

**Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services**

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**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on
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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation
of the work programme 2014–2018****Implementation of the work programme for 2014–2018****Eligibility for financial support from the Platform trust fund****Note by the Secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The present note provides information, including suggestions by the Bureau, on matters regarding eligibility for financial support from the trust fund of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services which arose during the first year of implementation of the work programme of the Platform, in particular concerning:

(a) Requests from several Governments to add the Platform to the list of international organizations eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA) as determined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD);

(b) The need for guidance regarding the eligibility of participants for financial support from the trust fund.

2. The Plenary is invited to consider the present note and to provide guidance on the suggestions made by the Bureau.

**II. Adding the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to the list of international
organizations eligible for official development assistance as
determined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and
Development**

3. There have been several requests from donor countries to add the Platform to the list of ODA-eligible international organizations as determined by OECD. If the Platform were officially recognized as an ODA-eligible international organization, donors contributing to the trust fund would be able to formally account for such contributions as official development assistance.

* IPBES/3/1.

4. Once a year the Development Assistance Committee of OECD reviews applications for addition to the list of eligible international organizations. Working on the basis of an agreed methodology, the Committee allocates a coefficient corresponding to the extent to which the funds are considered ODA relevant.¹
5. The Development Assistance Committee maintains a list of all countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance (see annex). The OECD Development Assistance Committee list of ODA recipients, which is based on gross national income per capita as published by the World Bank, includes all low- and middle-income countries, with the exception of members of the Group of Eight (G-8), members of the European Union and countries with a firm date for entry into the European Union, which are not eligible. The list also includes all of the least developed countries as defined by the United Nations.
6. The Development Assistance Committee defines official development assistance as those flows to countries and territories on the list and to multilateral institutions which are:
- (a) Provided by official agencies, including State and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and
 - (b) Each transaction of which:
 - (i) Is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and
 - (ii) Is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25 per cent (calculated at a rate of discount of 10 per cent).
7. The Plenary is asked to approve the suggestion of the Bureau that the Platform be added to the list of ODA-eligible international organizations in order to allow the secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureau, to prepare an application for 2015.

III. Guidance on the eligibility of participants for financial support

8. As set out in decision IPBES-2/5 (annex I, appendix), the Platform is to provide support to participants from developing countries. No further indication has been given as to which countries are to be covered. Furthermore, a number of ambiguous cases have been encountered in which it has proved difficult to make a clear decision on the eligibility of an expert. The lack of clear guidance has made it difficult to follow a consistent approach.
9. The following draft guidance provided by the Bureau would allow for a consistent approach to matters related to eligibility for financial support. It focuses on:
- (a) A prioritized list defining which countries are eligible for financial support;
 - (b) Rules for determining eligibility for financial support in ambiguous cases.

A. List of countries eligible for financial support

10. The Platform is to provide support to participants from developing countries, but no further indication has been given by the Plenary as to which countries are to be covered.
11. In order to ensure that a consistent approach is followed, the Bureau suggested that the OECD Development Assistance Committee list of ODA recipients, in accordance with the rules of the Platform restricted to States members of the United Nations only, be used to define which countries are eligible for financial support in the context of the Platform. The suggested list defining which countries are eligible for financial support in the context of the Platform is presented in the annex to the present note.
12. Using the adapted OECD Development Assistance Committee list of ODA recipients to define eligibility for financial support has implications with regard to current practices. To date, following the practice applied by the interim secretariat of the Platform provided by the United Nations Environment Programme, and in line with the practice of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, all countries of the Eastern European region have been eligible for financial support within the context of the Platform. The OECD Development Assistance Committee list of ODA recipients, however,

¹ The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for example, which was recently re-evaluated according to the current methodology, has been allocated a coefficient of 61 per cent. In other words, 61 per cent of its fund is defined as ODA-relevant.

explicitly excludes members of the G-8, members of the European Union and countries with a firm date for entry into the European Union.² In the light of this, the Plenary is invited to decide whether the practice of considering all countries of the Eastern European region as eligible for financial support should be continued or not, considering the following implications:

(a) Risks related to regional balance. The ability to provide financial support to all countries of the Eastern European region has helped to strengthen the regional representation of experts from the region. Nevertheless, with 11 per cent of all selected experts, this region has the weakest representation overall (compared with the ideal of 20 per cent of all selected experts) (see IPBES/3/2). Half of the experts making up that 11 per cent are from members of the G-8 or the European Union. Discontinuing financial support to those countries might lead to an even weaker representation of the Eastern European region;

(b) Costs. The cost of continuing to provide financial support to all countries of the Eastern European region is estimated to amount to approximately \$0.5 million over the remaining four years of the work programme (including \$200,000 in 2015) if the current level of representation of experts from countries of the Eastern European group (11 per cent of all selected experts) is maintained, and about \$1 million if adequate representation of that group (20 per cent of all selected experts) is targeted;

(c) ODA eligibility of the Platform trust fund. The overall eligibility of an institution is not a matter of “yes” or “no”; rather, it is determined by a gradient measured by OECD according to an agreed method. In the case of the Platform, it is indicated by a coefficient defining the proportion of the Platform trust fund that is ODA-relevant. The implication of continuing to provide financial support to all countries of the Eastern European region would result in an estimated decrease of 2.5 per cent of the ODA coefficient for the Platform.

13. In the event that the Plenary decides to continue the practice of considering all countries of the Eastern European region as eligible for financial support, the countries should be added to the suggested list of countries eligible for financial support as a separate fifth category.

B. Rules to determine eligibility for financial support in ambiguous cases

14. As stated above (see para. 8), a number of ambiguous cases have been encountered with regard to which it has proved difficult to make a clear decision on the eligibility of an expert. The ambiguity results from the fact that the term “developing country” can be interpreted as referring to the Government or organization making the nomination, to the nationality of the expert or to the place where the expert works. Examples of ambiguous cases include the following:

(a) Experts who are citizens of developing countries but who are resident in a developed country and/or affiliated with an institution in a developed country;

(b) Experts who have dual citizenship of both a developing and a developed country, but who are resident in and/or affiliated with an institution in a developed country;

(c) Discrepancies between the nominating country and the country of citizenship when one of the two is a developed country and the other a developing country;

(d) Experts from international organizations, who, as such, are not affiliated with a particular country and are thus not considered eligible to receive trust fund support, regardless of their nationality.

15. In order to allow for a consistent approach, it is suggested that experts eligible for support would be those that are either:

(a) Nationals of a developing country;

(b) Employed by a developing country institution; or

(c) Nominated by a developing country.

² Currently, this includes Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Annex

Suggested list of countries eligible for financial support from the Platform

The list of countries eligible for financial support in the context of the Platform is based on the list of official development assistance (ODA) recipients drawn up by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The list is automatically updated whenever the Development Assistance Committee list of ODA recipients is updated. The list also defines priorities for receiving support, with four categories ranked in order of decreasing priority: least developed countries, other low-income countries, lower-middle-income countries and upper-middle-income countries.

<i>Least developed countries</i>	<i>Other low-income countries (per capita GNI ≤ \$1,005 in 2010)</i>	<i>Lower-middle-income countries (per capita GNI \$1,006- \$3,975 in 2010)</i>	<i>Upper-middle-income countries (per capita GNI \$3,976- \$12,275 in 2010)</i>
Afghanistan Angola Bangladesh Benin Bhutan Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia Central African Republic Chad Comoros Democratic Republic of the Congo Djibouti Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Ethiopia Gambia Guinea Guinea-Bissau Haiti Kiribati Lao People's Democratic Republic Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mozambique Myanmar Nepal Niger Rwanda Samoa Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Sierra Leone Solomon Islands Somalia South Sudan Sudan Timor-Leste Togo Tuvalu Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Vanuatu Yemen Zambia	Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kenya Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Zimbabwe	Armenia Belize Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Cabo Verde Cameroon Congo Côte d'Ivoire Egypt El Salvador Fiji Georgia Ghana Guatemala Guyana Honduras India Indonesia Iraq Marshall Islands Micronesia (Federated States of) Mongolia Morocco Nicaragua Nigeria Pakistan Papua New Guinea Paraguay Philippines Republic of Moldova Sri Lanka Swaziland Syrian Arab Republic Tonga Turkmenistan Ukraine Uzbekistan Viet Nam	Albania Algeria Antigua and Barbuda Argentina Azerbaijan Belarus Bosnia and Herzegovina Botswana Brazil Chile China Colombia Costa Rica Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Ecuador Gabon Grenada Iran (Islamic Republic of) Jamaica Jordan Kazakhstan Lebanon Libya Malaysia Maldives Mauritius Mexico Montenegro Namibia Nauru Palau Panama Peru Serbia Seychelles South Africa Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Thailand The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Tunisia Turkey Uruguay Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)