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**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services****Fourth session**

Kuala Lumpur, 22–28 February 2016

Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Work programme of the Platform: work on
capacity-building****Work on capacity-building (deliverables 1 (a) and 1 (b))****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. In decision IPBES-2/5, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services established a task force on capacity-building for the period 2014–2018. Terms of reference for the task force were set out in annex II to the decision. The primary purpose of the task force is to support the achievement of deliverables 1 (a) and 1 (b) of the programme of work for the period 2014–2018. Further detail is provided in annex I to decision IPBES-2/5. Additional information on the membership of the task force is set out in document IPBES/3/INF/1.

2. The offer by the Government of Norway to provide a technical support unit for the task force at the Norwegian Environment Agency in Trondheim, Norway, was welcomed by the Plenary at its second session and accepted by the Bureau. The technical support unit was established on 1 January 2015. The work of the task force has also been supported by the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, under a contract arrangement with the Norwegian Environment Agency.

3. The task force held its third meeting in Bonn, Germany, from 20 to 24 April 2015. It was in part a joint meeting with the other task forces of the Platform. It also worked intersessionally, including through meetings held in the margins of other meetings.

II. Addressing priority capacity-building needs

4. In terms of the resolution adopted at the second session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, annex I), the Platform's mandated functions include prioritizing key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels, and providing and calling for financial and other support for the highest-priority needs related directly to its activities, as decided by the Plenary.

5. In decision IPBES-3/1, the Plenary approved an amended list of criteria and priority capacity-building needs as set out in annex I to the decision. It also indicated which needs would be

* IPBES/4/1.

resourced through the Platform trust fund and in-kind contributions and which needs would be supported by the Platform facilitating the mobilization of resources through the capacity-building forum and the piloting of a prototype matchmaking facility. The Plenary furthermore requested the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit to work with all relevant subsidiary bodies under the Platform in ensuring that those needs were fully addressed and that progress in meeting them was kept under review and reported to the Plenary on a regular basis.

6. In decision IPBES-3/1, the Plenary also took note of the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training developed by the task force on capacity-building and requested that the task force and its technical support unit complete the pilot implementation of the draft programme, report on progress with the pilot implementation and make recommendations for the further development and implementation of the programme to the Plenary at its fourth session. The Plenary also took note of the preliminary plans for convening, in 2015, the first capacity-building forum of the Platform with representatives of conventional and potential sources of funding and requested the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, and the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit, to convene the forum during the second half of 2015 on the basis of a call for expressions of interest to take part in the forum, and requested a report on the outcome of the forum to the Plenary at its fourth session.

7. The task force at its third meeting consequently planned actions for the piloting of the implementation of the draft programme on fellowship exchange and training and on the matching of priority capacity-building needs with resources, as set out below.

III. Piloting implementation of the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training

8. The task force on capacity-building has, with the assistance of its technical support unit, piloted the implementation of the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training approaches in 2015 as a means of addressing the priority capacity-building needs approved by the Plenary. The proposed programme is ambitious and requires considerable funds and substantial technical support for coordination, oversight, reporting and review.

A. Fellowship programme

9. The Platform Chair issued a call to member States and observers for the nomination of fellows to take part in the regional and subregional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services (deliverable 2 (b)) or the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration (deliverable 3 (b) (i)). A total of 684 applications was received, of which 446 were deemed eligible, having been endorsed by their home organizations or institutions. The management committees for each of the relevant assessments, supported by the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit, selected a total of 33 fellows to take part in the assessments.

10. Seven fellows were selected for the regional assessment for Africa; seven for the regional assessment for Asia-Pacific; six for the regional assessment for the Americas; six for the regional assessment for Europe and Central Asia; and seven for the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration. The fellows have participated in the first author meetings for their respective assessments and are receiving mentoring from assessment authors. In all five assessments, the feedback on the participation in and commitment of the fellows to their tasks was extremely positive. The fellows have been assigned to particular chapters and will be duly acknowledged in the final reports.

B. Training

11. The task force on capacity-building worked with the secretariat in planning training and familiarization sessions associated with each of the five assessment first author meetings held in 2015. Much of the training was based on work undertaken as part of other deliverables and covered in the guide on production and integration of assessments from and across all scales (deliverable 2(a)). Feedback on those sessions has been positive and, in some regions, further training for those involved in the assessments is under active discussion.

12. One of the purposes of the methodological assessments in particular is to identify areas in which further capacity-building is needed in order to facilitate uptake of particular tools and methodologies in other assessments and related activities. Work carried out while undertaking the methodological assessment on scenario analysis and modelling (deliverable 3(c)) has identified a number of capacity-building needs and discussion is ongoing between the technical support unit for

the assessment and the task force on capacity-building regarding the manner in which to best address those needs.

13. All fellows from the five assessments were invited to a joint workshop to take place in Bonn, Germany, in December 2015. The objectives of the workshop are as follows: (a) to develop a learning network among the Platform fellows; (b) to share lessons and reflections from the first author meetings; and (c) to ensure that the fellows have an understanding of the assessments process and the ways in which assessments could be utilized.

14. An e-learning tool on the conceptual framework of the Platform is nearing completion and will be made available shortly. Other online opportunities for learning are also under discussion, including webinars on key topics.

C. Further implementation

15. The task force recommends that the piloting of the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training be continued for another year, and it is foreseen that in 2016 the task force will undertake the following activities:

- (a) Review existing activities in order to learn lessons and build on experience gained;
- (b) Make a further call for application and nomination of fellows for such assessments as may be approved by the Plenary at its fourth session;
- (c) Plan further training and mentoring of the fellows selected;
- (d) Plan training of and e-learning by assessment authors as necessary, in consultation with the relevant technical support units;
- (e) Plan phased implementation of other activities included in the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training, such as secondments between technical support units and development of e-learning and training materials based on Platform products.

16. In supporting those activities, the technical support unit will liaise with the secretariat and other technical support units as appropriate and will seek additional funding where necessary, including from the private sector, for carrying out such activities.

IV. Matching needs with resources

A. Capacity-building forum

17. The Platform has a mandate to catalyse financing for capacity-building activities by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding, and it is the responsibility of the task force to support the Bureau in the organization of that forum. Following directions from the Bureau, the task force on capacity-building convened the first meeting of the Platform capacity-building forum in Dehradun, India, from 19 to 22 October 2015. The meeting was co-hosted by the Wildlife Institute of India and the Indian National Biodiversity Authority and some 70 participants from 30 countries attended. Participants included nominees from Governments and other stakeholders and representatives of a range of key organizations working on capacity-building related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, but unfortunately attracted few representatives from conventional and potential sources of funding.

18. Discussion during the first meeting of the forum was highly productive, generating a wealth of advice relating to further development of a facility for matching priority needs with the technical and financial resources for addressing such needs, and opportunities for building partnerships and aligning interests to increase support for addressing priority capacity-building needs. Many of the participating organizations were keen to understand how they could more effectively support the Platform in addressing priority capacity-building needs.

19. The forum considered the approach that might be taken at its future meetings in order to further develop partnerships and other forms of collaboration for delivering capacity-building and to attract more bilateral and multilateral organizations with large capacity-building programmes. It was generally felt that a further meeting was needed in 2016 in order to maintain momentum and that that meeting should be preceded by the development and implementation of an engagement strategy. The report of the meeting is set out as an annex to IPBES/4/INF/5.

B. Matchmaking facility

20. The work programme 2014–2018 anticipates the development of a matchmaking facility with the aim of bringing together those who have capacity-building needs with those able to help meet those needs, whether technical or financial. Since the third session of the Plenary, the task force and its technical support unit have been working to develop the online elements of the Platform matchmaking facility. The online elements will be hosted by the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network, a web portal run by the United Nations Development Programme. The intention is to learn from the operation of the prototype and then, step by step and over time, to build up a matchmaking facility in a modular fashion.

21. The Platform Chair launched a call for proposals requesting technical or financial support for planning or implementing capacity-building projects to be included in the prototype matchmaking facility. The call received 88 responses, 82 of which have been included in a beta version of the online component of the prototype matchmaking facility. The 82 projects included activities in 95 countries, with an average financial support of \$1.3 million sought per project. The top categories addressed by the projects were knowledge and data (addressed in 54 projects), national assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services (addressed in 54 projects), policy support tools (addressed in 39 projects) and indigenous and local knowledge (addressed in 28 projects).

22. The beta version of the online element of the prototype matchmaking facility was considered at the first meeting of the Platform capacity-building forum. The forum advised that, in piloting the matchmaking facility, the task force should develop a business model or concept for matchmaking, including a value proposition, a governance scheme and an action plan, elements of which are set out under “Further implementation” below.

C. Further implementation

23. The task force recommends the continued piloting in 2016 of the prototype matchmaking facility with the support of the capacity-building forum as a means for matching priority capacity-building needs with resources. The piloting will involve testing and further developing the concept of matchmaking, its value proposition, a governance scheme and an action plan, addressing the following elements, among others:

(a) The definition of entries in the online prototype matchmaking facility supported by the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network, including by considering entries such as concept notes, technical assistance, project development ideas, project abstracts, funding areas and achievements by strategic partners;

(b) The development of processes and criteria for review, acceptance and facilitation of entries in the online prototype matchmaking facility, including by considering approaches to national self-assessment of capabilities, such as those related to the preparation and use of national biodiversity and ecosystem services assessments;

(c) The identification of the role of subsidiary bodies and strategic partners of the Platform in matchmaking and of ways in which strategic partners can be identified and engaged in accordance with the guidance on the development of strategic partnerships and other collaborative arrangements approved in decision IPBES-3/4, while keeping in mind the need to engage with partners representing both implementers and conventional and potential sources of funding;

(d) The continued piloting and testing of the prototype matchmaking facility in collaboration with strategic partners based, among others, on project proposals received in response to the call from the Chair of the Platform and by taking into account feedback received;

(e) The provision of support to the Bureau on the planning of the second meeting of the capacity-building forum during the second half of 2016 at a venue where the regionally balanced Bureau and task force on capacity-building are able to interact with a consortium of strategic matchmaking partners representing both implementers and conventional and potential sources of funding; and consideration of the inclusion in the second meeting of a high-level segment.

24. In supporting the above activities, the technical support unit will liaise with the secretariat and other technical support units as appropriate, and will seek additional funding where necessary for carrying out the activities.

V. Suggested actions

25. The Plenary may wish to consider the following actions:

(a) Request the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit to continue the piloting of the draft programme on fellowship, exchange and training, and to report on progress in the pilot implementation and make recommendations for the further development and implementation of the programme to the Plenary at its fifth session;

(b) Request the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit to continue the piloting of the prototype matchmaking facility in collaboration with strategic partners representing both implementers and conventional and potential sources of funding, and to report on progress with the piloting and make recommendations for the further development and implementation of the facility to the Plenary at its fifth session;

(c) Take note of the lessons learned from the first capacity-building forum of the Platform and request the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, and the task force on capacity-building and its technical support unit, to convene a second meeting of the forum during the second half of 2016 with representatives of the implementers and conventional and potential sources of funding, and request a report on the outcome of the forum to the Plenary at its fifth session.
