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Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Initial work programme of the Platform: scoping
documents for regional assessments, land degradation
and restoration and the conceptualization of values****Initial scoping report for a global assessment on biodiversity
and ecosystem services (deliverable 2 (c))****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. A global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services is one of the final deliverables in the Platform work programme 2014–2018 adopted by the Plenary by its decision IPBES-2/5. According to deliverable 2 (c) of the work programme, (decision IPBES-2/5, annex I), the overall scope of the global assessment will be to assess the status and trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services, the impact of biodiversity and ecosystem services on human well-being and the effectiveness of responses, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

2. The global assessment was included in the work programme in response to requests made by several Governments, multilateral environmental agreements and other stakeholders, including Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Council for Science (ICSU), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (see IPBES/2/INF/9). These requests focused on the need for close links with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as with previous and ongoing assessment processes.

3. The request from the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to the Platform follows up on decision XI/2, in which the Conference of the Parties to the Convention invited the Platform, in cooperation with the Executive Secretary, to develop a work programme that includes the preparation of the next global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services, to be launched in 2018, focusing on status and trends, the impact of biodiversity and ecosystem services on human well-being, and the effectiveness of responses, including the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, building, inter alia, on its own and other relevant regional, subregional and thematic assessments, as well as on national reports.

4. It should be noted that the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets has been acknowledged as an overarching framework on biodiversity, to be implemented not only by biodiversity-related conventions, but also by the entire United Nations system and many other partners engaged in the biodiversity agenda. The response of the Platform to the request would thus address a broad set of users within and beyond the United Nations system.

* IPBES/3/1.

5. The present note serves as an initial scoping report by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau for the consideration of the Plenary at its third session as a basis for approving the initiation of a full scoping of the global assessment over the course of 2015 to be submitted to the Plenary for consideration at its fourth session. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has provided input to the present note.

II. Suggested approach for the scoping process

6. In order to launch the global assessment in a timely fashion, the Panel and the Bureau recommend that a full scoping of the assessment be carried out in 2015. The full scoping document would be prepared in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of the Platform's deliverables set out in the annex to decision IPBES-2/3.

7. A key step is to organize a scoping workshop in accordance with the criteria agreed upon in the rules of procedure. It is anticipated that the workshop would involve the participation of about 60 experts, including selected experts, and members of the Panel and the Bureau (see IPBES/2/2/Add.1), as well as the co-chairs of each regional assessment in order to build strong ties between the global assessment and the regional assessments. Nominations for participation in such a scoping workshop are solicited from Governments and other stakeholders, while experts are nominated by the Panel. Nominations are made in accordance with the following criteria: the experts nominated must reflect the range of scientific, technical and socio-economic views and expertise that exist; include appropriate geographical representation, ensure the representation of experts from developing and developed countries and countries with economies in transition; reflect a diversity of knowledge systems; and reflect gender balance. The experts nominated should also include some policymakers. In addition, it would be important for the secretariat of the Convention to be represented in the scoping workshop.

8. The scoping document will include sections presenting the overall scope and utility of the global assessment. It will provide a detailed chapter outline, and include sections on data and knowledge, operational structure, possible strategic partnerships, process and timetable, communication, outreach and capacity-building activities, and cost estimates.

III. Consultations prior to the scoping

9. It is suggested that, prior to the scoping workshop, an open consultation will be organized, as envisaged in the procedures for the preparation of the Platform's deliverables set out in the annex to decision IPBES-2/3, in order to allow for broader input to the process and support discussions during the workshop. In doing so, information on the initial requests for scoping, the initial scoping and any pre-scoping would be made publicly available. It is envisaged that such consultations may consider:

(a) *User needs associated with the requests such as those stemming from the Convention on Biological Diversity processes.* The Panel, the Bureau and the secretariat will work with the Convention, including its secretariat, in order to explore the scope of the global assessment in relation to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. Key issues, including how the global assessment contributes to the assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for 2020, how it draws upon or relates to the information in the fifth and sixth national reports for the Convention, and how it relates to a potential fifth Global Biodiversity Outlook report, will depend, among other things, on the timing of the preparation and delivery of the global assessment. Further consultations with the Convention secretariat are under way in the light of the recent decisions of the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting, which, inter alia, encouraged parties and invited other Governments and international organizations to contribute to the global assessment scoping process of the Platform in a timely manner and in accordance with procedures established by the Platform. The issue of needs related to the adjustment of timing of the delivery of the assessment towards mid-2019 was brought up in informal discussions with the Convention secretariat following the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) *How to build on and relate to existing efforts.* It is anticipated that the full scoping document would include a discussion on how the global assessment would build upon and relate to other existing efforts. Such efforts may include the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO) process, including the fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook report (GBO-4) released in October 2014 at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and any follow-up as requested by the Conference of the Parties. Other related efforts include the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP); the first World Ocean Assessment, to be completed at the end of 2014; planned assessments by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on fisheries, forests, and biodiversity and agriculture; the Global Environmental Outlook process (UNEP

request); national assessments carried out by Governments in preparing their national reports for the Convention, and other national, regional and global assessments;

(c) *How to build on thematic, methodological and regional and subregional assessments.* It is anticipated that the full scoping document would consider how the global assessment would build upon the regional and subregional assessments envisaged under deliverable 2 (b), as well as thematic assessments carried out as part of objective 3 of the work programme. Approaches for promoting the coherence of a variety of elements of the regional and global assessments, including the harmonization of indicators, concepts and terminology, will be reflected. The conceptual framework for the Platform (decision IPBES-2/4, annex), the guide for assessments developed for deliverable 2 (a) (see IPBES/3/INF/4) and the methodological assessments will facilitate coherence across all the Platform's assessment processes.
