

**Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services**Distr.: General
3 December 2014

English only

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

Bonn, Germany, 12–17 January 2015

Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

**Institutional arrangements: United Nations
collaborative partnership arrangements for the
work of the Platform and its secretariat****Progress report on the United Nations collaborative partnership
arrangement for the work of the Platform and its secretariat****Note by the secretariat**

1. In its decision IPBES-2/8, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services approved the collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary of the Platform and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as set out in the annex to the decision.

2. In the same decision, the Plenary invited UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP to approve the collaborative partnership arrangement. In response to that invitation, the following approval processes have been undertaken by each of the four United Nations entities:

(a) UNEP: In a letter dated 10 July 2014, addressed to the Chair of the Plenary, the Executive Director of UNEP approved the collaborative partnership arrangement in addition to the ongoing provision of secretariat services by UNEP to the Platform. He also said that UNEP looked forward to further collaboration with the Platform secretariat, as well as with UNESCO, UNDP and FAO, on matters of mutual interest on the basis of the arrangement;

(b) UNESCO: In a recent letter, the Director-General of UNESCO informed the Chair of the Plenary that UNESCO welcomed the collaborative partnership arrangement. The Executive Board of UNESCO, at its 185th session, held in 2010, took note of the Organization's intention to seek an institutional affiliation with the Platform, once established. At its 195th session, held in October 2014, the Executive Board welcomed the collaborative partnership agreement with the Platform;

(c) FAO: In a letter to the Executive Secretary of the Platform, dated 4 June 2014, the Director-General of FAO approved the collaborative partnership arrangement and noted that FAO looked forward to effective collaboration with the Platform, UNEP, UNESCO and UNDP on matters of mutual interest on the basis of the arrangement. At its 149th session, held in Rome from 16 to 20 June 2014, the FAO Council was informed of the outcome of the second session of the Plenary of the Platform and of the approval of the collaborative partnership arrangement by the Director-General of FAO (CL 149/INF/4, paragraphs 2–3, available from www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/030/mj982e.pdf);

(d) UNDP: the commitment of UNDP to supporting the Platform is set out in its biodiversity strategy, *The Future We Want: Biodiversity and Ecosystems – Driving Sustainable Development, Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework, 2012–2020*, which was approved by the UNDP Executive Group in September 2012. This agreed strategy constitutes the basis for UNDP

* IPBES/3/1.

support for the development of the Platform, together with UNEP, FAO and UNESCO. It recognizes that the Platform is a core tool for providing assistance to countries in meeting their commitments to the three Rio Conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements, by improving the interface between science and policy. This support, now reflected in the collaborative partnership arrangement, is aligned with the UNDP mission to help countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion, as set out in the new Strategic Plan of UNDP, *Changing with the World: UNDP Strategic Plan 2014–2017*, since decision-making based on sound science and traditional knowledge is critical for maintaining and enhancing the goods and services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems, which underpin sustainable development.

3. The annex to the present note sets out a progress report on the elements of the approved United Nations collaborative partnership arrangement as set out in the annex to decision IPBES-2/8. The annex is presented without formal editing.

Annex

Progress report on the elements of the adopted United Nations Collaborative Partnership Arrangement (decision IPBES-2/8)

I. Dedicated capacity and secondments or otherwise assigned staff are made available by the Organizations to support the secretariat of the Platform

1. UNEP is providing the Platform's secretariat, which is solely accountable to the IPBES Plenary on policy and programmatic matters, with final recruitment ongoing. UNEP is ensuring that interim support is provided during the transition from the secretariat functioning in Nairobi (UNEP HQ) and Cambridge (UNEP-WCMC) to the full operation of the IPBES secretariat in Bonn. UNEP is also seconding a dedicated professional Programme Officer to be part of the IPBES Secretariat, and the recruitment is in its final stages, with interim arrangements being in place since January 2014 to provide support from UNEP. In addition, UNEP has also been working with provision of financial support from China for a dedicated consultant to be seconded to the IPBES Secretariat in Bonn. The consultant joined the IPBES Secretariat in September 2014.
2. UNESCO has offered and, subsequent to the IPBES Bureau approval, accepted to host the technical support unit (TSU) for the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems (ILK-TF) with one full-time equivalent of UNESCO staff. The Letter of Agreement (LOA) between UNEP and UNESCO related to the TSU for ILK-TF was signed in May 2014 and funds for implementation of the activities were transferred to UNESCO in July 2014. Further details on the implementation of the hosting arrangements will be provided through the reporting framework described in the LOA. UNESCO has additionally offered and, pursuant to the IPBES Bureau's acceptance, accepted to provide technical support for the task force on knowledge and data in the form of 25% full-time equivalent of UNESCO staff; this includes expertise from both UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector as well as from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).
3. UNDP was requested through the Busan Outcome in 2010 to play a special role in developing capacity to support the Platform, integrating capacity building with assessment, knowledge generation, and policy-relevant tools and methodologies to help countries tackle science-policy questions critical to sustainable development. BES-Net, the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network, is UNDP's response to this request. Supported by the Norwegian Environment Agency and Swedbio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, BES-Net will also support the implementation of the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).
4. UNDP has appointed a consultant for one year as a Capacity Network Coordinator through its Biodiversity Global Programme. The consultant is supported by three UNDP staff members who together, contribute to the IPBES process, for example as resource people at the meetings of the IPBES task force on capacity-building, and at BES-Net Capacity Network meetings on the margins of IPBES. The UNDP Nairobi Global Policy Centre has also appointed a policy advisor who will provide support to BES-Net as a key performance area. The Centre, with an expanded mandate on strengthening the linkages between environmental sustainability and human development and resilience, has offered programmatic support to BES-Net, and discussions on this are ongoing.

II. Technical and programmatic support is provided by the Organizations for the work programme of the Platform at the global and regional levels on issues related to the mandates and programmes of work of the Organizations

5. The four United Nations bodies have continued to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme as follows:

- (a) Responded to the call for nominations of experts to the various IPBES deliverables undertaken in 2014, including for:
 - Task force on capacity-building (deliverable 1a)
 - Task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems (deliverable 1c)
 - Task force on data and knowledge (deliverable 1d)
 - Expert group to scope a set of regional and sub-regional assessments (deliverable 2b) for Africa, Asia and Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and Western Europe and Others.
 - Expert group for the thematic assessment on pollinators, pollination and food production (deliverable 3a)

- Expert group to scope a thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration (deliverable 3bi).
- Expert group for scoping and delivering a methodological assessment and development of a guide on scenario analysis and modeling of biodiversity and ecosystem services (Deliverable 3c).
- Expert group for scoping of a methodological assessment and development of a guide regarding diverse conceptualization of values of biodiversity and nature's benefits to people including ecosystem services (Deliverable 3d)
- Expert group to develop a guide on and a catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies (Deliverable 4c)

(b) Following consideration and approval of the regional assessments and related capacity building activities by the current session of Plenary, the four United Nations bodies will provide support to the regional structures that may be established by the Platform.

6. Based on requests and resources available, FAO and its decentralised offices could consider providing technical and programmatic support to regional structures that may be established by IPBES to facilitate the implementation of the work programme of IPBES.

7. UNDP will mobilize its network in support of BES-Net, including global teams, global policy centres as well as its regional and national offices. They will be involved in the development of the content of the BES-Net web portal and in the organization of face-to-face capacity building activities. Their capacity building expertise, knowledge of best practices in the field and of challenges in the science-policy-practice arena will therefore be capitalized upon.

8. In addition to the above mentioned support, the four United Nations bodies provided specific support as follows:

(a) United Nations Environment Programme

9. UNEP has been hosting the IPBES interim Secretariat since its establishment and has convened the intergovernmental meetings since 2009. During 2013 – 2014, UNEP has provided in-kind support through staff time and technical support and cash contributions to the work of the Platform, including to the organization of meetings of the Platform, valued at approximately US\$983,546. UNEP has also offered its technical and programmatic support in its core areas of managing and supporting assessments, early warning, knowledge generation, capacity building, and communication activities, including through the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).

10. UNEP continues to provide programmatic and administrative staff to support the work of the Secretariat and will ensure a smooth transition once the Secretariat positions are fully filled. In particular, UNEP is providing specific support to deliverable 3(d) scoping and preliminary guide for the methodological assessment on values. In addition, UNEP-WCMC is providing support as part of the interim technical/secretariat support, and is supporting the delivery of 2(a) guide on production and integration of assessments from and across all scales, and various other documents in preparation for Bureau and MEP meetings and the third session of IPBES Plenary.

11. UNEP, through UNEP-WCMC, provides support to the Sub-Global Assessment Network, which is a community of practice amongst assessment practitioners. During 2014 this has included convening the Fifth SGA Network Annual Meeting in Dubai and an Asia-Pacific workshop in China, as well as sharing experience through a range of other mechanisms. Financial support is provided by the European Union and the Government of Norway and Sweden.

12. UNEP-WCMC is also providing support to the Government of Norway with respect to the task force on capacity-building, pending establishment of the technical support unit at the Norwegian Environment Agency.

13. Decision IPBES-2/7 requested the United Nations Environment Programme to establish a trust fund for the Platform as stipulated in option 2.B in paragraph 19 (b) of the *Note by the Secretariat on Options for the Platform Trust Fund*¹ and to transfer any fund balance from the interim fund structure that was being managed by UNEP to the new trust fund as of 1 January 2014. UNEA-1 approved the establishment of the IPBES Trust Fund and subsequent transfer of all fund balance from the interim fund structure. An update on the status of contributions and expenditures to date as well as on the financial and budgetary arrangements is provided in document IPBES/3/10.

¹ IPBES/2/6

14. UNEP continues to provide periodic updates on IPBES to the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives and also provided an update on IPBES to the first United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP in June 2014.

(b) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

15. The UNESCO in-kind contribution to IPBES in the period 2013 – 2014 encompasses provision of staff time as well as the physical hosting of IPBES expert meetings, notably, the joint regional scoping meetings held from 17 – 22 August 2014 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. This contribution is reflected in document (IPBES/3/10). UNESCO will work with the designated MEP members and the co-chairs of the relevant expert groups in support of Deliverable 3(d) on conceptualization of values of biodiversity and ecosystem services (with particular reference to cultural values); and Deliverable 3(c) related to scenario development, in the context of the IPBES work programme 2014–2018. In addition to provision of expertise, UNESCO plans to make available USD 100,000 to work related to scenario development and USD 50,000 to conceptualization of values. UNESCO looks forward to further guidance on the organization of the first IPBES Knowledge Dialogues series in relation to Deliverable 1(d), as UNESCO sees that it is in relation to this particular task that its contribution to the work of the Task Force on Knowledge and Data can be clearly value-adding. Through its participation in the task force on knowledge and data, UNESCO and its IOC also contribute to Deliverable 4(b) on the development of an information and data management plan.

16. As host of the technical support unit for the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems, UNESCO provides programmatic and administrative support to the implementation of the work of the ILK-TF. This includes supporting the inclusion of ILK within other relevant processes of the IPBES programme of work and ensuring IPBES updates and requests reach networks of experts on and holders of ILK. In the context of UNESCO's participation in the work of the task force on knowledge and data, the Organization also provides expertise and experience in helping the Platform liaise with relevant international research programmes, observing programmes and other assessments.

(c) Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

17. FAO has made an in-kind contribution of US\$ 92,027 in 2012 and US\$ 293,015 in 2013 and a significant in-kind contribution will continue to be provided to the Platform through contribution of FAO technical staff– including through travel and participation at technical meetings - in the areas of biodiversity and ecosystem management, assessment, analysis of policy and legislative environments to support ecosystems service provision, monitoring and public awareness. FAO will consider providing technical and programmatic support to regional structures that may be established by IPBES to facilitate the implementation of its work programme based on requests and resources available.

18. Two FAO staff members were invited to serve as Resource Persons for the fast-track assessment on pollination. They continue to attend relevant meetings of the authors in this role and provide guidance throughout the process. In addition, building on its technical activities and networks established under its Global Action on Pollination Services for Sustainable Agriculture, and through funding provided by the Government of Norway, FAO has been working to contribute knowledge to the assessment on pollinators and pollination. Specifically, the work contributes to enhancing the science-knowledge-policy interface in pollination services by assisting countries to apply the pollination deficit protocol, inviting the contribution of indigenous people and local communities to assessing pollination deficits, building the capacity in participating countries to detect trends and indications from pollination deficits, and facilitating the identification, mapping, modelling and analysis of options for action in areas experiencing such deficits. A meta-analysis of pollination deficit data has been undertaken, a policy matrix and framework have been developed, and a policy paper on mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services with a focus on pollination is being finalized.

19. FAO hosts the secretariat of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and facilitates the implementation of the GSP actions through its regional partnerships and networks. The Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) provides scientific and technical advice on global soil issues. FAO facilitated interactions with IPBES in order to forge mutually fruitful cooperative links between ITPS and IPBES on the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration.

(d) United Nations Development Programme

20. During the three years 2012–2014, UNDP made a total in-kind contribution of US\$ 725,000 in supporting the establishment of the Platform and exploring ways to help implement its programme of work. Through partnerships with the Norwegian Environment Agency and Swedbio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, UNDP has laid the groundwork for formalizing BES-Net as a network of IPBES

member states and organizations involved in capacity-building, and developing a strategy for the BES-Net web portal. Governments and stakeholder organizations participated in informal consultations on the idea of the capacity network at side-events in Hyderabad (CBD COP-11), Jeju (IUCN World Conservation Congress), Panama, Bonn and Antalya (IPBES), as well as the Kuala Lumpur informal capacity building consultation and in Pyeongchang (CBD COP-12). A side event was also organized at the CBD COP-12 with participation from the IPBES Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNESCO. 2015 will see the development of the BES-Net web portal and the first face-to-face capacity-building activities in the form of a science-policy-practice dialogue to be held in Ethiopia on resilience to drought and food security.

21. Various IPBES task forces and experts groups have identified BES-Net as the partner of choice to support the online components of deliverables 1(a) Capacity-building Matchmaking Facility, deliverable 4(a) Catalogue of relevant assessments, and deliverable 4(c) Catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies. In line with decisions taken at the third session of the IPBES Plenary and in support of decision IPBES/2/5, the BES-Net strategy will support the implementation of these deliverables and makes provision for these components to be individual modules of the BES-Net web portal. Further detail of the strategy is available in document IPBES/3/INF/19.

22. UNDP will continue to provide technical backstopping on capacity building, contributing ideas and knowledge to the formulation of the IPBES work programme and its implementation in regions, and contributing to the task force on capacity-building. UNDP representatives attended the two meeting of the IPBES task force on capacity-building held in 2014, as resource people, to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme, and will continue to provide this support into 2015.

III. Exchange of information

(a) Regular consultation and exchange of information

23. The IPBES Secretariat has engaged in regular consultation with UNEP to ensure continuity and coordination in Secretariat support to the Platform.

24. There have been frequent communications and joint activities between the IPBES Secretariat, the IPBES task force on capacity-building and UNDP on the BES-Net strategy and its implementation. In addition, UNDP contributed to an IPBES side event at the CBD COP-12 to provide an update on BES-Net. Informal consultations were conducted also with UNESCO on potential collaborations on the BES-Net portal.

(b) Progress review and planning

(c) Secretariat to provide pre-session documents in a timely and appropriate manner

25. The IPBES secretariat has provided relevant documentation to the focal points of the United Nations bodies for review and inputs in a timely and appropriate manner.

IV. Attendance at meetings of the platform

(a) Attending sessions of the plenaries and participation in meetings of subsidiary bodies of the plenary

26. The four United Nations bodies were invited and participated as observers to the third Bureau and MEP meetings held in March 2014 in Bonn, Germany. In addition, the four United Nations bodies were invited and participated as observers to the fourth MEP meeting held in July 2014 in Bonn, Germany [NB: UNDP sent their apologies due to other commitments].

(b) Secretariat to inform partners in a timely manner of meetings

27. The Secretariat has informed the United Nations Bodies of the upcoming meetings in a timely manner.

V. Staff

(a) 4 Provide and assign staff to the platform's secretariat

28. UNEP is in the final stages of recruiting a dedicated professional Programme Officer to be part of the IPBES Secretariat, and has provided interim support of a Programme Officer since January 2014.

(b) Recruiting of head of secretariat by UNEP Executive Director in consultation with heads of the other partners

29. The recruitment of the head of the secretariat was undertaken by UNEP in consultation with UNESCO, FAO and UNDP. The Executive Secretary of the Platform took office on 4 February 2014 at the IPBES Secretariat offices in Bonn, Germany.

VI. Visibility

(a) Acknowledge partners in all public information documents and communication material and insert their emblems/names along that of the platform.

30. The logos of the United Nations bodies have been included in all IPBES public information documents and communication materials, including the IPBES website.

(b) The IPBES Secretariat has used the IPBES logo and the four bodies' logos in its communication.

31. The IPBES Secretariat has included the emblems/names in all public information documentation and communication material, including the IPBES website. In addition, official documentation for the third session of the IPBES Plenary bears the logos of all UN bodies (as seen in the masthead of this information document).
