



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

Distr.: General
5 April 2010

Original: English



**Third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder
meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform
on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

Busan, Republic of Korea, 7–11 June 2010

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Consideration of whether to establish an intergovernmental
science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

**Analysis of capacity development for biodiversity and ecosystem
services**

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Executive summary

1. At the second ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, held in Nairobi from 5 to 9 October 2009, participants requested the preparation of additional information documents to support further discussions and decision-making, including a document on current and relevant capacity-development initiatives.¹

2. The present note offers background information and suggestions to further discussions on how such an intergovernmental science-policy platform could best complement existing capacity-development initiatives while responding to prevailing needs and demands. It does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of current and planned capacity-development activities at the international, regional and national levels, but rather:

- (a) To provide a framework for a common understanding of capacity development;
- (b) To investigate accomplishments, challenges and needs with regard to capacity-development areas central to the agenda of the proposed intergovernmental science-policy platform;

* UNEP/IPBES/3/1.

1 See document IPBES/2/4/Rev.1, annex, para. 3.

(c) To recommend capacity-development areas to which an intergovernmental science-policy platform could provide support within the overall framework of the broader science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

3. The concept of “capacity” can be defined as the ability of people, organizations and a society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. Capacity-development interventions aim at supporting change to improve the performance of individuals, organizations and the overall system with a view to attaining a set objective. To achieve the intended results, capacity assessment and capacity development need to be anchored in regular planning, policy and budgeting processes, and involve various functions of management. The capacities required can be summarized as:

- (a) Capacities to engage;
- (b) Capacities to gain access to and use information and knowledge;
- (c) Capacities to plan processes and to develop policy;
- (d) Capacities to manage and implement;
- (e) Capacities to monitor and evaluate.

4. While access to and use of information and knowledge are at the core of the proposed intergovernmental science-policy platform, the other capacity areas are equally important when it comes to incorporating results into development processes to achieve sustainability. The effectiveness of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services depends, among other things, on the capacity developed in all aspects of the science-policy interface, namely, the domains of science, assessment, policy and observation. While capacity development that would be supported through an intergovernmental science-policy platform would probably be mainly focused on the area of assessment, it should take into account, and relate to, the four distinct but linked spheres of the science-policy interface. Accordingly, an active role for an intergovernmental science-policy platform in developing capacity with regard to identified priority needs is encouraged, with a close connection to current and planned capacity-development activities supported through existing bilateral and multilateral organizations.²

5. The analysis is based on the results of the overall process to develop an intergovernmental science-policy platform, particularly the report of the second meeting on the subject,³ and related information documents and official submissions, in addition to responses to a questionnaire sent to key international organizations in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It also draws on the analysis of results from national biodiversity strategy and action plans under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the national capacity self-assessment process supported through the Global Environment Facility. Suggestions are made to establish three main capacity-development objectives under an intergovernmental science-policy platform to support the enhancement of national capacities to use fully the best available scientific information in support of sound policymaking. Each objective has a set of suggested outcomes. These are:

(a) To support data collection, analysis and sharing, with a view to filling pertinent gaps and harmonizing the current fragmented system by fostering initiatives of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems and Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network, such as:

- (i) Reviewing remaining barriers to access to data;
- (ii) Taking stock of existing data, data gaps and data-gathering activities;
- (iii) Developing guidelines and standards for gathering, storing and sharing data, including online access to journals, libraries and satellite and geo-referenced data;
- (iv) Promoting standard, target and indicator development beyond the 2010 biodiversity targets;
- (v) Developing a process for the harmonization and recurrent review of guidance on national, regional and international research agendas;

(b) To enhance communication and outreach for bridging the science-policy gap, for example by:

² See options 2 and 3, contained under subheading 4 of section C of document UNEP/IPBES/3/2.

³ UNEP/IPBES/2/4/Rev.1.

-
- (i) Encouraging a culture of mainstreaming by involving key stakeholder groups in both the structures and operations of the proposed platform;
 - (ii) Promoting decentralized approaches to strengthen national and regional expertise and experience, for example, for access to technologies and tools for ecosystem valuation, assessments and modelling;
 - (iii) Implementing a science-policy dialogue to inform the public and enhance the uptake of science in policy;
- (c) To strengthen institutions, to provide incentives for change and to establish and sustain capacity at the appropriate level, by:
- (i) Encouraging the coordination of environmental assessments with other studies that provide insight into organizational structures, institutional capacities and governance processes that are important to environmental management;
 - (ii) Making use of existing environmental assessments and planning tools (national biodiversity strategies and action plans, national adaptation programmes of action, national action plans, etc) .when embarking on new assessments;
 - (iii) Stimulating good practice and scenarios for mainstreaming and developing guidelines on how best to incorporate assessment findings into policy development;
 - (iv) Promoting opportunities and training programmes for scientific exchange between developed and developing countries.
-