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

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

**Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation
of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018****Implementation of the first work programme of the
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services****Report of the Executive Secretary****Introduction**

1. At its second session, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) adopted decision IPBES-2/5, by which it adopted an ambitious first work programme with a sequenced set of deliverables for the period 2014–2018. The work programme was adopted on the understanding that work on specific deliverables would be initiated following further decisions by the Plenary in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of the deliverables of IPBES (decision IPBES-3/3, annex I).

2. At its third, fourth and fifth sessions, the Plenary adopted decisions IPBES-3/1, IPBES-4/1 and IPBES-5/1, respectively, in which it provided further guidance on the implementation of all deliverables of the work programme. In decision IPBES-4/1, the Plenary approved the undertaking of a global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services to be performed over the period from 2016 to mid-2019.

3. The present report has been prepared by the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, to facilitate the consideration by the Plenary of the progress achieved in the implementation of the work programme. As a basis for that consideration, the report provides information on the following matters:

(a) Progress made in 2017 in the implementation of the deliverables set out in the work programme for the period 2014–2018 initiated in decisions IPBES-2/5, IPBES-3/1, IPBES-4/1 and IPBES-5/1;

(b) Update regarding the recruitment of staff members to the secretariat in 2017.

* IPBES/6/1.

I. Progress in the implementation of decisions IPBES-2/5, IPBES-3/1, IPBES-4/1 and IPBES-5/1 on the first work programme

4. IPBES has made substantial progress since the fifth session of the Plenary in implementing the Plenary-approved work programme within the Plenary-approved budget. The Plenary will be presented with five interesting and policy-relevant assessments for review and approval at its sixth session, which have engaged the attention of some 600 experts over three years, and an insightful internal review that highlights the strengths and weaknesses of IPBES and provides ideas to stimulate discussion for a second work programme building on the successes of the first.

5. The community at large has continued enthusiastically to support IPBES through the time and effort contributed by selected experts, a large and diverse set of other in-kind contributions from Governments and organizations, and through contributions by members to the IPBES trust fund and financial support for related activities of IPBES detailed in document IPBES/6/9.

6. One expert group (on policy support tools and methodologies) reconstituted in 2017, one assessment author group (on the global assessment), and two expert groups (on values and on scenarios and models) established in 2016, five assessment author groups (on the regional assessments and on the assessment of land degradation and restoration), established in 2015, and three task forces (on capacity-building, knowledge and data, and indigenous and local knowledge) established in 2014, continued their work in 2017. Altogether, these groups involved some 900 experts in 2017, bringing to 1,300 the total number of experts involved in IPBES since the start of the implementation of the first work programme in 2014. A total of 22 expert meetings were held over that same period.¹ A set of 12 technical support units continued to provide support to various deliverables. More information on technical support for the implementation of the work programme is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/20.

7. The following paragraphs set out information on progress made under each objective of the first work programme of IPBES.

A. Objective 1: Strengthen the capacity and knowledge foundations of the science-policy interface to implement key functions of the Platform

8. Three task forces with technical support units were established in 2014 as part of the first work programme. In 2017, progress was achieved in the following areas:

(a) The task force on capacity-building (deliverables 1 (a) and (b)) made progress in the implementation, together with partners, of the capacity-building rolling plan as requested in decision IPBES-5/1, section II. The task force met in April 2017 in Norway. The IPBES fellowship programme continued to be implemented, with 49 fellows from 37 countries. In the context of the IPBES training and familiarization programme, three writing workshops were held in Norway, South Africa and Turkey, with a view to further building the capacity of IPBES experts to draft chapters and summaries for policymakers. In addition, four regional dialogue meetings were held in Colombia, Ethiopia, Hungary and Japan between June and August 2017, attended by a total of 76 IPBES national focal points, to enhance members' contributions to the finalization of the regional assessments. The Bureau, acting on the advice of the task force, recommends holding a third meeting of the IPBES capacity-building forum, in late 2018, back-to-back with the annual meeting of the capacity-building task force. The forum meeting in 2018 would provide an opportunity to advance cooperation with representatives of current and new partners, including those related to indigenous and local knowledge, and knowledge and data. The work of the task force continued to be supported by the technical support unit based at the Norwegian Environment Agency in Trondheim, Norway, thanks to in-kind support from Norway. Additional information on progress regarding work on capacity-building, is presented in background document IPBES/6/INF/12;

(b) The task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems (deliverable 1 (c)) supported the implementation by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel of the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in response to the request in decision IPBES-5/1, section III. The task force met in Colombia in May 2017. Implementation of the approach in the context of the global assessment included the convening of the indigenous and local knowledge liaison group of the global assessment in Hungary in April 2017; a call for contributions on indigenous and local knowledge; and

¹ These include the ninth and tenth meetings of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, but exclude the sessions of the Plenary.

dialogue meetings between experts of the global assessment and representative networks and organizations of indigenous peoples and local communities and indigenous and local knowledge experts at the sixteenth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, held in New York in April and May 2017; at the fortieth annual conference of the Society of Ethnobiology, held in Montreal in May 2017; at the Global Dialogue on Human Rights and Biodiversity Conservation, co-organized by SwedBio, the Forest Peoples Programme, Natural Justice and the Thematic Group on Governance, Equity and Rights of the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), hosted by the Chepkitale Indigenous Peoples' Development Project, held in Kenya in November 2017; and at the tenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Canada in December 2017. Additional events at meetings involving indigenous peoples and local communities and at scientific conferences were also held to share information on the approach. The task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems also provided guidance on arrangements for the establishment of the participatory mechanism, and a participatory mechanism steering group is currently being established. Work in this area continued to be supported by the technical support unit based at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), thanks to in-kind support from UNESCO. Additional information may be found in the background document on work related to indigenous and local knowledge (IPBES/6/INF/13);

(c) The task force on knowledge and data (deliverables 1 (d) and 4 (b)) continued to provide advice for ongoing assessments, in accordance with the outline workplan for the task force on knowledge and data for 2017 and 2018 set out in annex III to decision IPBES-5/1. Highlights of the progress achieved in implementation include the provision of visual materials for the IPBES core set of indicators to experts for use in IPBES assessments, and the initiation of an approach, including two workshops, to define sets of social and ecological indicators on major themes of the global assessment, held in Hungary in April 2017 and the Republic of Korea in December 2017; the further development of the web-based infrastructure providing resources for experts performing assessments; and the implementation of a process to identify knowledge gaps and to catalyse the generation of new knowledge, beginning with a focus on the IPBES assessment of pollination, pollinators and food production and a workshop on that topic (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, November 2017). Work in this area continued to be supported by the technical support unit based at the National Institute of Ecology (NIE) in Seocheon-gun, Republic of Korea, thanks to in-kind support from the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea. A full progress report is set out in the background document on work related to knowledge and data (IPBES/6/INF/14).

B. Objective 2: Strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services at and across subregional, regional and global levels

9. Progress achieved under objective 2 includes the following outputs:

(a) Further update of the guide on the production of assessments, prepared by the secretariat under the guidance of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in consultation with the Bureau (deliverable 2 (a)), including development of a summary of the guide and an interactive web-based tool in time for the sixth session of the Plenary. During 2017 the guide was used as a basis for briefing assessment authors at the second and third author meetings for the six ongoing assessments. This work continued to be supported by the technical support unit established at the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), thanks to in-kind support from that organization. The guide is a living document to which new modules will be added or modified as needed. Further information on the work related to the guide for assessments is available in document IPBES/6/INF/17;

(b) Final drafts of the four regional and subregional assessments prepared by the assessment author groups (deliverable 2 (b)), for consideration by the Plenary at its sixth session, following the external review by Governments and peers of the second-order drafts of the chapters and the first-order drafts of the summary for policymakers of the assessments between May and July 2017 and the convening of third author meetings for the four assessments in July and August 2017 in Colombia, Czechia, Ethiopia and Japan; the convening of webinars between May and June 2017 explaining the scope of the assessments and the review process; the convening of regional dialogues to strengthen the capacity of Governments to review these assessments and to contribute to their consideration at the sixth session of the Plenary; and the convening of a joint capacity-building workshop dedicated to drafting summaries for policymakers for the co-chairs and coordinating lead authors of the four regional assessments and the land degradation and

restoration assessment in February 2017 in Norway. The Europe and Central Asia assessment held an additional self-funded workshop focused on its summary for policymakers in January 2017. Work in this area continued to be supported by technical support units based at the Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Institute in Bogota, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, in Tokyo, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, in Pretoria, and the Institute of Plant Sciences, University of Bern, Switzerland, thanks to in-kind support from Colombia, Japan, South Africa and Switzerland. A full report on the preparation of the regional assessments is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/7;

(c) First-order drafts of the chapters of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services prepared by the assessment author group (deliverable 2 (c)), and made available for external peer review in mid-2017; the convening of one meeting for each of chapters 2–6 in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom to develop the content of the chapters in early 2017; the convening of a second author meeting in September 2017 in South Africa, to examine the comments received during the peer review and begin preparation of the second-order drafts of the chapters and first-order draft of the summary for policymakers, for their review by Governments and peers from mid-April to mid-June 2018; contribution to the initiation of an approach, including two workshops, to define sets of social and ecological indicators on major themes of the global assessment (see paragraph 8 (c)); implementation of the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in the context of the global assessment (see paragraph 8 (b)); and the recruitment of a consultant to complement the technical support unit, thanks to in-kind support from Germany. A progress report on the preparation of the global assessment is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/11.

C. Objective 3: Strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services with regard to thematic and methodological issues

10. Progress achieved under objective 3 includes the following outputs:

(a) A final draft of the assessment of land degradation and restoration (deliverable 3 (b) (i)), prepared by the assessment author group for consideration by the Plenary at its sixth session, following the external review by Governments and peers of the second-order drafts of the chapters and the first-order drafts of the summary for policymakers of the assessments in May and June 2017, and the convening of a third author meeting in July 2017, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; and the convening of webinars in May 2017 explaining the scope of the assessment and the review process. A full report on the preparation of this assessment is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/2;

(b) Further work by the expert group on scenarios and models (deliverable 3 (c)), in response to decision IPBES-5/1, section VI, regarding the provision of expert advice on the use of existing models and scenarios to support ongoing IPBES assessments, including the convening of a workshop on biodiversity and ecosystem services scenarios for IPBES using shared socioeconomic pathways, in Germany in October 2017, and of a workshop for chapter 5 of the global assessment, in the Netherlands in February 2017; and regarding the catalysis of the development of scenarios and associated models by the broader scientific community, including the convening of a workshop in New Zealand in September 2017 on new visions for nature and nature's contributions to people for the twenty-first century. Work in this area continued to be supported by the technical support unit at PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, thanks to in-kind support from the Netherlands. A progress report is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/15;

(c) Further work by the expert group on values (deliverable 3 (d)), in response to decision IPBES-5/1, section VI, including the provision of support to the consideration of values in the six ongoing assessments of IPBES with, in particular, the convening of one expert meeting in Hungary in April 2017 for the global assessment, contribution to the online tool on multiple conceptualizations of values as part of the catalogue on policy support tools, and the catalysis of activities to promote the integration of values in research projects, with the convening of a workshop in Mexico in November 2017. This work continued to be supported by the technical support unit at the Ecosystems and Sustainability Research Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, thanks to in-kind support from the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity of Mexico and the German Agency for International Cooperation. A progress report is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/18;

(d) The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, in consultation with the Bureau, in response to decision IPBES-5/1, paragraph 4 of section V, evaluated the need for any changes to already approved

scoping documents based on major scientific findings of other Platform assessments, and concluded that there was no such need. In line with decision IPBES-5/6, paragraph 5, the Plenary will be invited to consider, under item 8 of the agenda of its sixth session, the undertaking of the pending thematic assessment on the sustainable use of wild species (deliverable 3 (b) (iii)), the pending methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of biodiversity and nature's benefits to people including ecosystem services (deliverable 3 (d)) and the pending thematic assessment on invasive alien species and their control (deliverable 3 (b) (ii)) (IPBES/6/8). The scoping reports as approved by the Plenary are set out in background documents IPBES/6/INF/8–10, respectively.

D. Objective 4: Communicate and evaluate Platform activities, deliverables and findings

11. Progress achieved under objective 4 includes the following outputs:

(a) Updating and revision of the catalogue of assessments (deliverable 4 (a)) and integration into the new web-based architecture of the catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies, as set out in document IPBES/6/INF/16, supported by the technical support unit at UNEP-WCMC, thanks to in-kind support from that organization;

(b) Further work on the catalogue on policy support tools and methodologies (deliverable 4 (c)) in response to decision IPBES-5/1, section VII, by a reconstituted expert group complemented by resource people from relevant international processes and interested partners, involving several meetings of the task group on the catalogue, held virtually given the lack of resources for an in-person meeting; and the production of a revised catalogue made available to Governments and stakeholders in November 2017 for their review, and its further revision prior to the sixth session of the Plenary. This work continued to be supported by the technical support unit at UNEP-WCMC, thanks to an in-kind offer from that organization. A progress report on the matter is set out in document IPBES/6/INF/16;

(c) Activities in the context of the communication and outreach strategy and collaboration with open-ended networks of stakeholders with regard to the implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy in accordance with decision IPBES-4/4 (deliverable 4 (d)), as set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/19, with technical support for the implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy provided by IUCN, and steps being taken to enter into additional strategic partnerships (IPBES/6/INF/21);

(d) Further work on the review of the effectiveness of IPBES during its first work programme (deliverable 4 (e)), in response to decision IPBES-5/2 and as set out in document IPBES/6/10, including preparation of an internal review report by the internal review team and endorsed by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau for the information of the Plenary at its sixth session, based on the questionnaire (set out in the annex to decision IPBES-5/2) as revised by the Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Panel, following the fifth session, reviewed by members and stakeholders and finalized by the Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Panel (the full report may be found in background document IPBES/6/INF/32); issuance by the Executive Secretary in November 2017 of a call for the nomination of candidates for the review panel; and initiation of a bidding process for an external professional organization to coordinate the review. Information on the outcome of the call and the bidding process is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/33.

(e) Further work by the Committee on Conflicts of Interest, and preparation of a report, as set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/22, in accordance with rule 10 of the implementation procedures of the conflict-of-interest policy set out in annex II to decision IPBES-3/3.

II. Update regarding the recruitment of staff members to the secretariat in 2017

12. In May 2017, a new administrative officer (P-3), responsible for finance, budget and administration, was recruited to replace a staff member who had left in February 2017. The position of a consultant at the G-5 level is currently under recruitment. In decision IPBES-5/6, the Plenary had approved funding for one half of the cost of this position, and Germany has since provided an in-kind cash contribution to enable the recruitment of a full-time staff member to support the further development and maintenance of the data management system that supports the implementation of the IPBES work programme.

**Staffing of the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in 2017**

<i>Position</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Head of secretariat (D-1)	In place since February 2014
Programme Officer (P-4) ^a	In place since March 2015
Communications Officer (P-4)	In place since July 2016
Programme Officer (P-3)	In place since April 2015
Administrative Officer (P-3)	In place since May 2017
Associate Knowledge Management Officer (P-2)	In place since May 2016
Associate Programme Officer (P-2)	In place since February 2016
Administrative support staff member (G-6)	In place since May 2016
Administrative support staff member (G-6)	In place since August 2016
Administrative support staff member (G-5)	In place since July 2016
Administrative support staff member (G-5)	In place since July 2013
Administrative support staff member (G-5)	In place since August 2015
Administrative support staff member (G-5)	Under recruitment

^a In-kind position received from UNEP.