF
- Enhanced collaboration between national and regional platforms and networks that face similar challenges in terms of biodiversity loss and ecosystem services.