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**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Sixth session**Medellin, Colombia, 18–24 March 2018
Item 5 of the provisional agenda****Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation
of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018****Report on the institutional arrangements established to
operationalize technical support for the implementation of the
work programme****Note by the secretariat**

1. In its decision IPBES-2/5, on the work programme for the period 2014–2018, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau and in accordance with the approved budget set out in the annex to decision IPBES-2/6, on the status of contributions and expenditures to date and the budget for the biennium 2014–2015, to establish the institutional arrangements necessary to operationalize the technical support outlined in the note by the secretariat on establishing institutional arrangements in support of the work programme for the period 2014–2018 (IPBES/2/INF/10).
2. At its third, fourth and fifth sessions, the Plenary provided further guidance regarding the implementation of the first work programme. In its decisions IPBES-3/1, on the work programme for the period 2014–2018, IPBES-4/1, on the work programme of the Platform, and IPBES-5/1, on implementation of the first work programme of the Platform, the Plenary requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau and in accordance with the approved budgets set out in the annexes to decisions IPBES-3/2, IPBES-4/2 and IPBES-5/6 respectively, on financial and budgetary arrangements, to establish the institutional arrangements necessary to operationalize the technical support required for the work programme.
3. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, sets out information on the various institutional arrangements established between 2014 and 2017.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 28 February 2018.

** IPBES/6/1.

Annex

Institutional arrangements established from 2014 to 2017 to operationalize technical support for the implementation of the work programme

1. Annex I to decision IPBES-2/5 specifies that technical support needed for the coordination of the deliverables will in principle be provided by the secretariat. The Plenary at its second session however recognized that the needs for coordinating the work programme deliverables will exceed the capacity of the secretariat in its planned composition. The Plenary therefore agreed that a cost-effective way to provide the necessary additional technical support could be through different arrangements, such as technical support units, based on in-kind offers from governments and other stakeholders.
2. A technical support unit is defined as a dedicated team, or dedicated individual, providing support to expert groups, or task forces to implement the IPBES work programme. “Dedicated” implies clearly defined roles, responsibilities and full commitment to supporting the IPBES work programme deliverables.
3. Technical support units provide scientific, technical and organizational support, for the delivery of one or more of the agreed deliverables. They work under time-bound and task-specific partnership agreements approved by the Bureau. All technical support units form part of the secretariat and are under the authority of the Executive Secretary.
4. The following technical support units (TSUs) have been established outside of the secretariat at the following institutions, thanks to their support:
 - (a) In place since 2014:
 - (i) Norwegian Environment Agency in Trondheim, Norway, to support the work of the task force on capacity building (deliverable 1(a) and 1(b)), providing two full-time professional positions and one full-time administrative position as well as office space and infrastructure;
 - (ii) UNESCO in Paris, France, to support the work of the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems (deliverable 1(c)), providing several part-time professional and administrative positions as well as office space and infrastructure;
 - (iii) Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and the National Institute of Ecology (NIE) in Seocheon-gun, Republic of Korea, to support the work of the task force on knowledge and data (deliverables 1(d) and 4(b)), providing several part-time professional and administrative positions as well as office space and infrastructure at NIE; and
 - (iv) Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) in Bilthoven, The Netherlands, funded by three Ministries, to support the work of: the expert group delivering the methodological assessment on scenarios and models (deliverable 3(c), 2014-2016), the expert group implementing phase 2 of the work on scenarios and models (2016-2019); the authors involved in chapters 4 and 5 of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services (deliverable 2(c), 2016-2019). The agreement includes three full-time staff including professional and administrative positions as well as office space and infrastructure.
 - (b) In place since 2015:
 - (i) Alexander von Humboldt Institute in Bogota, Colombia to support the production of the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas, providing two full time technical staff members and one administrative support staff as well as office space and infrastructure (deliverable 2(b));
 - (ii) Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), in Tokyo, Japan, to support the production of the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Asia and the Pacific, providing two full time technical

- staff members and two administrative support staff as well as office space and infrastructure (deliverable 2(b));
- (iii) Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), in Pretoria, South Africa, to support the production of the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa, providing several full and part-time technical and administrative staff members as well as office space and infrastructure (deliverable 2(b));
 - (iv) Institute of Plant Sciences, University of Bern, Switzerland, to support the production of the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Europe and Central Asia, providing two full time technical staff members as well as office space and infrastructure (deliverable 2(b)); and
 - (v) The Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) of the United Nations Environment Programme, in Nairobi, Kenya to support the work of the expert group on values, providing one technical support staff as well as office space and infrastructure (deliverable 3(d); ended in May 2016).
- (c) In place since 2016:
- (i) Institute for Ecosystems Research and Sustainability, National Autonomous University of Mexico (IIES-UNAM), Morelia, Mexico, to support the work of the expert group on values (deliverable 3(d)), providing one part-time technical staff member as well as office space and infrastructure; and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany (BMUB) through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)/ValuES, funding one full time position since 2016, and, in addition, one half time position, since March 2017, both located at UNAM; and
 - (ii) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) providing technical support, through one half-time staff member, for the implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy (deliverable 4(d)).
- (d) In place since 2017:
- (i) The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Center, to support work on the guide on the production of assessments (deliverable 2(a)), the catalogue of assessment (deliverable 4(a)), and on policy support tools and methodologies (deliverable 4(c)), by providing three part-time staff members as well as office space and infrastructure.
5. The following technical support was provided to the secretariat, in Bonn, Germany:
- (a) In place from 2014 to 2016:
 - (i) A consultant to support the delivery of the regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services (deliverable 2(b)), through in-kind contribution from China (ended in December 2016); and
 - (ii) A consultant to support the delivery of the assessment on pollination and pollinators associated with food production (deliverable 3(a)), covered by the work programme budget (ended in September 2016).
 - (b) In place since 2015:
 - (i) A consultant to support the delivery of the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration deliverable 3(bi)), covered by the work programme budget.
 - (c) In place since 2016:
 - (i) A consultant to support the delivery of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, deliverable 2(c)), covered by the work programme budget.

- (d) In place since 2017:
 - (i) A consultant to support the delivery of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, deliverable 2(c)), supported by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nation Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) of Germany.
- (e) To begin in 2018:
 - (i) The Government of France supporting one full time professional fund raiser to begin early February 2018; and
 - (ii) The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nation Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) of Germany providing financial support to complement the half-time position of information systems assistant and allow the recruitment of a full-time G-5 staff member.

6. Agreements have been established or are currently being finalized on all institutional arrangements mentioned above. The appropriate legal instruments were put in place when transfer of funds from the IPBES trust fund to an external TSU was necessary (to all TSUs besides NIE and UNAM), while a Memorandum of Understanding or a Project Cooperation Arrangement was drafted when no transfer of funds was necessary (NIE, UNAM). A United Nations consultant contract was established for the regional assessments (deliverable 2(b)) consultant, and Individual Contractor Agreements through the United Nations Office for Project Services for the consultants working on the thematic assessments and the global assessment and providing technical support within the secretariat in Bonn. A non-reimbursable loan agreement of personal services from sources external to the United Nations was established between France and the United Nations Environment Programme.
