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**Ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an
intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity
and ecosystem services**

Kuala Lumpur, 10–12 November 2008

Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda*

**Consideration of an intergovernmental science-policy platform
on biodiversity and ecosystem services:
rules and procedures**

**Rules and procedures of an intergovernmental science-policy
platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Upon its establishment, and subject to its governance structure, the operation of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services will be guided by a set of rules and procedures, which might include the following:

- (a) Rules of procedure;
- (b) Procedures governing reports;
- (c) Rules governing administration.

2. Key points regarding the above rules and procedures are highlighted below.

II. Rules of procedure of the platform

3. Rules of procedure will be necessary for meetings of the platform. Subject to the platform's legal status and institutional arrangements, options might include the following:

- (a) Preparing a new set of rules of procedure for the platform;
- (b) Applying the rules of procedure of an existing intergovernmental body for the purpose of the platform;
- (c) A combination of the above two options.

* UNEP/IPBES/1/1.

A. Participation

4. The modality of participation in the platform, as determined by its governance structure, will need to be reflected in the rules of procedure. Consideration should be given to the following potential members when considering the modality of participation in the platform (see also document UNEP/IPBES/1/4, paragraph 6):

- (a) States that are members of the United Nations or its specialized agencies;
- (b) Regional economic integration organizations that are members of specialized agencies of the United Nations;
- (c) United Nations bodies, funds, programmes, its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency;
- (d) Other intergovernmental organizations and entities, including multilateral environmental agreements;
- (e) Any other body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which is qualified in matters covered by the platform (such as scientific and research institutions, non-governmental organizations representing major groups, or organizations representing the private sector).

5. While bearing in mind the principle that the platform should be inclusive of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and building upon existing networks of scientists and knowledge-holders, the modality of participation in the platform by those potential members listed above might be distinct and differentiated, particularly in respect of decision-making procedures.

B. Observers

6. Depending upon the platform's membership, categories of entities that participate in meetings of the platform as observers might be identified. Rules might be set out to establish the modality of participation by observers in platform meetings.

C. Invited experts

7. Should it become necessary, invitations to meetings of the platform or those of its subsidiary bodies might be extended to a limited number of experts who have specific expertise in issues of relevance to the platform. Specific procedures, if so required, might be set out for this purpose.

D. Meetings

8. Meetings of the platform might normally be held at the seat of the platform's secretariat. The arrangements for several plenary meetings of the platform will need to be identified, including how often those meetings will take place (e.g., every two or three years after the initial meeting).

E. Agenda

9. Rules might be set out to identify the process for the preparation of the provisional agenda for each meeting, for example, by the secretariat under the guidance of the Chair. Standard categories of items for the provisional agenda might be listed in such rules. The timing of the distribution of the provisional agenda (e.g., six weeks before the meeting) might be set out, in addition to procedures for adopting the provisional agenda (e.g., addition, deletion or amendment of items).

F. Representation

10. Subject to the governance structure and membership, rules governing the representation of each participating entity might be set out (e.g., composition of a delegation).

G. Officers

11. A chair might be elected by participants at the platform meeting. Alternatively, two or more co-chairs might be elected. The chair or co-chairs might be assisted by other officers (e.g., vice-chairs and a rapporteur). Those officers might serve as the bureau of the platform.
12. A term for each official should be specified (e.g., for the period from the beginning of a meeting to the next meeting when new officials are elected).
13. Rules might be set out to limit the terms of officials, for example, no more than two consecutive terms.
14. In electing officers, geographical representation should be taken into account. The basis for such geographical representation might be the five United Nations regions or other formulae as applied in specialized agencies or other intergovernmental arrangements.
15. The powers of the chair or co-chairs might be specified in the rules, together with the functions of other officers (e.g., vice-chairs) in the absence of the chair or co-chairs.

H. Subsidiary bodies

16. Some types of subsidiary bodies, including ad hoc bodies, might be established to assist the platform's work (such as task forces and working groups). The modality of participation in and operation of such subsidiary bodies might be specified either in the terms of reference for each body or set out in rules in a general manner.

I. Secretariat

17. Irrespective of institutional arrangements that might be made for a secretariat, the head of the secretariat will be required to arrange for the provision of staff and services required by the platform and its subsidiary bodies within available resources. Such services might include, among other things, making arrangements for relevant meetings, ensuring necessary coordination with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and collection, translation, reproduction, distribution, publication and preservation of meeting documents.

J. Conduct of business

18. As a general rule, meetings will be held in public, unless decided otherwise.
19. A quorum might be specified to open or permit the debate to proceed, or for a decision to be taken. For the purpose of determining quorum, consideration might be given to the circumstances of a regional economic integration organization, where applicable.
20. Rules governing the power of the chair will be set out. These might include the power of the chair to declare the opening and closing of the meeting, preside at the meeting, ensure the observance of the rules of procedure, accord the right to speak, call a speaker to order, rule on a point of order, put questions to a vote and announce a decision.
21. Rules governing motions and procedures dealing with proposals or amendments to proposals might be set out.

K. Voting

22. Subject to the platform's governance structure and the modality of participation therein, each entity so qualified might have one vote.
23. Consideration should be given to the circumstances of a regional economic integration organization on matters within its competence and exercising of its right to vote where applicable.
24. Rules governing decision-making on both procedural and substantive matters, together with procedures concerning the voting process, might be set out.

L. Elections

25. All elections might be held by secret ballot, unless otherwise decided.
26. Rules governing elections processes will be set out.

M. Languages and official records

27. The official language or languages of platform meetings will be specified (e.g., one or all of the six official languages of the United Nations).
28. Arrangements for translation of official documents and interpretation of statements might be specified.

N. Amendment to the rules of procedure

29. The rules of procedure might be amended in the same manner as they are adopted.

III. Procedures governing reports of the platform

30. Elements for the possible procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, approval, adoption and publication of platform reports, modelled on the existing arrangements (such as those under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), might include the following:

A. Overall process for platform reports

31. Such reports are published materials containing the full scientific analysis of biodiversity and ecosystem services changes. Each report may comprise two or more sections including:
 - (a) Summary for decision makers;
 - (b) Optional technical summary;
 - (c) Individual chapters and their executive summaries.
32. Methodology reports are published materials, which provide practical guidelines for decision making.
33. To ensure proper preparation and review, the following steps will be taken:
 - (a) Compilation of governmental and non-governmental focal points and nominees for coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers and review editors;
 - (b) Selection of coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers and review editors;
 - (c) Preparation of a zero-order draft report;
 - (d) Expert review of a zero-order draft report;
 - (e) Preparation of the first-order draft report;
 - (f) Government or expert (peer) review of the first-order draft report;
 - (g) Preparation of the final report;
 - (h) Review and acceptance, adoption or approval of the final report at the plenary.¹

¹ For the purpose of subparagraph (h) above, “acceptance” signifies that the material has not been subjected to line-by-line discussion and agreement, but represents a comprehensive, objective and balanced view of the subject matter. “Adoption” is a process of endorsement section by section (i.e., not line-by-line). “Approval” signifies that the material has been subjected to line-by-line discussion and agreement.

B. Compilation of nominees for authors, reviewers and review editors

34. The secretariat will request all Governments participating in the platform and relevant organizations working in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being to identify appropriate experts to act as coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers or review editors.

35. To facilitate the identification of appropriate experts, Governments and non-governmental stakeholders should designate focal points. The composition of the experts identified by the focal points should ensure, where necessary, balanced geographical representation, including balance between developed countries, developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Information on these experts will be maintained by the secretariat and be available to all participants in the platform.

C. Selection of authors, reviewers and review editors

36. The executive body (e.g., bureau or an executive board) or the science advisory group will select coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors from those experts nominated by Governments and participating organizations. The composition of experts in all categories will reflect the need to aim for a range of views, expertise, peer recognition, gender and geographical representation, taking into account various forms of knowledge. The coordinating lead authors and lead authors may enlist other experts as contributing authors to assist in their work.

D. Preparation of draft reports

37. The coordinating lead authors and lead authors will prepare the zero-order draft. Experts who wish to contribute material for consideration in the first draft should submit it directly to the lead authors. Contributions will be supported as far as possible with references from the peer-reviewed and internationally available literature, and with copies of any unpublished material cited. Clear indications of how to access the latter will be included in the contributions. For material available in electronic format only, a hard copy should be archived and the location where such material may be accessed should be cited.

38. In preparing the first draft, and at subsequent stages of revision after review, lead authors should clearly identify disparate views for which there is significant scientific or technical support, together with the relevant arguments. Technical summaries provided will be prepared under the guidance of relevant working group.

E. Review

39. The purpose of the review process is to ensure that platform reports present a comprehensive, objective and balanced view of the current state of knowledge.

40. Three general principles should govern the review process of the report, which should include the latest scientific findings as comprehensively as possible:

- (a) Circulation will aim to involve as many experts as possible, with particular attention to independent experts (not involved in the preparation of the document) from a broad range of countries;
- (b) The review should be objective, open and transparent;
- (c) Appropriate experts will review material related to scientific, traditional, local, institutional and other forms of knowledge.

41. At least six weeks should be allowed for review by experts and Governments. All written expert and Government review comments will be made available to reviewers upon request during the review process and will be retained in an open archive in a location determined by the platform secretariat.

F. Approval and acceptance of summaries

42. Summary sections of reports accepted by the platform plenary will comprise the global and sub-global summaries for decision makers. It will be subject to simultaneous review by both experts and Governments and to a final line-by-line approval at a session of the plenary. The global and sub-global summaries for decision makers will be prepared concurrently with the main report. Approval of the

summaries for decision makers signifies that they are consistent with the factual material contained in the reports. Coordinating lead authors may be requested to provide technical assistance in ensuring that the documents are consistent. The summaries for decision makers should be formally and prominently described as: "Reports of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services".

IV. Procedures governing administration of the platform

43. Appropriate administrative and financial arrangements will need to be made for the platform, which might be arranged in conjunction with the institutional arrangements of the platform secretariat.

44. In the event that the platform secretariat is provided by one or more organizations, administrative and financial arrangements (such as the establishment and management of a trust fund for the platform) might be made in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations of the respective organizations (e.g., in the case of the United Nations, its financial rules and regulations, staff rules and administrative instructions).
