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

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Initial work programme of the Platform

**Draft process for scoping potential assessments and other
activities of the Platform**

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme has prepared a draft process for scoping potential assessments and other activities of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (see annex), taking into consideration the comments provided by Governments and other stakeholders during the intersessional period. All the submissions received are also available online (www.ipbes.net). In addition, the draft process set out in the annex to the present note is available for further online review until 28 February 2013. The annex has not been formally edited.

* IPBES/1/1.



Annex

Draft process for scoping potential assessments and other activities of the Platform

I. Introduction

1. The second session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES, held in Panama City in April 2012, decided to invite Governments, multilateral environmental agreements and other stakeholders to submit their views on the process that should be followed for scoping potential assessments and other Platform activities once they have been prioritized by the Plenary of the Platform, as well as their views on what the outputs of such a process should include.¹ Subsequently, a letter dated 29 May 2012 was circulated by UNEP to Governments and other stakeholders, requesting them, as part of the agreed intersessional process, to submit their views on this matter, on the basis of which the interim secretariat was requested to prepare draft process/procedure and make it available for online review. The draft process for scoping potential assessments and other Platform activities which is presented in the present note was prepared on the basis of inputs received from Governments and other relevant stakeholders.

2. The present note should be considered in reference to the draft procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests by Governments and other stakeholders (IPBES/1/5). This note is available for online review until 28 February 2013, and it is envisaged that this draft process and comments submitted on the process may then be further considered by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) and Bureau with a view to being a scoping process for IPBES being adopted at the second session of the IPBES Plenary.

3. In addition, the draft process takes into account experiences from other assessment and science-policy processes including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, The Global Regular Assessment of the Marine Environment, The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the EU Network of Biodiversity Knowledge, The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study, and the United Kingdom National Ecosystem Assessment, among others.

4. This process is intended to guide the scoping of potential assessments and other Platform activities, and is to be applied in accordance with other rules and procedures of the Platform. This process is not intended to prescribe future decisions by the Platform regarding its work programme, but rather to support that those decisions are well informed.

The scoping process

5. Scoping can be considered as the process by which decisions on the IPBES work programme are well informed from a scientific, technical, and administrative perspective. Scoping will determine whether or not knowledge to be assessed is available, and will also be an important first step in identifying knowledge gaps. It will also provide information on the potential financial and operational implications of the work programme.

¹ See UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, annex II, paragraph 10.

6. Once requests from the various IPBES constituencies are received, the Scoping Process could assess whether there is sufficient information to respond to such requests, and initially prioritize and organize them for consideration by the Plenary. Once completed, the Scoping Process could produce an initial outline for any IPBES assessment report and other deliverables, for consideration by the IPBES Plenary.

7. The scoping process will provide guidance to the plenary and any working groups established on the knowledge available against which IPBES assessments will be conducted, policy responses identified and capacity-building catalysed.

8. The consideration of the role of the various participants in the scoping process is important, including the role of IPBES Members in nominating experts for any scoping meetings, the role of the Chair, vice-chairs and other Bureau members and the MEP in selecting experts, and the role of the plenary and its subsidiary bodies as appropriate in endorsing scoping documents. The scope of major deliverables, such as global assessments, might be authorized by the Plenary. However, the scoping process of regional deliverables could be delegated to the various IPBES bodies, including the Bureau or members of the MEP at the regional level. The authorizing authority for each scoping exercise could be set out in procedures, in the workplan or in decisions by the Plenary on responses to specific requests.

9. The scoping process would begin once the Plenary has taken a decision based on the Bureau and MEP recommendations concerning requests that merit further consideration including the scientific and policy relevance of the requests, the need for additional scoping and the implications of the requests for the Platform's work programme and resource requirements (IPBES/1/5). A process of pre-scoping might also be required in order for the plenary to be sufficiently informed on the merits of the full scoping process in relation to any particular requests.

10. A possible flow chart elaborating the scoping process is included in the appendix to this present report. The need for a two stage process (pre-scoping and full scoping) will depend to some extent on the quality of request submissions, for which guidance and a standardized form for submissions would be beneficial, building on the information proposed in paragraph 7 of IPBES/1/5; a pre-scoping stage may not be necessary or always desirable (e.g. for urgent requests).

II. Pre-scoping

11. Based on the consolidated requests presented to the Plenary by the MEP or Bureau (see Procedures for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the Platform IPBES/1/5), the Plenary may decide to request the parties that submitted the original request(s) to elaborate on certain information/elements contained in their original requests. Such additional information might be compiled by the Secretariat for consideration by the Bureau and MEP, which then might make recommendations to the Plenary on whether to refer forward any of the pre-scoped requests to a full scoping process. Alternatively, the Bureau/MEP might be given delegated authority to determine which, if any, pre-scoped requests are put forward for full scoping. Such delegated authority would shorten the time from submission of requests to the decision to undertake activities in response to such requests.

III. The full scoping process

12. Upon approval by the Plenary or as output from the Bureau/MEP pre-scoping process, a full scoping exercise might be undertaken. The first step in such a process might be to organize a scoping meeting with an appropriate range of stakeholders (see also *Draft Procedures for preparation of IPBES deliverables*), which might be led by one or more members of the Bureau and/or MEP. Nominations for participation in such a scoping meeting might be solicited from Members and observers of the Platform, and members of the Bureau and MEP, and selected by the Bureau.

13. Participants for such a scoping meeting might include a range of scientists and other subject-matter experts as well as expert representatives from stakeholder and user groups, including from members of the platform. Such a range of participation would help ensure that any assessments and other activities will be scientifically robust, based on the knowledge and experience of a range of stakeholders, and relevant to decision-making. In selecting scoping meeting participants, consideration might be given by the Bureau to the following:

- scientific, technical and socioeconomic expertise, including the range of views;
- geographical representation;
- a mixture of experts with and without previous experience in IPBES;
- gender balance; and
- experts with a background from relevant stakeholder and user groups, including Governments.

14. In addition, an online consultation could be established prior to the scoping meeting to support discussions during the meeting itself and to provide the opportunity for broader input to the process.

15. In order to facilitate the scoping meeting, a guidance document for developing a draft outline for an assessment and for developing the scope of other potential activities could be developed, which might include a range of scientific, technical and procedural/administrative elements for consideration.

16. Possible scientific and technical elements to be included in the guidance document might include:

(a) The main issues regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services to be covered by the assessment or other activities, in relation to the IPBES functions and conceptual framework;

(b) The main policy questions and users that might be addressed through the assessment or other activities;

(c) The urgency of the activity, and how it will contribute to other processes/decisions;

(d) Possible constituent chapters for any assessment report and the scope of each of these chapters;

(e) Any known significant limitations in the knowledge that will be needed to undertake any assessment and whether options exist for addressing knowledge gaps;

(f) Potential additional outputs that could be derived from an assessment to support other functions of the Platform (e.g., on capacity-building, policy support tools, etc.).

17. Possible procedural/administrative elements to be included in the guidance document might include:

(a) The possible overall activity schedule and milestones;

(b) The potential operational structure(s) that might be necessary, and the roles and responsibilities of the various bodies in delivering the activity; how the procedures for the implementation of the work programme will be implemented to ensure effective peer review, quality assurance, and transparency;

(c) The full estimated costs of undertaking the activity, and the potential sources of funding, including from the IPBES trust fund and other sources as appropriate;

(d) Any capacity-building interventions that may be required to deliver the activity, which might then be included as activities in the general report delivery plan;

(e) Any specific communication and outreach activities that might be appropriate for the specific deliverable, including in relation to the identification of gaps in knowledge, and for policy support.

Appendix

Possible IPBES scoping process flow chart

