

Agenda item 1: Opening of the session

**OPENING REMARKS BY**

**Dr Anne Larigauderie  
Executive Secretary of IPBES**

**AT  
IPBES-5  
Bonn, Germany**

**Tuesday 7 March 2017**

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Mr. Chair,  
Mr. Deputy Mayor,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly welcome all of you to our hometown, Bonn, on behalf of the IPBES secretariat!

1. We are very pleased to have here this week more than 620 participants from 115 countries, including Government representatives from 99 of our 126 IPBES member States.
2. This 3rd year of implementation of the work programme has, like the first two, been very rich and intense!
3. The secretariat has organized, over the course of 2016, more than 20 meetings in locations around the world, including here in Bonn.
4. We currently have 900 active experts, who continue to contribute their time and ideas freely and enthusiastically to IPBES. We have calculated that this represents a contribution of at least \$14 million to IPBES since 2014. Our experts continue to be committed because they believe that knowledge can have a real policy impact and that better informed decision making on biodiversity will ultimately make a positive difference to the wellbeing of people and our planet.
5. This year, we have launched work on the global assessment, scheduled to be released in May 2019, in time for the review of the Aichi targets by the CBD in 2020. We have also made good progress with the four regional assessments and on the land degradation assessment. We have continued our innovative work on scenarios and on values. We have also started to disseminate our two Assessments on Pollination and on Scenarios, and have seen their growing uptake and use by Governments, organisations such as the CBD and FAO, as well as by the scientific community. The Pollination Assessment is starting to be used as a basis for policy-making, which is very encouraging and paves the way for the even wider use of our upcoming reports.
6. This past year, new technical support units have also been established in Mexico, the Netherlands and UNEP-WCMC thanks to the generous in-kind support offered by these countries and organisations. We have also been receiving generous technical support since 2016 from IUCN. These come in addition to the units established in 2014 and 2015 in South

Africa, Colombia, Japan, Switzerland, Norway, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, and at UNESCO, whom we warmly thank as well.

7. As a result of all these efforts, the Plenary will be invited to consider a number of important issues.
8. The Plenary will, among other things, consider a new approach for our work on ILK; it will agree on terms of reference for the first review of IPBES. It will also decide on potential new assessments and may launch a process to define a second work programme for IPBES.
9. Additional issues on the agenda of this Plenary include a prototype web site for policy support, a rolling plan for capacity building, and progress in a number of areas including communication, as you may already have noticed, and collaboration with all the stakeholders, in attendance here and around the world, interested in IPBES.

Distinguished Delegates,

10. The secretariat has continued to receive in 2016 the unfailing support from the Federal Government of Germany and, in particular, from the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, as well as from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would like to express to Dr. Paulus the gratitude of the secretariat to Germany for this support.
11. In closing, I would like to wish all delegates a very fruitful and interesting meeting and to thank everyone very much for their kind attention.