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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

**Communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic
partnerships**

**Stakeholder network of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: update on
progress made in the organization and structuring of an
inclusive open-ended network of stakeholders**

Note by the secretariat

Annex I to the present note sets out information on activities undertaken by stakeholders in accordance with decision IPBES-3/4, on communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership, to establish an open-ended network of stakeholders as contemplated by the stakeholder engagement strategy set out in annex II to that decision. Annex II to the present note sets forth elements of a plan for future collaboration between the secretariat and the network of stakeholders on the initial implementation plan set out in the appendix to the stakeholder engagement strategy. The information in the annexes was submitted by the stakeholders listed in annex I and is presented as received, without formal editing.

* IPBES/4/1.

Annex I

Activities to establish an open-ended network of stakeholders

Following the adoption of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (SES) by IPBES 3rd Plenary (IPBES/3/18, Decision IPBES-3/4), a group of stakeholders volunteered to undertake further concrete steps towards the establishment of the “inclusive, open-ended network of IPBES stakeholders”, based on previous work (stakeholder days during IPBES 2 and IPBES 3, SES contact group during IPBES 3, and intersessional activities following IPBES 2 and IPBES 3), consultations, experiences from similar processes in other international fora and conventions, guidance of IPBES Secretariat and information provided by the IPBES Plenary in its Decision.

I. Defining the inclusive, open-ended network of IPBES stakeholders: name, goals and objectives

As a first step, the group discussed and proposed a name for the “inclusive, open-ended network of IPBES stakeholders” mentioned in the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (Decision IPBES-3/4, Annex II, section III. Oversight, para 5) which is the “**IPBES Stakeholder Network**”, also referred to in this document as **the Network**.

The IPBES Stakeholder Network shares IPBES’ goals, as described in the conceptual framework of the Platform, in particular:

- 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” (Decision IPBES-2/4 in IPBES/2/17 p39).
- to support the four functions of IPBES as well as the implementation of the IPBES programme of work (Decision IPBES/2/5).

More specifically, the Network aims to support and provide added value to the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (IPBES/3/18, Annex II) by facilitating the engagement of stakeholders and knowledge holders in the IPBES process, while taking into account the great diversity of stakeholders related to the Platform.

In this regard, the Network has the following objectives:

- Foster two-way communication between IPBES stakeholders and the Platform;
- Support the efforts of the IPBES to develop a method for systematically identifying and mobilizing stakeholders, taking into account regional and gender balance and diverse knowledge systems;
- Disseminate information and material on IPBES products and achievements to a great variety of audiences;
- Reach out to a diversity of potential users and providers of information to increase the relevance and use of the Platform’s products and deliverables
- Attract knowledge holders from citizen science initiatives, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and indigenous peoples and local communities to contribute to the Platform’s products and deliverables;
- Strengthen support for the Platform’s work programme 2014-2018 through identification of experts from different regions and scientific disciplines;
- Mobilize resources for capacity-building; and
- Mobilize in-kind contributions from stakeholders for the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and for the Platform’s work programme 2014-2018 in general.

II. The Network's approach: structure and functioning

The IPBES Stakeholder Network is an inclusive, open-ended, self-organized, collaborative entity, **open to all stakeholders of IPBES** (as defined in Decision IPBES-3/4, Annex II, V. Definition of stakeholders, para 8), encompassing a very broad community, and covering diverse knowledge systems.

A. The structure

The IPBES Stakeholder Network works mainly on a virtual basis and is self-structured through a dedicated “Network Committee”, a “Stakeholder Support Unit” (SSU), and “Network Membership”.

The Network committee

The Network Committee will be composed of elected Network members and provisions are set in the Terms of Reference of the Network to maximise the balance of the Network committee's composition across UN regions, genders, sectors, knowledge systems and end-users.

Election of the first Network Committee will take place as soon as the conditions to define and build the Network Membership are conducive.

The Network Committee will be responsible for:

- Facilitating the outreach to and the engagement of stakeholders from different regions, sectors, disciplines and knowledge systems;
- Updating and developing Terms of Reference for the IPBES Stakeholder Network according to the Network's evolution;
- Overseeing and guiding the work of the Stakeholder Support Unit (SSU);
- Leveraging in-kind contributions or funding for the internal functioning of the Network and work of the Stakeholder Support Unit (SSU).
- Developing an annual work plan for the activities of the Network, and preparing an annual report to stakeholders;
- Prioritizing the partnership's collaboration with the IPBES; and
- Preparing an annual report to IPBES based on indicators agreed with the IPBES.

The Stakeholder Support Unit

The Stakeholder Support Unit (SSU) will be composed of Network members providing time and human resources as an in-kind contribution to the Network.

The SSU will be responsible for communication within the Stakeholder Network, facilitating stakeholders' interactions and mobilizing support for stakeholders' involvement in IPBES work programme.

The SSU will also be responsible for liaising with the IPBES Secretariat, as well as IPBES Technical Support Units, where necessary, and manages the day to day communication between the IPBES Secretariat and the Network Committee.

The Network Membership

The membership of the IPBES Stakeholder Network is independent from admission of observers to the IPBES plenary. Stakeholders who are not registered as observers to IPBES but are interested in becoming observers could apply for observer status, following IPBES policy and procedures for the admission of observers (see IPBES/1/12, para. 22).

Neither the Network Committee, nor the Stakeholder Support Unit, has any mandate to communicate on behalf of individual Network members to IPBES plenaries.

B. The Functioning

Terms of Reference for the IPBES Stakeholder Network defining the functioning of the Network (the Network bodies, the foreseen election process, the Network membership, the decision making process, the interactions with IPBES and other organizations) have already been developed through an open review process (see below the table of activities 2014 - 2016) and will be finalized prior to IPBES 4.

The Network will communicate with IPBES, on behalf of the stakeholders represented in the Network, on matters related to the implementation of the foreseen partnership, the engagement of stakeholders in the IPBES work programme and the work plan of the Network.

When the Network will organize or participate in meetings or events at which matters related to its collaboration with IPBES may be discussed, the Network will, as appropriate, either invite the IPBES Secretariat to participate in the meeting, or update IPBES on relevant matters discussed during the meeting.

The Network will also seek to collaborate with other organisations or networks as appropriate.

In general, the Network will be funded by in kind contributions from stakeholders and other appropriate contributions.

III. Report on the activities of the Network

The group of stakeholders volunteering in the self-organization of the IPBES Stakeholder Network is composed of members of organizations listed hereafter.

This group is acting as the Interim Committee of the IPBES Stakeholder Network and its Stakeholder Support Unit, and is facilitated in close collaboration by IUCN, NEFO, ICSU and SCB.

The group works on volunteer and virtual bases, meeting in person whenever possible. Among the group, all decisions are taken through consultations and consensus.

In association with this group of volunteer stakeholders, an IPBES engagement Network email list has been available since 2014, and is used to communicate and consult with a wider group of interested stakeholders (around 290 email addresses).

A. Home organizations of volunteer stakeholders

- International Union for Conservation of Nature - IUCN;
- Network-Forum for Biodiversity Research Germany;
- International Council for Science - ICSU/Future Earth;
- Society for Conservation Biology - SCB;
- American Museum of Natural History - AMNH;
- World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF;
- ProNatura / FoE Switzerland;
- Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ;
- Ecological Society of Germany, Austria and Switzerland - GFÖ/Marburg University;
- International Biogeography Society - IBS/Marburg University; and
- Swiss Academy of Sciences / Swiss Biodiversity Forum.

B. Table of activities 2014 - 2016

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Link with SES implementation plan (IPBES-3/4)</i>
30/01/14	Creation of the IPBES Engagement Network email list and Facebook page	Dissemination of IPBES calls in EN, FR, ES	290 members (12/2015)	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
11/10/14	Workshop "Advancing with IPBES Stakeholder Engagement" – CBD – COP12	Comments on the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy	27 Participants	(j) Stakeholder events
10-11/01/15	IPBES-3 Stakeholder Days	Meeting report	60 participants	(j) Stakeholder events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Link with SES implementation plan (IPBES-3/4)</i>
12-17/01/15	IPBES-3 Coordinated contributions from the group of stakeholders attending IPBES-3	Opening statement to the IPBES-3 plenary	Group and email list ¹	
		Statement on Agenda item 7 (Rules of Procedure)	Group and email list ¹	
		Statement on the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (IPBES/3/16)	Group and email list ¹	
		Presentation in the contact group on Stakeholder Engagement	Group and email list ¹	
		Background document for the presentation in the contact group	Group and email list ¹	
		Closing statement to the IPBES-3 plenary	Group and email list ¹	
27/01/15	IPBES-3 Debriefing stakeholder days facilitators group	Lessons learned, minutes and file for planning future stakeholder days	Facilitators group	(j) Stakeholder events
28/01/15	Update on planned activities for 2015	Network news (EN, FR, ES)	Email list ¹	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
03/02/15	1 st Online Network meeting Self-organization	Discussion on terms of reference for the inclusive open-ended network of IPBES stakeholders	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(i) Use of information and communications technology tools > free tools or in-kind contribution
24/04/15	2 nd Online Network meeting Self-structuring	Various examples of structure, minutes and way forward	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(i) Use of information and communications technology tools > free tools or in-kind contribution
28/04/15	1st consultation Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)	Zero order draft (ToR)	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
28/04/15	3 rd Online Network meeting “Virtual structure” needs	Minutes and way forward	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(i) Use of information and communications technology tools > free tools or in-kind contribution
28/05/15	4 th Online Network meeting Terms of Reference (ToR)	Minutes and way forward	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(i) Use of information and communications technology tools > free tools or in-kind contribution

¹ The Group of coordinated stakeholders is composed of members of observer organisations that met during IPBES-3. The IPBES engagement Network email list was used to communicate within the group and with other stakeholders not participating in the Plenary (around 250 email addresses during IPBES-3).

² The Interim Network Committee and SSU consist of members from various organisations volunteering in the self-organization of the IPBES Stakeholder Network.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Link with SES implementation plan (IPBES-3/4)</i>
25/06/15	Open Online Meeting BES-Net – Presentation and discussion	Document on IPBES Stakeholder Network needs	Open chat + Mrs Solene Ledoze, UNDP	(i) Use of information and communications technology tools > free tools or in-kind contribution
19/07/15	2nd consultation Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)	Public consultation on 1st order Draft ToR – Deadline 3 August	Email list ¹ and 30 stakeholder organizations	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
07/08/15	IPBES Stakeholder day during ICCB-ECCB 2015, Montpellier, France.	<u>Meeting report</u> , discussion on ToR, report on the registration form of the IPBES registry of stakeholders	14 participants + input from Mrs Solene Ledoze, UNDP.	(j) Stakeholder events a) Stakeholder identification
23/08/15	3rd consultation Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)	Revised 1 st order draft ToR	Email list of 30 registered pers. to IPBES Stakeholder day after ICCB 2015	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
18/09/15	IPBES-4 Proposal for a strategic p Request for guidance	Information document addressed to MEP and Bureau (October meeting)	Interim Committee and SSU ²	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
06/11/15	IPBES-4 Proposal for a strategic partnership	Input to working document IPBES/4/18 and Annex 3 addressed to IPBES Secretariat	Interim Committee and SSU ² , and IPBES Secretariat	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists
01/12/15	IPBES-4 Contribution to Information Document INF/18	Progress report of the IPBES Stakeholder Network addressed to IPBES Secretariat	Interim Committee and SSU ²	(h) Use of social media and electronic mail lists

Annex II

Elements for a future work plan to start collaboration with IPBES on the initial implementation plan of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (IPBES/3/18, Appendix)

To illustrate a future collaboration between the IPBES Stakeholder Network and IPBES Secretariat, the group of volunteer stakeholders, acting as the Interim Network Committee and SSU, drafted an annual work plan. The work plan does not reflect activities related to the internal functioning of the Network (elections, outreach, structuring etc.).

Support to the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (IPBES/3/18, Annex II)

(a) Identification and mapping of stakeholders

The IPBES Secretariat shall, in cooperation with the Network, develop criteria and a methodology for the identification and mapping of stakeholders to ensure that stakeholders bring their diverse areas of expertise and knowledge to the work of the Platform and will then publish an open registry of stakeholders.

The network could support the IPBES Secretariat in developing such criteria and methodology, and test them to map the Network's membership. The network could also undertake outreach activities to encourage stakeholders to register on the IPBES open registry of stakeholders.

(b) Needs analysis

The IPBES Secretariat shall develop a questionnaire to assist in the conduct of a needs analysis of the different stakeholder groups.

The Network could support the IPBES Secretariat in translating the survey into non-UN languages depending on volunteer translation support available in its network, conduct the survey through its network and provide the IPBES Secretariat with the raw data obtained from the survey to allow the IPBES Secretariat to analyse responses.

Depending on the results of the analysis, the Network could undertake specific outreach activities to fill identified gaps.

(c) How-to guides and translations

The IPBES Secretariat shall prepare how-to guides and their translation into the six (6) United Nations official languages.

The Network could further translate guides into non-UN languages depending on volunteer translation support available in its network and will support the distribution of the guides to stakeholders within its networks. The Network will also support the IPBES Secretariat in tailoring these guides to various types of stakeholders ("hard-to-reach", businesses, etc.)

(d) Factsheets

The IPBES Secretariat shall prepare factsheets, and their translation into the six (6) United Nations official languages.

The Network could further translate factsheets into non-UN languages depending on volunteer translation support available in its network and will support with distribution of the fact sheets to governments and stakeholders within its networks. The Network could also help IPBES Secretariat tailor these fact sheets to various specific types of stakeholders ("hard-to-reach", businesses...).

(e) Hard-to reach stakeholders

The Network will support the IPBES Secretariat by developing a plan to reach out to stakeholders across regions, countries, sectors, disciplines and knowledge systems, in particular those with limited internet access.

(f) Collaboration with existing networks and hubs

The Network could participate in the development of a plan for strengthening collaboration with existing networks.

(g) Establishment of new networks and hubs

The Network will create regional hubs that assist in mobilizing their stakeholders, tailoring messages, participating in outreach efforts and potentially translating key documents. These hubs could encourage and support other stakeholders in the establishment of similar hubs in their own networks at the national and sub-national scales.

(h) Social media

The Network, through its Stakeholder Support Unit, will establish communication channels (social media, website, and mailing lists) to disseminate information from the platform to the Network, and will facilitate the translation of key information depending on volunteer translation support available in the Network.

(i) Stakeholder events

The Network, in collaboration with national platforms and networks, will support the IPBES Secretariat with the organization of stakeholder days and could propose the organization of other events, such as side-events during plenary meetings. Furthermore, the Network could initiate awareness-raising events or targeted expert workshops and include space for the Platform's consultations.

(j) Annual surveys

The Network will distribute annual surveys through its networks and provide the IPBES Secretariat with the raw data obtained from the surveys to allow the IPBES Secretariat to analyse responses.

Support to the organization of the Stakeholder days prior to IPBES Plenary meetings

The Network would be a natural and dedicated partner to organise, in collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat, the Stakeholder Days ahead of IPBES plenaries.

The Network, working in close collaboration with IPBES Secretariat, could be responsible for:

- engaging stakeholders in the development of an agenda for the Stakeholder Days;
- identifying local partner organizations and mobilizing in-kind support for hospitality, catering, whispering translation, technical support to the meeting and other needs identified; and
- mobilizing in-kind contributions to support a broad participation of stakeholders from different regions, sectors, disciplines and knowledge systems.