

# **Initial scoping report for Deliverable 1 (c): A thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity**

*Note: This initial scoping report, which was developed to inform the Plenary at IPBES 7, would be considered for the development of the scoping report in the context of the new IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 adopted by the Plenary in decision IPBES-7/1.*

1. Previous assessments have concluded that plausible pathways exist for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity<sup>1</sup> in conjunction with key human development goals. These pathways are coherent with known constraints on economics, resource use and human development goals. However, they require fundamental changes in development paradigms, entailing changes in society, including much more efficient use of land, water, energy and materials, rethinking of consumption habits and major transformations of food systems. The need for transformative change<sup>2</sup> for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. This assessment is aimed at understanding and identifying factors in human society, at both the individual and collective levels, that can be leveraged to bring about such transformative change in favour of biodiversity while taking into account broader social and economic imperatives in the context of sustainable development. This includes behavioural, social, cultural, economic, institutional, technical and technological dimensions, corresponding to the indirect drivers of change in biodiversity, which sit at the centre of the IPBES conceptual framework. Gaining a better understanding of how these drivers can be transformed would inform the development of policies and actions to trigger a shift towards sustainability and good quality of life at many levels, from individuals through communities and businesses to society at large.
3. The assessment will explore the drivers of and motives behind broad societal changes and transitions to inform the design of relevant policies, communication and engagement campaigns and other actions. It will examine, inter alia:
  - (a) Values (relational, utilitarian, etc.) and how they influence behaviour;
  - (b) Notions of good quality of life, worldviews and cultures, models of interaction between people and nature and social narratives;
  - (c) The role of social norms and regulations, and of economic incentives and other institutions in leveraging behavioural change in individuals, businesses, communities and societies;
  - (d) The role of technologies and technology assessment;
  - (e) The role of collective action;
  - (f) Complex systems and transitions theory (the role of niche innovations, established regimes, path dependence and lock-in, non-linear interactions and feedbacks and emergent properties);
  - (g) Obstacles to achieving transformative change, including unequal power relations, lack of transparency, vested interests, unequal distribution of the costs and benefits of actions, tendencies for short-term decision-making, the psychology of losses and gains, the logic of market-driven processes, the lack of policy coherence and inertia;
  - (h) Equity and the need for “just transitions”;
  - (i) Lessons from previous transitions (e.g., attitudes to smoking, energy transition, urban development).
4. The assessment will require interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work drawing on the natural and social sciences, the humanities and indigenous and local knowledge. It will require experts in institutions, behavioural economics, political economy, psychology, systems thinking and technology

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<sup>1</sup> Decision X/2 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, annex, section II, Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2010–2020.

<sup>2</sup> Transformative change (or transformational change; the terms are used interchangeably) refers to a fundamental, system-wide change that includes consideration of technological, economic and social factors, including in terms of paradigms, goals or values.

assessment, among other disciplines, as well as indigenous and local knowledge experts and experts on indigenous and local knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

5. While the assessment will be global in scope, regional differences and similarities will also be assessed.

6. In addition to supporting the 2050 vision for biodiversity, the assessment will address multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Sustainable Development Goals 8 (decent work and economic growth, i.e., issues related to decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 12 (sustainable consumption and production patterns, i.e., issues of consumption and waste), 14 (life below water), 15 (life on land) and 17 (partnerships for the goals, especially aspects concerning technology, finance and trade).

7. The assessment will build on the findings of previous and ongoing IPBES regional and thematic assessments. It will especially gain from results and thinking developed in IPBES work related to policy support, diverse conceptualization of values, indigenous and local knowledge and scenarios and models.

8. The assessment will be carried out over a three-year period.

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<sup>3</sup> As defined in the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES set out in annex II to decision IPBES-5/1.