



The assessment report on
**THE DIVERSE VALUES
AND VALUATION
OF NATURE**

SUMMARY FOR POLICYMAKERS

Key Messages

of Particular Relevance to

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

from the

IPBES Assessment of the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature



Acknowledgement

Thank you to everyone who participated...

- Authors and contributing authors
- Dialogue workshop participants
- Groups and individuals who contributed materials
- Reviewers who submitted comments

The assessment was possible thanks to your knowledge, generosity, time and commitment



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Background to IPBES

The **Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)** is an independent intergovernmental body, established by Governments in 2012. It now has 139 members.

The overall **objective** of IPBES is to strengthen the science-policy interface for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

The new IPBES work programme (from 2019 to 2030) has **5 main objectives**:

- Assessing knowledge
- Building capacity
- Strengthening knowledge foundations (including **enhancing work with Indigenous and local knowledge**)
- Supporting policy
- Communicating and engaging



IPBES and Indigenous and local knowledge

Since its inception, IPBES has recognised the importance of Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) to the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, and IPBES enshrined work with ILK in its deliverables and objectives.

The IPBES [conceptual framework](#) explicitly considers multiple knowledge systems and types of values.

IPBES has a dedicated task force on ILK and a technical support unit on ILK based at UNESCO.

IPBES has developed an “[approach to recognizing and working with ILK in IPBES](#)”, which was approved by the IPBES Plenary at its fifth session in 2017. IPBES has also developed a methodological guidance to enhance implementation of this approach.

From these efforts, IPBES has produced the first global-scale environmental assessments that seek to explicitly and systematically work with ILK.

You can read more about IPBES work with ILK [here](#) and participation by IPLCs [here](#).



Introduction to the values assessment

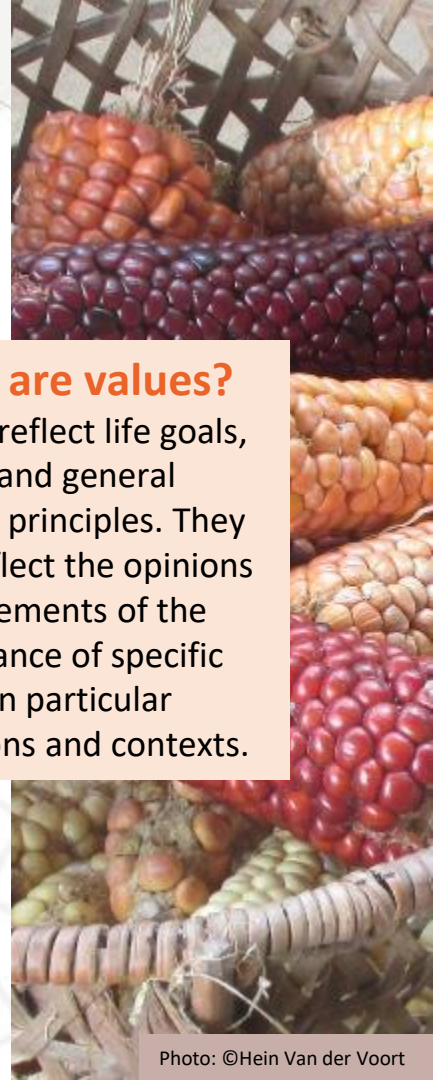
The ***assessment of the diverse values and valuation of nature*** (the “values assessment”) provides guidance to navigate pathways for reconciling people’s good quality of life with life on Earth and advancing the intertwined economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner.

It includes an understanding of the relations between different worldviews and values, guidelines for designing and implementing valuation methods and processes, and for embedding the diverse values of nature into decision-making and policymaking.

The assessment also highlights key capacities for working with multiple values to leverage transformative change across different stakeholders and institutions.

What are values?

Values reflect life goals, beliefs and general guiding principles. They also reflect the opinions or judgements of the importance of specific things in particular situations and contexts.



The assessment consists of:

- A **Summary for Policymakers (SPM)**, approved by the IPBES Plenary at its 9th session in 2022 (IPBES-9), available in 6 UN languages
- A set of **six chapters**, accepted by the IPBES Plenary at IPBES-9, available in English:
 1. The role of values of nature and valuation for addressing the biodiversity crisis and just and sustainable futures
 2. Conceptualizing the diverse values of nature and their contributions to people
 3. The potential of valuation
 4. Value expression in decision-making
 5. The role of diverse values of nature in visioning and transforming towards just and sustainable futures
 6. Policy options and capacity development to operationalize the inclusion of diverse values of nature in decision-making
- **Supplementary materials**, available in English

These documents are all available on the IPBES website [here](#)



How was the assessment prepared?

- The assessment ran from 2018 to 2022
- 95 authors from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and all regions of the world (in 47 countries) gathered and synthesized information from diverse sources
- Over 200 additional contributing authors added to the assessment
- Two review periods gave opportunities for others to comment on drafts



Methods for working with ILK

Following the IPBES [approach to recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge](#), the values assessment used a variety of methods for working with Indigenous and local knowledge and enhancing participation by IPLCs.

Approaches and methods included:

- Eighteen authors worked as an “ILK liaison group”, tasked with ensuring that ILK was included in individual chapters and in narratives throughout the assessment.
- Key guiding questions for ILK were developed for each chapter.
- Extensive review of literature and other materials on ILK.
- Twenty-five contributing authors (who write portions of specific text) added to the expertise on ILK.



Methods for working with ILK (continued)

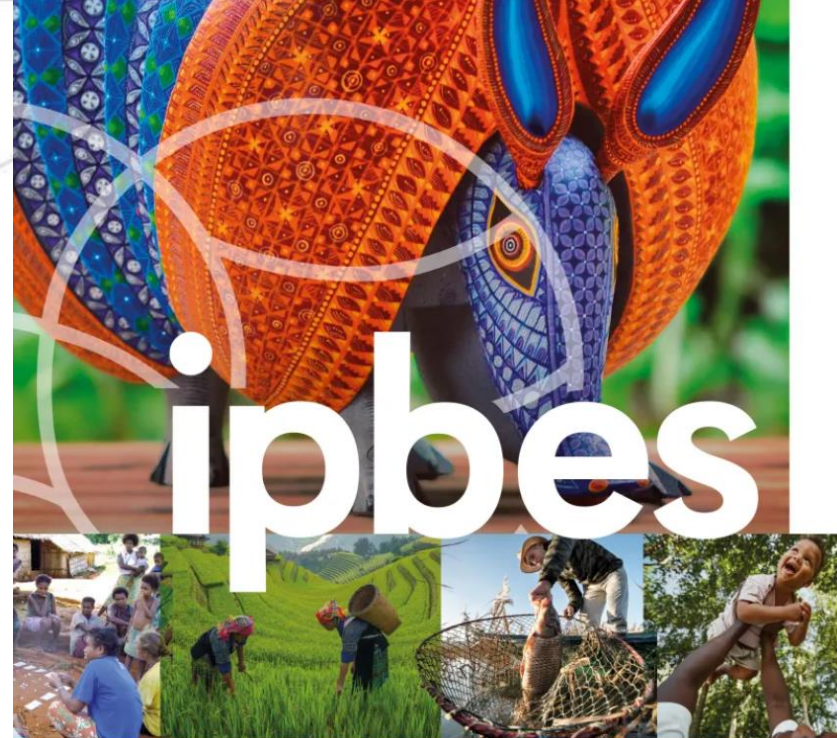
- Three dialogue workshops were held with IPLCs from around the world:
 1. Framing the assessment and key concepts / questions
 2. Reviewing the first order drafts
 3. Reviewing the SPM

Reports from the workshops can be found [here](#).

- An online call for contributions gathered more than 700 submissions on ILK from around the world.
- Gaps in available information were highlighted to catalyze new research.



The summary for policymakers



The assessment report on
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SUMMARY FOR POLICYMAKERS

The summary for policymakers

The summary for policymakers (SPM) summarises the key findings from across the chapters of the assessment. You can find the SPM in all 6 UN languages [here](#).

The SPM gives **10 key messages** and background information that supports these messages. The background information is divided into 4 sections:

- A. Understanding the diverse values of nature
- B. Measuring and making visible the values of nature
- C. Leveraging the diverse values of nature for transformative change towards sustainability
- D. Embedding the values of nature for transformative decision-making for sustainability

In the SPM background, the “degree of confidence” is given in brackets for each main finding. This is based on the quantity and quality of evidence and the level of agreement regarding that evidence. You can read more about this at the end of this document.





Presentation of the key messages of particular relevance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities

Key messages and background information in the SPM demonstrate the importance of ILK and the crucial role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) for designing and implementing valuation methods and processes, and for embedding the diverse values of nature into decision-making and policymaking. Challenges and ways forward are also addressed.

Following requests from IPLCs, these messages and related background information are presented in the following pages, with the aim of making this information more accessible.

The text in the following pages has been taken directly from the SPM, and has not been edited, so it reflects the text that was agreed by the IPBES member states at the ninth IPBES plenary meeting in 2022.



Key message 2

Despite the diversity of nature's values, most policymaking approaches have prioritized a narrow set of values at the expense of both nature and society, as well as of future generations, and have often ignored values associated with Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' worldviews



Background

A1. Over millennia, around the world, people have developed many ways of understanding and connecting with nature, leading to a large diversity of values of nature and its contributions to people (well established).

...people may see themselves as part of nature or in terms of *living as nature*, perceiving it as a physical, mental, and spiritual part of themselves. In this case, a river is valued as sacred or family because it supports relations of kinship and interdependence (well established)



Key message 4

Valuation processes can be tailored to equitably take into account the values of nature of multiple stakeholders in different decision-making contexts.

Valuation is an explicit, intentional process in which agreed-upon methods are applied to make visible the diverse values that people hold for nature.

The type and quality of information obtained from valuation depend on how, why and by whom valuation processes are designed and implemented.

The way valuation is conducted, including the methods chosen, is in part determined by power relations in society, which influence which and whose values of nature are recognized and how equitably the benefits and burdens arising from these decisions are distributed.



Key message 4 continued...

... the following five steps help guide valuations:

- (i) constructing a legitimate process;
- (ii) defining the purpose of valuation;
- (iii) scoping the valuation;
- (iv) selecting and applying valuation methods; and
- (v) articulating the values into decision-making.

These steps can increase robustness of valuations to inform different decision-making contexts, including in the context of IPLCs' territories.



Background

B3. IPLCs undertake valuation of nature in their places and territories in accordance with their own worldviews and applying locally established procedures, which can offer new perspectives to improve and advance valuation processes (established but incomplete).

Valuation in the context of IPLCs aims at supporting collective decisions regarding desirable human-nature relations by generating information about nature, enhancing collective good quality of life, transmitting and generating local ecological knowledge, and reinforcing cultural identities (established but incomplete).

Valuation in these contexts often considers different sources and types of information and is undertaken by diverse expert teams that often include community members, and can imply consultation with ancestors, non-human species, landscapes and spiritual beings (established but incomplete).

Examples of valuation approaches are patrols of communal territories conducted to monitor attributes of nature, such as soil quality, pasture conditions, or wildlife abundance.



B3. Continued...

Ultimately, findings from valuation are used to make decisions for the collective, such as where to migrate, when to undertake farming activities and what hunting quotas to set (established but incomplete).

Valuation by IPLCs is often accompanied by a set of protocols and procedures that are in adherence with their worldviews and specific to local contexts (established but incomplete).

Applying western science concepts and procedures to describe and characterize valuation undertaken by IPLCs risks misrepresenting their worldviews and valuation practices, since specific methods cannot be decoupled from their communal worldviews, practices and traditions (well established).

Indigenous perspectives offer opportunities to learn alternative forms of valuation, improve valuation practices, and advance the development of intercultural methods that are based on ethical principles and guidelines (well established) such as co-producing valuation and undertaking it with the free, prior and informed consent and full involvement of IPLCs (well established).



Key message 7

Achieving sustainable and just futures requires institutions that enable a recognition and integration of the diverse values of nature and nature's contributions to people.

For example, policies giving local people authority in protected area management often result in improvement of people's good quality of life and more effective, long-lasting conservation.

Tackling power asymmetries is important because power shapes the extent to which the values held by different actors are considered in decision-making.

Recognizing and respecting the worldviews, values and traditional knowledge of IPLCs and the institutions that support their rights, territories or interests allow policies to be more inclusive of how different people live, relate to and value nature, which also translates into better outcomes for people and nature.



Background

C4. In biodiversity conservation, community involvement that allows for the prioritization of local values leads to social outcomes being perceived as fairer, often enhancing programme sustainability and consequently social ecological outcomes (well established).

Here again power asymmetries among local stakeholders can be addressed to improve decision outcomes, such as through co-management of protected areas and co-design of payments for ecosystem services programmes to protect forests (established but incomplete). Whose values are included in conservation decisions is a key consideration since it influences the outcomes of decisions; for example, relational and instrumental values held by IPLCs are often underrepresented and enter the decision process late in protected area decisions mostly driven by intrinsic values, generally resulting in mistrust and less effective conservation (well established).

Payments for ecosystem service programmes with substantive community engagement in defining the land management problem or that adapt to local demands over time are better able to align values among diverse stakeholders and achieve better conservation and social outcomes (established but incomplete).



Background

C5. Recognizing and respecting Indigenous and local knowledge and their associated diversity of values is necessary to achieve outcomes that are respectful of different ways of living (established but incomplete).

There is increasing recognition of the need to bridge between knowledge systems, including those of IPLCs, to support policies related to, for example, development, biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity, and climate change mitigation (well established).

Better understanding of the Indigenous and local knowledge and its associated diversity of values requires going beyond dominant epistemologies and worldviews, including efforts to decolonize perspectives in order to recognize other ways of seeing, knowing and doing... (well established). Considering place-based values in decision-making can lead to more equitable and sustainable outcomes (well established).

For example, in agroecosystems, recognizing and giving credence to the knowledge and values of smallholders, including women, are key to co-designing initiatives that ensure food security and the sustainable use and conservation of agrobiodiversity by farming communities (established but incomplete).



Background

C6. Ignoring, excluding or marginalizing local values often leads to socio-environmental conflicts linked to value clashes, especially in the context of power asymmetries, which undermine the effectiveness of environmental policies (established but incomplete).

Socio-environmental conflicts often result from decisions that exclude some groups' values, especially those of IPLCs who can be directly connected with and dependent on nature and who bear a disproportionate burden from changes in rights to access or use of nature (well established).

For example, many infrastructure and development projects, such as mining, have led to prolonged conflicts between IPLCs and external actors. Such cases often result in court battles and other forms of protest against perceived environmental injustices; these battles and protests threaten local values through degradation or loss of locally valued ecosystems (well established).



C6. Continued

Ignoring or marginalizing local values in the design and management of conservation activities, including protected areas and payments for ecosystem service programmes, can also leave a legacy of mistrust or resentment that is difficult to repair and can provoke local protest and even sabotage, jeopardising conservation outcomes over time (established but incomplete).

Conflicts can be avoided or more easily resolved when policy goals are aligned with local instrumental and relational values (well established). However, when the values of different actors or groups clash, conflicts may be unavoidable. In such cases, dialogue and transparent deliberative approaches can help make explicit the values underlying the conflict and through consideration of the different values actors may be able to reconcile their values and develop a shared vision of what a successful programme might look like (established but incomplete).



Photo: © E. Hernández Martínez, Artwork by Jacobo & Maria Ángeles, Oaxaca, México

Key message 8

Transformative change needed to address the global biodiversity crisis relies on shifting away from predominant values that currently over-emphasize short term and individual material gains, to nurturing sustainability-aligned values across society



Background

D1. Decision-making that fosters sustainability transitions can be advanced by following six interrelated values-centred guidelines (established but incomplete).

These guiding principles apply to all the stages of the policy cycle (from setting agendas to evaluating policies) and can be summarized as follows (established but incomplete):

1. *Contextualize* the decision-making process by recognizing the diverse worldviews and values of nature that underpin different social-ecological contexts.
2. *Design* decision-making processes considering the conditions and functions of ecosystems and biodiversity, the capacities, knowledge and perspectives of stakeholders through participatory, empowering, deliberative and conflict management approaches.
3. *Represent* meaningfully and respectfully the diverse worldviews, broad and specific values held by stakeholders, rights-holders and knowledge-holders involved in decisions about nature.



D1. Continued

4. *Engage* interactively with specific actors to promote dialogue, long-term collaboration and co-creation of solutions to conserve and sustainably use nature.
5. *Legitimize* decisions and their impacts by instilling a sense of co-ownership over the valuation process and its results by all actors who take part in nature management.
6. *Reflect* to ensure that decisions impacting nature and its contributions to people are aligned with the values and actions that can foster transformative change towards sustainability.



Background

Box SPM.4. Operationalizing the six guidelines to embed nature's values into environmental decisions: an example from Canada

The Canadian Nuclear Waste Management Organization has addressed the lack of public support for scientifically designed waste disposal options with reduced impacts on society and biodiversity and induced deep transformations in decision-making.

Over a 20-year period, the organization has promoted opportunities for collaboration, co-learning, and reflection with Indigenous knowledge holders. Public consultation processes helped contextualize the local knowledge and value systems and weave them with scientific knowledge and technical expertise.

Decision-making processes at the disposal sites were then designed in an open and transparent way, assessing environmental, social and economic impacts, as well as involving the voluntarily expressed interest of local community members. Stakeholder engagement was promoted through an independent advisory body, including Indigenous elders and youths from across Canada.

In all these steps, different stakeholders' worldviews, knowledge and values about nature were voiced and represented, leading to improved public support and legitimacy, and a lasting impact on institutional structures and the policy process.



Background

D2. Environmental policy instruments and policy support tools are more likely to foster transformative change for sustainability and justice when they are aligned with nature's diverse values (well established).

Different rights-based approaches have been found to incorporate the diverse values of nature into local and national laws and constitutions (e.g., rights to a healthy environment, rights of nature, rights of Mother Earth, rights of specific entities like rivers, lakes, mountains).

These are inspired by IPLCs and can make the case for biodiversity by stimulating institutional change in accordance with national laws and international principles of national sovereignty over natural resources (well established).



Background

D4. Key knowledge and operationalization gaps limit opportunities to effectively embed nature's diverse values in decision-making (well established).

Specific knowledge gaps regarding values and valuation limit the quantity and quality of evidence that would be required to foster transformative decision-making.

Evidence is sparse on valuation approaches used by IPLCs (well established).

To overcome these gaps, policymakers may consider them and support the development of specific capacities of key stakeholders, drawing on available context-specific expertise (e.g., understanding of the different worldviews of local stakeholders).



Background

D5. The values held and expressed by IPLCs can inspire environmental governance models in different social-ecological contexts (established but incomplete).

Sustainability-aligned values held and expressed by many IPLCs have inspired other societies around the world, and the incorporation of these values into laws and regulations (box SPM.6). These values can be adopted at different scales and administrative levels, including, for instance, large-scale territorial governance.

Collaborative governance and co-design of management plans and policies offer opportunities to make use of Indigenous and local knowledge in the design and implementation of sustainable alternatives.

For example, Indigenous Peoples have co-designed community-based sustainable use and conservation areas, and also taken part in the governance of protected areas (established but incomplete). Values held by a wide range of communities and organized civil society groups, such as youth social movements, have also been incorporated in development agendas and policies across scales (established but incomplete).



D5. Continued

Developing 'bridging' and 'governance' capacities can aid the translation of Indigenous and local values into laws and regulations that could mobilize society's sustainability-aligned values (established but incomplete).

Addressing the loss of IPLCs' languages, knowledge and values can be aided by establishing alliances with economic, social and political actors, to help reduce vulnerabilities posed by the loss of biocultural diversity (established but incomplete).

Alliances between civil society organizations and networks of IPLCs have promoted the recognition and incorporation of values and knowledge associated with local food systems and agrobiodiversity by national institutions, to address food security problems (established but incomplete).



Box SPM.6. Opportunities and challenges for integrating Indigenous and local values in policy contexts: an example from the South American Andes

Philosophies of good living are associated with ideas of collective good quality of life among people and nature, and are closely associated with the worldviews, languages and knowledge systems of many Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) communities.

For example, the notion of *vivir bien* or *buen vivir* (good living) is rooted in Indigenous Andean worldviews and languages (*sumak kawsay* in Kichwa, and *suma qamaña* in Aymara), and illustrates pathways for linking collective good quality of life and nature's values with policy decisions.

In some Andean communities, values embedded in *buen vivir* philosophies have historically been part of territorial management plans. Those values have been institutionalized in the constitutions of Ecuador and the Plurinational State of Bolivia and other national policies. They have also been expressed in intercultural educational policies and have inspired global rights-of-nature policies protecting rivers, ecosystems and species.

Yet, embedding such values in policymaking across scales also entails challenges. For example, these values and principles may be used as propaganda rather than genuinely fostering transformative change. Even if *vivir bien* or *buen vivir* is a constitutional principle, it can be used to legitimize status-quo governmental development agendas. Ethical and transparent involvement of IPLCs can guide transformative policies.

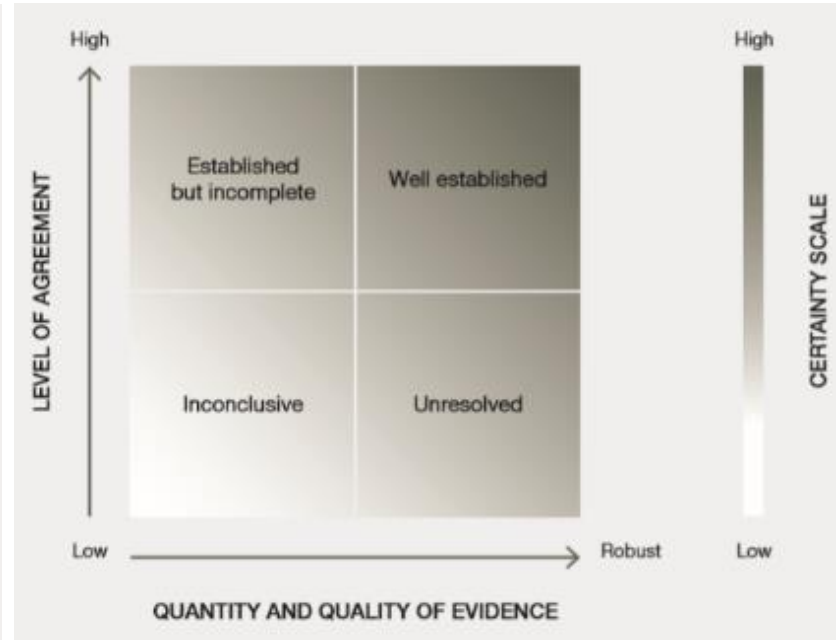


Degrees of confidence

In the SPM messages, the degree of confidence is given in brackets for each main finding. This is based on the quantity and quality of evidence and the level of agreement regarding that evidence. The evidence includes data, theory, models and expert judgement.

The summary terms to describe the evidence are:

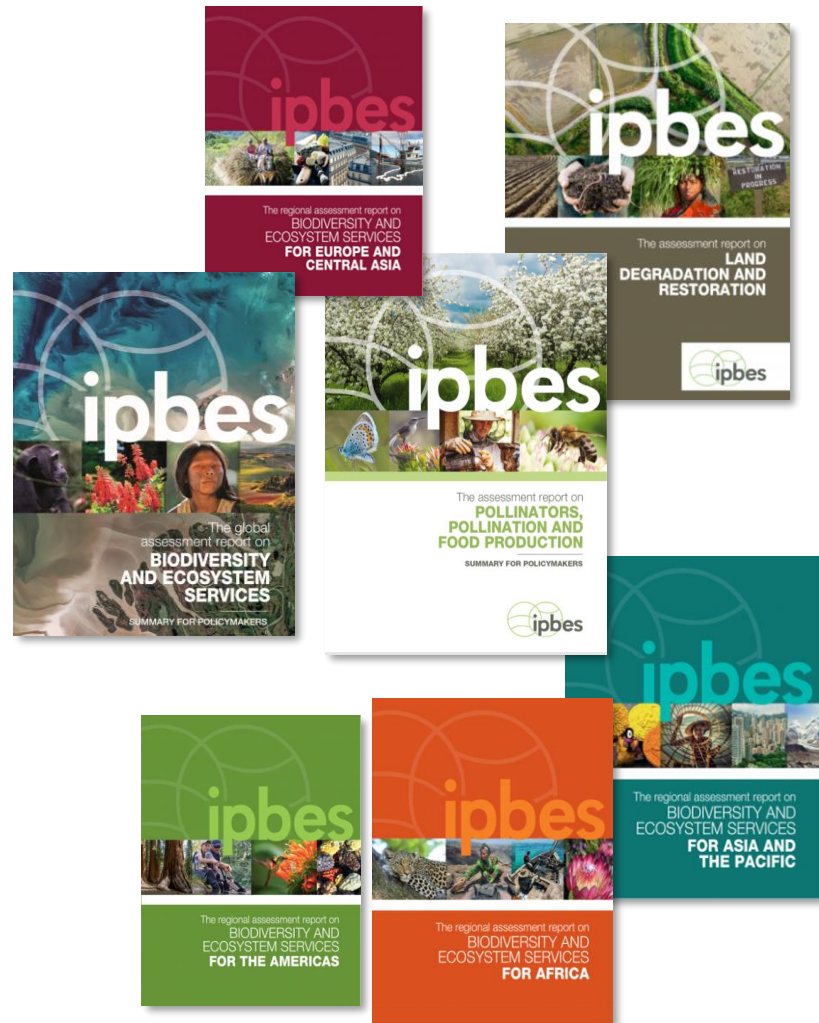
- **Well established:** comprehensive meta-analysis or other synthesis or multiple independent studies that agree.
- **Established but incomplete:** general agreement although only a limited number of studies exist; no comprehensive synthesis and/or the studies that exist address the question imprecisely.
- **Unresolved:** multiple independent studies exist but conclusions do not agree.
- **Inconclusive:** limited evidence, recognizing major knowledge gaps.



Other IPBES assessments

Assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services are some of the main deliverables from IPBES. Completed, ongoing and upcoming assessments are as follows:

- [Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production](#) (delivered 2016)
- [4 Regional Assessments](#): the Americas, Europe and Central Asia, Africa, and Asia-Pacific (delivered 2018)
- [Land Degradation and Restoration](#) (delivered 2018)
- [Global Assessment](#) (delivered 2019)
- [Values and Valuation of Nature](#) (delivered 2022)
- [Sustainable Use of Wild Species](#) (delivered 2022)
- [Invasive Alien Species](#) (to be delivered in 2023)
- [Nexus of Biodiversity, Water, Food and Health](#) (to be delivered in 2024)
- [Transformative Change and Options for Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity](#) (to be delivered in 2024)
- [Business and Biodiversity](#) (to be delivered in 2025)





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Thank you!

¡Gracias!

Merci!