



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

Paris, 29 April–4 May 2019

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 communications and outreach strategy
and the stakeholder engagement strategy****Note by the secretariat**

1. The Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), in its decision IPBES-3/4, on communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership, took note of the communications and outreach strategy set out in annex I to that decision and requested the secretariat, subject to the availability of funds, to undertake the activities described in the initial implementation plan set out in the appendix to annex I. An update on that implementation was noted by the Plenary in its decision IPBES-4/4.
2. In its decision IPBES-3/4, the Plenary also welcomed the revised draft stakeholder engagement strategy and requested the secretariat to undertake activities to implement it in collaboration with an open-ended network of stakeholders. In sections II and III of decision IPBES-4/4, the Plenary requested the Executive Secretary to collaborate with open-ended networks of stakeholders, to undertake the activities set out in the initial implementation plan of the stakeholder engagement strategy, and to finalize the institutional arrangements needed to establish such strategic partnerships.
3. Subsequent reporting by the secretariat on progress on communications activities and stakeholder engagement, outlined in documents IPBES/5/9, IPBES/5/INF/15, IPBES/5/INF/16 and IPBES/6/INF/19, was noted by the Plenary at its fifth and sixth sessions.
4. The annex to the present note sets out information on the further implementation of the communications and outreach strategy (part I) and on the implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy (part II). The annex is presented without formal editing.

* IPBES/7/1/Rev.1.

Annex

I. Implementation of the communications and outreach strategy

A. Day-to-day communication

1. *Videos.* Six new IPBES outreach videos were professionally produced in 2018 – a six and a half-minute video on the IPBES Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration, four videos ranging in length from five to five and a half minutes on each of the four IPBES Regional Assessment Reports and a ten and a half-minute video covering all four of the IPBES Regional Assessment Reports. All six videos were separately subtitled in all of the official United Nations languages, to increase their reach and impact, and have also been made available as shorter, stand-alone segments on the IPBES social media platforms. This video material has been widely shared among all IPBES stakeholders to support the uptake of the Assessment Reports. There have also been a number of short videos produced by the secretariat on issues ranging from the external review process, to the new leadership and members of the MEP and the importance of the inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge in the work of IPBES. The secretariat is also working with a professional video agency to produce ‘B-roll’ video material to amplify the reach of the IPBES global assessment report that is planned to be launched at the seventh session of the Plenary, as well as a number of shorter video clips for use on social media to further promote the launch and subsequent uptake of the global assessment.

2. *Traditional media.*

(a) The maintenance and expansion of the central consolidated database of IPBES environment and science ‘traditional’ media contacts have been a focus of the secretariat over the past year. Through direct research and networking, close collaboration with key IPBES stakeholders and the assistance of a professional public relations firm, the number of IPBES contacts has increased by more than 250%, from about 2,800 in January 2018 to more than 7,200 at present. An emphasis of this expansion has been to include more ‘top tier’ media, non-English speaking outlets and more broadcast, especially TV, journalists, editors and producers. Resources permitting, this will be augmented in 2019 by the procurement of access to one of the world’s largest proprietary contact databases of ‘beat’-specific journalists and influencers.

(b) The secretariat has also built on the success of the more collaborative approach to traditional media with IPBES’s four core United Nations partners, stakeholders and key strategic allies, which was outlined in IPBES/6/INF/19. This has been achieved by expanding the number of these informal communication partnerships and working even more closely together on uptake events, joint outreach initiatives and common messaging for both social and traditional media, especially before and during major global and regional events related to biodiversity issues.

(c) Professional global, regional and national media monitoring has continued, across a range of languages, with ‘breaking news’ alerts for immediate action on communications risks and opportunities, as well as real-time IPBES-specific mentions and developing news that relates to the IPBES work programme. This will be further strengthened in 2019 through the addition, resources permitting, of more comprehensive print-specific monitoring.

(d) In terms of ‘reach’ IPBES achieved exceptional results in 2018, with 6,553 separate news ‘hits’, in 37 languages, across 2,688 different news outlets, in 126 countries. Although, as expected, the majority of these hits were focused in the period just before and after the launches of the IPBES regional assessment reports and the land degradation and restoration assessment report, almost 28% of all hits occurred in January to February and April to December. Even excluding all hits in March – the month of the launches – IPBES still increased traditional media hits by more than 88% compared to the total number of hits in 2017. This is a strong indication that traditional media interest in IPBES and its work remained strong, even after the initial news wave attributable to the launches had subsided.

3. *Social media.*

(a) On the basis of a comprehensive integrated digital communication and outreach strategy, IPBES saw very steep social media growth in 2018 across all relevant metrics. For the 12 months ending May 2018, the IPBES follower/fan base grew by 383% on Facebook, 83% on Twitter, 235% on YouTube and 811% on Instagram – in addition to establishing an initial presence on LinkedIn. In terms of ‘reach’, IPBES increased by more than 2,800% on Facebook, 178% on Twitter and 311% on YouTube (no baseline data was available for comparisons on Instagram and LinkedIn).

On perhaps the most important metric – engagement – IPBES saw 649% growth on Facebook, 100% growth on Twitter, more than 1,600% on Instagram and 98% on YouTube (no baseline data was available for comparison on LinkedIn). In the same period, the IPBES website saw traffic directly driven by social media sources increase by 134% and from October 2017 to May 2018 the secretariat’s comprehensive social media monitoring tools recorded in excess of 55,000 mentions of IPBES on social media. This growth significantly exceeded all annual social media targets and has remained at high levels throughout the rest of 2018.

4. *Outreach materials.* As part of efforts to strengthen uptake of the IPBES assessments and the impact of the wider IPBES work programme, 2018 saw the secretariat produce and ship to key events in every region, more than 3,500 brochures (in all United Nations languages), almost 2,000 summaries for policymakers, more than 800 summary guides to IPBES assessments, in excess of 550 USB drives, over 400 posters, as well as a range of additional branded collateral items. These were augmented by electronic presentations to introduce IPBES and its work programme, as well as presentations on each of the five IPBES assessment reports launched in 2018.

5. *Impact tracking.* To help the IPBES community to present compelling examples of specific impacts of IPBES’s work, the secretariat conceptualized, designed and implemented a new communications tool in 2018 – the IPBES impact tracking database (TRACK). This fully searchable public online resource aims to collate a wide range of good indicative examples of IPBES impact at different scales, in different geographical areas, and across the whole work programme on, among others, decision-making, policy, actions, approaches and investments. With more than 60 separate impacts already tracked, the tool is also open for public submissions, and can be accessed at www.ipbes.net/impact-tracking-view

6. *Website.* The secretariat, with input from the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies, has reviewed the structure and functionality of the website and elaborated a scope of work. A contractor has been hired to help implement the scope of work with a view of improving the graphic and user interface design of the IPBES website over a period of 5 months. Existing functionality has been further elaborated and additional features like the forum in support of the web conference on land degradation and restoration knowledge gaps and needs were also set up. The website remains a critical tool and resource and has been used for data collection, stakeholder engagement and dissemination of information. The website receives an average of 15,000 monthly visitors.

B. Preparations for the launch of the global assessment report

7. As detailed in IPBES/6/INF/19 (appendix IV), the secretariat has adopted a three-phase communications strategy to promote IPBES assessment reports before, during and after their launches. This approach has again been adopted for outreach on the planned launch of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services – expected to be considered by the Plenary during its seventh session.

8. One of the most important elements of the first (‘Pre-Launch’) phase has been the crafting and dissemination of the message ‘primer’, with essential information about the assessment, designed to help decision makers, stakeholders, media and other interested parties understand the scope, scale and significance of the assessment – but not to preview any of the draft key messages or policy options. The primer has been translated into all six official United Nations languages and these can be accessed on and downloaded from the IPBES website at <http://www.ipbes.net/ipbes7-primers> Another key element of this phase has been initial media and spokesperson training, as well a number of targeted missions by the secretariat to Washington, D.C., Paris and London to brief key media outlets, editors and influencers about the launch – with a concentration on newswire services and broadcast outlets. There has also been significant progress during this phase in building informal communication partnerships with IPBES allies, advocates and stakeholder organizations, both to assist in the dissemination of the primer and to build momentum for the Launch and Post-Launch phases.

9. The focus for the second (‘Launch’) phase will be the planned media launch of the approved Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the global assessment report – expected to be on Monday, 6 May 2019, which will also be webcast live. This will be preceded by a period of approximately 48-hours during which the SPM, the media release and a range of media resource materials will be made available, under strict embargo, to pre-accredited media, allies and advocates. The embargo will be lifted at the start of the media launch event – at which point the materials will be shared with all IPBES media contacts, allies and advocates. Other key elements of this second phase will include

extended media and spokesperson training, promotion of the official opening ceremony and a comprehensive social media campaign anchored around #IPBES7 and the #GlobalAssessment report.

10. In the third ('Post-Launch') phase, the communications focus will shift from media outreach to the promotion of uptake of the assessment report. This will entail, among others, the production by the secretariat, of the laid out electronic and printed copies of the SPM, outreach video material and presentations to support subsequent uptake events. This phase will also see an emphasis on message and outreach alignment with the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to prepare for the launch of the Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 (GBO-5) at its fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-15) in China, given the decision of the CBD Parties to use the IPBES assessment outcomes as an important evidence base for the assessment of progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in GBO-5.

II. Implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy

11. Implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy in 2018 has emphasized the importance of strengthening and expanding the national IPBES platforms and the self-organized networks of IPBES stakeholders.

12. The creation of specific IPBES website architecture to support the hosting and maintenance of the online presence of the self-organized networks of IPBES stakeholders was completed in 2018, with the Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONET) having now taken up this opportunity and currently in the process of populating membership lists, file-sharing and intra-network online forums. It is expected that, in 2019, this process will be expanded to include additional self-organized networks and to facilitate inter-network collaboration as well as closer integration into the newly-established IPBES communities of practice.

13. Active stakeholder engagement was also a key element in the success of the more than 100 separate uptake events held in all regions since the launch of the five IPBES assessment reports in 2018 (but also focusing on uptake of the pollination and scenarios assessment reports as well).

14. Many of these uptake events included elements of capacity-building, policy support and knowledge and data work – in addition to the focus on uptake of the assessment outcomes. The work of the IPBES national platforms has been especially effective in this regard, and a focus of the secretariat's stakeholder engagement work in 2019 will be to support the growth of existing and establishment of new national and regional platforms.

15. Following the launch of the IPBES global assessment report, the secretariat will work with all IPBES stakeholders to ensure uptake events for the report that also attempt to address the largest identified gaps in the IPBES stakeholder community – geographically and in terms of under-represented disciplines and groupings. It will be assisted in this effort through the technical and in-kind support of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

16. The secretariat also plans, resources permitting, to prepare and launch a second IPBES stakeholder survey in the second half of 2019 – to help track progress since the first survey in 2016 and to update the mapping and especially the gap-analysis of the IPBES stakeholder community.
