

IPBES Notification EM/2018/20: Future work programme of IPBES

UK response

The UK welcomes the progress in the implementation of the IPBES work programme and the agreement to initiate three new assessments on the sustainable use of wild species, invasive alien species, and a methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits. We note that in view of the agreement to have no more than three concurrent assessments that the earliest opportunity to start a new assessment will be in 2021.

The UK supports proposals from IPBES-6 for a longer term strategic work programme with some flexibility to accommodate emerging needs. This longer term perspective and flexibility is needed bearing in mind the ongoing assessments from the first work programme and we think some more time is needed to thoroughly evaluate the impacts and uptake of the results of the first work programme including the global assessment due to be completed next year as well as the ongoing external review of IPBES. This is particularly important in considering the balance and organisation of the work in regard to the four functions of IPBES. In general we would wish to see closer alignment between IPBES expert groups and related work under other processes, agreements and institutions. This will require further consideration of the membership of these groups and closer oversight by the plenary.

In the context of the CBD and the proposals for an over-arching post-2020 biodiversity framework we can anticipate the need for a further global assessment aligned with the cycle of reporting the post-2020 framework. We would wish to reflect further on the added value, geographical scope and organisation of regional assessments. Regional dimensions may be better addressed within a global assessment, rather than undertaken separately, and may be more useful if undertaken with a finer grain than the four current regions. The specific needs of CBD would benefit from further consideration alongside the development and adoption of the post-2020 framework in 2020. We therefore draw attention to recommendations of SBSTTA-22 on this matter.

Building on IPBES completed assessments we will be interested to explore options for developing the evidence base to support transformational change in the way society values, uses and restores ecosystems and natural resources and manages trade-offs between different demands on the environment, including the nexus of biodiversity, food, energy and health. However in developing the future work programme we must ensure a more coherent approach to assessments undertaken by MEAs, UN agencies and platforms such as IPBES and IPCC.