

# Report of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services on the work of its third session.

## Annex VII

### Scoping for a regional assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services for Europe and Central Asia (deliverable 2 (b))

#### I. Scope, geographic area, rationale, utility and assumptions

##### A. Scope

1. Within the scope outlined in the generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, (decision IPBES-3/1, annex III), the key policy-relevant questions concern options and opportunities with regard to biodiversity and ecosystem services and their role for human well-being. The assessment will examine the opportunities for sectoral policies and policy instruments; managing production, consumption and economic development; and ecological infrastructures and ecological technologies. It will explore opportunities to promote food security, economic development and equality while avoiding land and aquatic degradation and conserving cultural landscapes. The Europe and Central Asia assessment will focus in particular on the following questions:

(a) How can ecosystems that provide ecosystem services, such as those underpinning ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change and nature-based solutions to sustainable development, be protected through investments, regulations and management regimes for terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine systems?

(b) What are the effects of production, consumption and economic development on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their contribution to human wellbeing? Major links with other regions will be assessed;

(c) How can sectoral policies and new policy instruments make use of opportunities arising from the contribution of biodiversity and ecosystem services to human well-being?

##### B. Geographic area of the assessment

2. For the purpose of the regional assessment, three subregions have been identified that include the following countries and territories, including marine and coastal areas:

<i>Subregions</i>	<i>Countries and territories within the Europe and Central Asia region</i>
Central and Western Europe	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey (Group of Central European countries)
	Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Group of Western European countries)
Eastern Europe	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine
Central Asia	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

##### C. Rationale

3. In the context of the general rationale outlined in the generic scoping report, the present section sets out the rationale specific to the region. The assessment will address a number of international and regional issues of high priority as embodied in global and regional agreements, in national policy and in societal expectations. Important priorities include the issues covered by the four thematic assessments in the work programme of the Platform (pollinators, pollination and food production; land degradation and restoration; sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and strengthening capacities and tools; and invasive alien species), in addition to sustainable agriculture, sustainable forestry, sustainable fisheries and biodiversity in areas sensitive to climate change. The assessment of opportunities for mainstreaming through sectoral policies and new policy instruments

(such as certification, labelling, no net loss, offsetting, green infrastructure, national accounting, payment for environmental services schemes and social valuation) will be facilitated by Europe's longstanding policy experience, which puts the region in an excellent position to assess policy impacts with a view to learning lessons and resolving issues relating to trade-offs and associated costs, including the costs of policy inaction. An assessment of the European and Central Asian region will allow for the exploration of several transboundary issues, including water quality and quantity, fisheries, climate change, air pollution and migratory species. It should raise awareness of shared environmental issues and contribute to the better articulation of policy across the entire region.

#### **D. Utility**

4. In the context of the general utility outlined in the generic scoping report, the present section sets out the utility specific to the region. The assessment will contribute to building multiple evidence bases (academic, indigenous and local knowledge, citizen science, etc.) for the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being. It will explore options for effective management and policy interventions at appropriate levels of governance, including policy instruments such as environmental accounting systems, payments for ecosystem services and measures of growth that account for natural capital. The assessment will also help to identify capacity-building needs across subregions. The assessment will support parties in implementing global, regional and subregional agreements (see appendix). Furthermore, the assessment will also be relevant to the European Union's ongoing efforts to map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in national territory (the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES) initiative). The assessment could also support the implementation of national legislation and, at the national and subnational levels, will provide clear standards, methods and resources (data information and knowledge; strategic partner list; mechanisms for including indigenous and local knowledge) for national and local government to support sustainable development and improve human well-being through maintaining and improving ecosystem services.

#### **E. Assumptions**

5. In the context of the general assumptions outlined in the generic scoping report, the present section sets out the assumptions specific to the region. The Europe and Central Asia regional assessment will draw on and, where possible and appropriate, contribute to ongoing and planned national and regional assessments, including those undertaken by the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity initiative and the European Union MAES initiative to value some services and integrate them into accounting systems by 2020. In terms of environmental protection and the sustainable use of ecosystem services, there is substantial subregional variation in the region regarding, for example, the effects of economic development, which in some Central European, Eastern European and Central Asian countries is growing faster than in many Western European countries. Attention will be given to the different political and economic historical developments within and across the subregions. Differences between subregions in terms of their economic and political development offer the opportunity to transfer lessons between subregions. For the Western and Central Europe subregion, the policy opportunities offered by a common governance system are of particular interest. For the Central Asia subregion, opportunities for policies and institutional arrangements for the recovery of degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and for managing transboundary ecosystems are of particular interest.

## **II. Chapter outline**

6. The assessment of the European and Central Asian region will follow the chapter outline set out in the generic scoping report (decision IPBES-3/1, annex III) but will, within that outline, focus on the regionally specific scope set out in the three questions identified in section I above.

7. In addition, in chapter 2, on nature's benefits to people and quality of life, analysis will also address the impact of ecosystem services on society and how innovation and nature-based solutions are influencing the job market in the region. The chapter will also examine the multiple values of biodiversity. In chapter 4, on direct and indirect drivers of change in the context of different perspectives on quality of life, emphasis will be placed on the regional and subregional aspects of land degradation and restoration as well as on invasive alien species and sustainable intensification of agriculture. Fire and floods will be included as drivers in the European and Central Asian assessment owing to their growing importance in the region. Chapter 5, on integrated and cross-scale analysis of interactions of the natural world and human society, will in particular consider issues that include increasing demand for biological raw materials in a bio-economy context (bioenergy, fibres and organic matter), climate change, food provisioning from land and water, and water availability. It will assess how the value of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services influences indirect drivers and

how the integration of such values into national and local development planning and accounting may help address Aichi Biodiversity Target 2. In chapter 6, on options for governance, institutional arrangements and private and public decision-making across scales and sectors, the assessment will in particular consider future challenges for sustainable use and conservation in key sectors in the European and Central Asian region such as nature protection, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, water management, spatial planning, energy (including bioenergy), tourism, infrastructure and incentives (including subsidies harmful to biodiversity as well as positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity).

### III. Key data sets

8. Beyond the general issues related to key data sets outlined by the generic scoping report, the present section sets out issues related to key data sets specific to the region. The assessment will draw on a wide variety of data sets addressing the specific components of the conceptual framework. Relevant data sets could include those arising from ongoing and planned activities, such as the European Union MAES initiative referred to above, as well as those from a wide range of sources, including global, regional and national institutions and organizations, those from research projects, such as earth observation data, and analysis of the scientific literature. Data and information specific to the region might be retrieved from data centres such as the European Environment Agency, the Joint Research Centre, Eurostat, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization and relevant centres collecting earth observation data. They will also be collected from relevant research networks and projects.<sup>1</sup> Other entities, including the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, the Encyclopaedia of Life, the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network and the International Union for Conservation of Nature also hold or provide access to important data and knowledge relevant to the region. Strategic partnerships with data holders will be developed and links to ongoing knowledge generation initiatives and activities established. Data availability for the region is variable with, in general, wider access to environmental data in Western and Central Europe than in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Lack of data accessibility and compatibility in some countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia is a key concern to be addressed by the Platform. Special efforts will be made to involve the data and information from indigenous and local knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge holders.

### IV. Strategic partnership and initiatives

9. Beyond the general issues related to strategic partnerships and initiatives outlined in the generic scoping report, the present section sets out issues related to strategic partnerships and initiatives specific to the region. Strategic partnerships, whether formal or informal, with the above-mentioned data holders will be developed, and links to ongoing knowledge generation initiatives and activities established. Strategic partnerships should also be established with organizations working with indigenous and local knowledge systems, through societies and associations working with indigenous and local knowledge holders within the region. These include, for example, the Arctic Council, the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat and the European Citizen Science Association. The Pan-European Biodiversity Platform will contribute to the Europe and Central Asia assessment, including through the provision of technical support.

### V. Operational structure

10. As noted in the generic scoping report for the regional or subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, operational structures will need to be identified that will best deliver the assessment, including related capacity-building. Technical support units may be established to coordinate the delivery of this assessment, working as part of the secretariat. The operational structure will need to take into account existing initiatives and organizations, such as the MAES working group, the European Environment Agency and the pan-European Biodiversity Platform supported by the United Nations Environment Programme. The MAES initiative will be directly supported by ESMERALDA, a coordination support action funded under Horizon 2020, and indirectly by the knowledge generated in several European Union projects (such as OPERAs and OpenNESS) funded under the seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7)

---

<sup>1</sup> Relevant research projects and networks include Biodiversity Multi-Source Monitoring System – from Space to Species, Multi-scale Service for Monitoring NATURA 2000 Habitats of European Community Interest, Future Earth, European Biodiversity Observation Network, Operationalization of Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services, Ecosystem Science for Policy and Practice, the Ecosystem Services Partnership and A Long-Term Biodiversity, Ecosystem and Awareness Research Network.

and by knowledge generated by European Union Horizon 2020 projects, including the European Research Area on biodiversity and ecosystem services (BiodivERsA2 and 3), co-funded by the European Union and its member States. The organizational structure will also need to help facilitate cooperation between different subregions.

## **VI. Process and timetable**

11. The process and timetable are set out in the generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

## **VII. Cost estimate**

12. The cost estimate is set out in the generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

## **VIII. Communications and outreach**

13. It is necessary for this regional assessment to operate using existing formal and informal networks and to work across scales from the global to national and – ideally – subnational levels. The role of the technical support units, regional hubs and centres of excellence, together with the national focal points, is crucial in Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia subregions, communications and outreach will include capacity-building on forming and sustaining networks, since the current culture of network building is less developed than in Western Europe. Any communications and outreach will need to be consistent with the Platform's communications and outreach strategy.

## **IX. Capacity-building**

14. It is acknowledged that capacity-building needs vary widely within the region, not only from one subregion to another, but even from country to country. It will therefore be necessary to carefully assess capacity-building needs and promote and facilitate capacity-building activities that address those needs. For example, in parts of the region there is an urgent need to improve access to the data, information and knowledge that will help underpin assessment processes. In other parts of the region there is an urgent need for increased experience in developing and using tools such as scenarios and indicators. During implementation of the assessment it will be important to share experience as widely as possible, potentially through fellowship and staff exchange programmes. This should be focused on both individuals and institutional capacity.

## **Appendix**

### **Examples of potentially relevant regional and subregional agreements**

1. Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention)
2. Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)
3. Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)
4. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)
5. Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention)
6. Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
7. European Landscape Convention and the European Union Birds Directive
8. European Union Common Agricultural Policy
9. European Union Common Fisheries Policy
10. European Union Habitats Directive
11. European Union Marine Strategy Framework Directive
12. European Union Nitrates Directive
13. European Union Water Framework Directive

- 
14. Framework Convention on Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention)
  15. Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians
  16. Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development
  17. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention)
-