

Opportunities for national platforms and networks to engage with and contribute to the work of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

Introduction

Efforts to strengthen national and regional capacities is a key component of the work of IPBES on building capacity under the rolling work programme up to 2030. As part of these efforts, IPBES promotes the development and work of science-policy platforms and networks at national and (sub)regional levels.

Such science-policy platforms and networks have the potential to contribute greatly to the work and objective of IPBES by strengthening national science-policy interfaces for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

Why national and (sub)regional platforms and networks are important to the work of IPBES

National platforms and networks can provide a space to share information about IPBES and its processes and products, and to facilitate increased engagement and participation in the work of IPBES.

National platforms and networks can bring together national actors, including scientists and other knowledge holders, policymakers and decision-makers, practitioners and other stakeholders, and provide an arena for coordination and collaboration among national actors on joint activities related to IPBES and other biodiversity-related topics. They can also help to develop capacities essential for effective participation and strengthen the science-policy interface at national level. In this way, they may provide valuable assets for national focal points to mobilise and coordinate national engagement in IPBES and processes under important biodiversity-related agreements.

(Sub)regional platforms can support national platforms by providing a common space for sharing knowledge, resources, opinions, and lessons learnt. In addition, (sub)regional platforms and networks can fulfil the same roles as national platforms, though on a (sub)regional level.

BOX 1

National platforms and networks in the context of IPBES

The structure and modus operandi of national platforms may vary greatly depending on the national context, needs, and priorities of a country, but they have in common that they:

- Work to strengthen the interface between science and policy on biodiversity and ecosystem services; and
- Encourage and facilitate engagement in the work of IPBES and the use and promotion of IPBES assessments, conceptual approaches and guidance.

An overview of existing platforms and networks is available on the IPBES website at: <https://ipbes.net/national-regional-platforms-networks>.

How national and (sub)regional platforms and networks can engage with and contribute to the work of IPBES

Several countries have already established national platforms supporting the work of IPBES. Examples of activities undertaken by these platforms to amplify and supplement the work of national focal points include:

- Identification, nomination and mobilisation of experts and other stakeholders to take part in the production, review and use of IPBES products;
- Organization of uptake events to disseminate information about IPBES and key messages from IPBES products;
- Mobilisation of national/(sub)regional efforts to address knowledge gaps identified in IPBES assessments;
- Organization of capacity-building events to strengthen individual and institutional capacities at the national/(sub)regional level for engaging with the work of IPBES; and
- Coordination and implementation of national/(sub)regional activities related to the work of IPBES and the wider biodiversity agenda, such as the undertaking of national/(sub)regional ecosystem assessments.

An overview of the different opportunities to engage in the performance of the four functions of IPBES¹ is provided below in Box 4. More examples of how existing platforms and networks are supporting the work of IPBES can be found in the report of the fourth meeting of the IPBES capacity-building forum (see [IPBES/8/INF/9, appendix 3](#)).

BOX 2

Register examples of IPBES impact

Platforms can register and share examples of the use of IPBES outputs, such as the IPBES assessment reports, in decision-making or in science in the IPBES Impact Tracking Database (TRACK) using this submission portal: <https://ipbes.net/impact-tracking>. An overview of registered IPBES impacts is available on ipbes.net at this link: <https://ipbes.net/impact-tracking-view>.

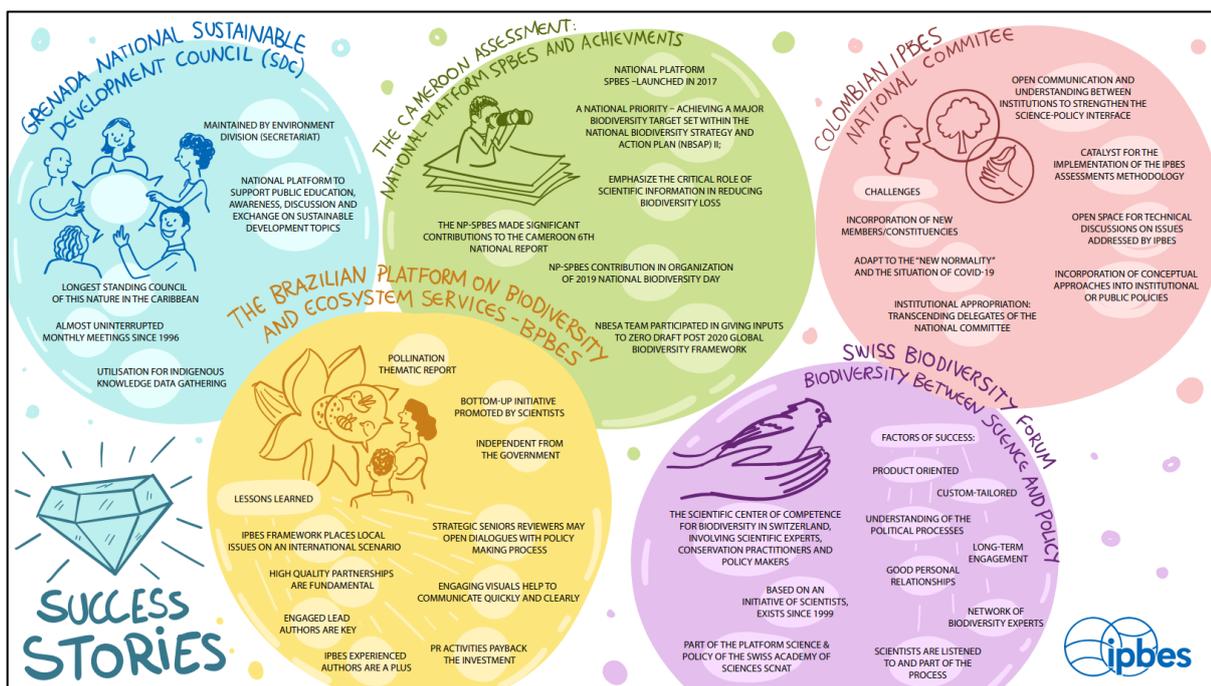


Figure 1: Graphic recording of success stories shared by existing national platforms at the fourth meeting of the IPBES capacity-building forum.

¹ As identified in its defined functions, operating principles and institutional arrangements: <https://ipbes.net/documents-by-category/policies-and-procedures>.

How IPBES promotes national and (sub)regional platforms and networks

IPBES promotes the development and work of national and (sub)regional platforms and networks through, among other things:

- Engaging with organizations and institutions that support existing national and (sub)regional platforms and networks;
- Supporting efforts to establish and develop national and (sub)regional platforms and networks, such as the development of a guide for the establishment of national platforms and networks;
- Supporting efforts that aim to strengthen engagement of stakeholders in IPBES at national, regional and global levels;
- Supporting efforts to strengthen national and regional capacities; and
- Developing an online space on the IPBES website for information on existing platforms and networks, organizations and institutions that aspire to establish a platform or network and those that could support such efforts.

BOX 3

How to register a national platform

Platforms can be registered by the IPBES national focal points in the country they operate through this webform:

<https://ipbes.net/form/national-platforms>.

For questions or support, including how to register a regional platform, please contact the IPBES technical support unit on capacity-building on tsu.capacitybuilding@ipbes.net.

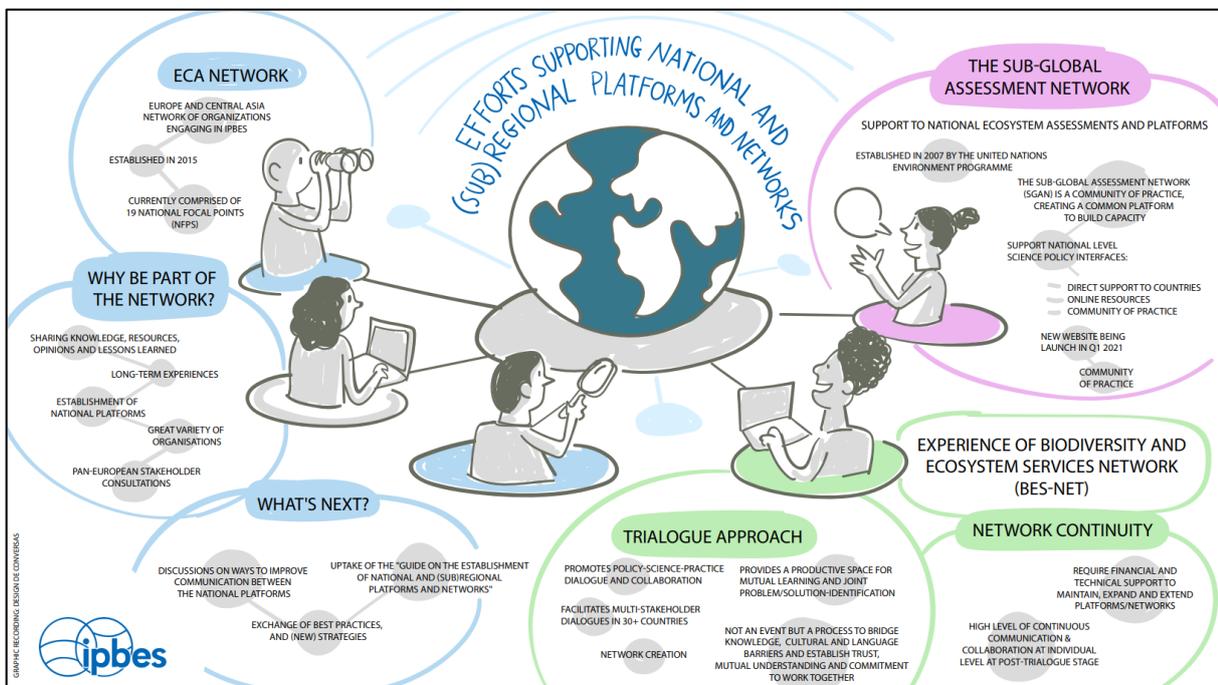


Figure 2: Graphic recording of different efforts supporting national and (sub)regional platforms at network presented at the fourth meeting of the IPBES capacity-building forum.

Opportunities to engage in the performance of the four functions of IPBES

Assessing knowledge delivers global, regional, methodological and thematic assessments, and helps to catalyse assessments at the national level. Governments and stakeholders can engage with and support this work by:

- (for Governments and organizations:) Nominating, promoting and supporting the participation of experts in IPBES assessments.
- (for experts:) Being nominated as experts to participate in the production of assessments and scoping reports as authors.
- (for early-career scientists:) Being nominated as experts to participate in the production of assessments as fellows in the fellowship programme.
- (For Governments and experts) Participating in pre-scoping conferences.
- (For Governments and experts): Submitting written review comments.
- (For Governments, organizations and experts:) Promoting and using findings of IPBES assessments.

Building capacity identifies and prioritizes capacity-building needs, and builds capacities of individuals and institutions for a strengthened science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Governments and stakeholders can engage with and support this work by:

- Nominating, promoting and supporting early-career experts' participation in the fellowship programme.
- Developing complementary learning materials on IPBES products.
- Organizing and supporting capacity-building and knowledge sharing activities relevant to IPBES.
- Participating in, promoting and supporting the establishment of communities of practice on IPBES deliverables.
- Participating in, promoting, and supporting the establishment of national and regional science-policy platforms and networks and conducting national and regional ecosystem assessments.
- Taking part in IPBES dialogue meetings and webinars to enhance knowledge exchange and foster mutual learning to strengthen the science-policy interface.

Knowledge generation catalyses and generates new knowledge. It consists of three components: data access and management; filling knowledge gaps; and engaging with indigenous and local knowledge. Governments and stakeholders can engage with and support this work by:

- Providing access to, using, or reproducing the data, methods, and metadata relevant to or contained in IPBES assessments
- Contributing to knowledge generation by supporting the uptake and filling of identified knowledge gaps
- Facilitating indigenous peoples and local communities' participation in and benefit from IPBES products and activities.

Policy support promotes development and use of policy support tools and methodologies so that the assessments' results can be more effectively applied. Governments and stakeholders can engage with and support this work by:

- Using of IPBES assessments to inform policy.
- Participating in and/or convening dialogue meetings to further discuss the assessments' findings.
- Utilising the IPBES scenarios and models assessment and relevant work of the task force on scenarios and models for the development and use of scenarios of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Background – The role of the task force on capacity-building

IPBES aims 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. In doing so, it draws heavily on existing capacities of experts and institutions from all over the world to critically assess the state of knowledge on the interactions between human societies and the natural world, catalyse knowledge generation and support policy. In undertaking these endeavours, IPBES is faced with striking world-wide asymmetries in individual and institutional capacity. IPBES, with the aim of addressing these asymmetries, seeks to develop capacities of individuals and institutions for a strengthened science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

A key component of IPBES' efforts to develop institutional and individual capacities relates to the promotion and encouragement of national and (sub)regional platforms and networks. Efforts towards this are undertaken in the context of IPBES' work on capacity-building and with the aim of addressing objective 2(c): strengthened national and regional capacities, of the 2030 work programme.

The establishment and continued development of national and (sub)regional science-policy platforms and networks are driven by Governments, strategic partners, collaborative supporters, and others supporting the work on capacity-building under IPBES. The task force on capacity-building contributes to these efforts by facilitating, encouraging, and promoting activities of relevant institutions and organizations, and strengthening networks for dialogue and peer-learning.

Information about the work of the task force on capacity-building and contributions from collaborative supporters are available at <https://ipbes.net/building-capacity>.