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

Paris, 29 April–4 May 2019

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services****Overview of the process followed for the production of the  
global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services****Note by the secretariat**

1. In section III of its decision IPBES-4/1, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) approved the undertaking of a global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of the IPBES deliverables, as set out in annex I to decision IPBES-3/3, and outlined in the scoping report for a global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, set out in annex I to decision IPBES-4/1.
2. In section IV of its decision IPBES-6/1, the Plenary requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to facilitate discussions among the co-chairs of the global and regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the assessment of land degradation and restoration, Governments and other stakeholders on the lessons learned from the ways in which the concept of “nature’s contributions to people” had been introduced and used in the regional assessments and in the assessment of land degradation and restoration and how it had been received, in order to assist Governments and other stakeholders in their review of the second draft of the global assessment, noting that the concept was an evolving one.
3. In section IV of the same decision, the Plenary requested the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, working with the co-chairs and coordinating lead authors of the global assessment, to ensure that the results of the completed regional, thematic and methodological assessments, as well as any other relevant assessments undertaken by other international bodies, were taken into account in the preparation and finalization of the global assessment. The Plenary requested the co-chairs of the global assessment to work with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to ensure that the policy questions set out in the scoping report of the assessment were addressed in the draft summary for policymakers.
4. At its seventh session, the Plenary will be invited to approve the summary for policymakers set out in document IPBES/7/3. It will be also invited to accept the chapters of the global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services set out in document IPBES/7/INF/1, which will be revised after the seventh session to ensure consistency with the summary for policymakers as approved.
5. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, sets out a report on the process followed for the production of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

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\* IPBES/7/1/Rev.1.

## Annex

### Overview of the process followed for the production of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services

#### I. Context

1. The overall scope of the global assessment is to critically assess the state of knowledge on past, present and possible future multi-scale interactions between people and nature. The assessment examines the status, trends (past and future), drivers, values and response options regarding nature (including terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine biodiversity, ecosystem structure and functioning), nature's contributions to people (including ecosystem goods and services), and their interlinkages. The assessment also highlights thresholds, feedback, resilience, opportunities, synergies and trade-offs between different responses. The assessment furthermore analyses the contributions of biodiversity, ecosystems and their benefits to people, long-term well-being and sustainable development as expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals, recognizing the synergies and trade-offs associated with meeting multiple goals, and the coupling between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. This analysis is undertaken in the context of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, its 2050 Vision and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.
2. The overall objective of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services is to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem functioning and ecosystem goods and services at a range of spatial scales from the local to global levels by providing the knowledge needed for informed decision-making by Governments, the private sector and civil society. The global assessment provides users (Governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society, including indigenous peoples and local communities and non-governmental organizations) with a relevant, credible, legitimate, authoritative, evidence-based, holistic and comprehensive analysis based on the current state of scientific and other knowledge systems.
3. The global assessment was carried out by a team of approximately 145 interdisciplinary experts over a period of approximately three years between 2016 and 2019. The assessment report is composed of the summary for policymakers together with the six chapters and some front and back matters, which will be added following the seventh session of the Plenary. The assessment report will be laid out and posted on the IPBES web site after this seventh session.

#### II. The assessment team

##### A. Dedicated Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau members

4. In line with the procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables (decision IPBES-3/3, annex I), the following dedicated members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau oversaw the production of the assessment report on behalf of the Panel and the Bureau:

**Bureau:**

Robert Watson (Chair IPBES)  
 Ivar Baste  
 Asghar Mohammadi Fazel  
 Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar (since the sixth session of the Plenary)

**Multidisciplinary Expert Panel:**

From the fourth to the sixth session of the Plenary:

Paul Leadley  
 Unai Pascual

Since the sixth session of the Plenary:

Luthando Dziba (Co-Chair Multidisciplinary Expert Panel)  
 Markus Fischer  
 Madhav Karki  
 Isabel Pinto  
 Katalin Török  
 Bibiana Vilá

5. The management committee for the assessment consisted of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau members mentioned above, the co-chairs of the assessment, the technical support unit, as well as a representative of the IPBES secretariat. Management committee meetings were held, usually remotely, at regular intervals.

## B. Experts of the global assessment

6. The assessment expert group was led by three co-chairs, who oversaw the preparation of the assessment report and ensured that it was completed to a high standard. Each chapter was coordinated by two to five coordinating lead authors, and produced by a group of lead authors, who were responsible for various parts of the chapter. Each chapter had one to two review editors, who ensured that all substantive comments were afforded appropriate consideration and advised lead authors on how to handle controversial issues, if any existed. In addition, one to two fellows were also part of each chapter team. Fellows are experts in the early stages of their careers, who collaborated with the coordinating lead authors and lead authors in developing sections of the chapters, under the guidance of one of the experts who acted as their mentor, as part of the IPBES fellowship programme.

7. The co-chairs, and a large proportion of the coordinating lead authors and lead authors were selected in 2016 from the original pool of nominations for experts made by Governments and stakeholders (see IPBES/5/INF/8). Additional coordinating lead authors and lead authors were selected using the procedure for filling gaps in the availability of experts (annex I to decision IPBES-4/3), in order to reach a satisfactory gender, geographical and disciplinary balance. During 2016 and 2017 this procedure was also used to select review editors and to replace a small number of experts who were unable to make their contribution as planned due to unforeseen circumstances. Fellows were selected through a separate application process.

8. The following table provides information on the number of experts selected for this assessment. A total of 145 experts prepared the report, including 63 nominated using the gap filling procedure. Experts selected from those presented by relevant stakeholders did not exceed twenty per cent in line with the procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables. The full list of all experts, whose composition is indicated in the table below, is provided on the IPBES website: <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-experts>.

Co-chairs	Coordinating lead authors	Lead authors	Review editors	Fellows	Total number of experts including fellows
3	24	87	15	16	145

## C. The technical support unit

9. The Bureau, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, agreed at their sixth meetings (October 2015 in Bonn, Germany), that the technical support unit would be based at the IPBES secretariat in Bonn, Germany, and composed of a head, seconded by one programme officer. The head of the technical support unit, Ms. Hien T. Ngo, and the programme officer, Mr. Maximilien Guèze, fulfil the aforementioned roles from the headquarters of the IPBES secretariat, as consultants.

10. The role of the technical support unit is to provide scientific, technical and organizational support toward the delivery of the assessment report. In addition, the role of the technical support unit is to liaise with relevant task forces and other technical support units of ongoing assessments to ensure that cross-cutting issues are properly addressed.

## III. Key steps toward the production of the assessment

11. A description of key steps towards the production of this assessment, undertaken after the sixth session of the Plenary is provided below. A detailed description of the steps taken before the sixth session can be found in IPBES/5/INF/8 and IPBES/6/INF/11.

### A. Second external review (by Governments and experts)

12. The second external review of the assessment report by Governments and experts was conducted from 30 April to 9 July 2018. The comments received were collated by the technical

support unit and shared with the authors and review editors before the third and final author meeting in July-August 2018. A total number of approximately 9,500 comments, from this second review, was received for all six chapters and the summary for policymakers, from about 300 individuals, of which 26 were Governments (and the European Union on behalf of its 28 Member States).

## **B. Third author meeting**

13. The third and final author meeting took place at the Senckenberg Biodiversität und Klima Forschungszentrum (BiK-F) in Frankfurt, Germany, from 29 July to 3 August 2018, with additional support from the German Government and with in-kind support from Senckenberg BiK-F. The objectives were for the experts to address the external review comments and to finalize the development of the assessment chapters. Co-chairs and coordinating lead authors also dedicated two days (3 and 4 August 2018) to the finalization of the summary for policymakers, with support from management committee members. Further homogenization of policy-relevant issues across chapters and the summary for policymakers were completed during the summary for policymakers' meeting in Frankfurt, Germany.

## **C. Production of the final draft of the assessment report**

14. The six chapters of the assessment underwent two external reviews by experts and Governments. The summary for policymakers was reviewed by Governments and experts in 2018 (as part of the second external review) and by Governments again, during the final review by Governments, prior to the seventh session of the Plenary. The six chapters received a combined total of approximately 10,200 comments from 442 expert reviewers, from both reviews. The summary for policymakers received approximately 3,500 comments, from about 225 expert reviewers, of which 26 were Governments (and the European Union on behalf of its 28 Member States). The global assessment, overall, thus received a total of 13,700 comments.

15. These comments were considered by the authors when producing the final draft. The entire process was supported by the review editors, who helped the authors with interpreting review comments and ensured that they were addressed appropriately by the authors. Responses to comments from both the first and second review phases will be published on the IPBES website after the approval of the summary for policymakers and the acceptance of the chapters, following the seventh session of the Plenary.

## **D. Addressing the requests made by the Plenary at its sixth session**

16. The Plenary at its sixth session requested in decision IPBES-6/1, section IV, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to facilitate discussions among the co-chairs of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, the regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the assessment of land degradation and restoration, Governments and other stakeholders on the lessons learned from the ways in which the concept of "nature's contributions to people" had been introduced and used in the regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and in the assessment of land degradation and restoration, and how it had been received, in order to assist Governments and other stakeholders in their review of the second draft of the global assessment, noting that the concept was an evolving one.

17. To address this request, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau convened an IPBES consultation meeting in Bonn, Germany, from 4 to 6 June 2018, attended by 48 IPBES national focal points and the European Union on behalf of its 28 Member States, members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, and the co-chairs and four coordinating lead authors and lead authors of the global assessment, to discuss the relevance and usefulness of the nature's contributions to people concept. This meeting was organised during the second review period of the global assessment. The meeting concluded that the global assessment would use both nature's contributions to people and ecosystem services terminologies, where appropriate, throughout the global assessment in order: i) to reflect the policy questions in the scoping report, ii) to reflect the evolution of thinking and the scientific debate over the ecosystem service concept, and iii) to embrace negative nature's contributions to people.

18. During that same meeting, the advances and main results of the summary for policymakers were presented by the co-chairs of the global assessment and part of the coordinating lead authors (key chapters with policy content) to national focal points. Comments were received on content and concepts in terms of policy relevance, key messages and cross-cutting topics and gaps. A final table of aspirations and options was suggested to ensure that policy questions are addressed. Additional comments were received on policy-adapted style and language.

19. Furthermore, in the same decision IPBES-6/1, the Plenary requested the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, working with the co-chairs and coordinating lead authors of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, to ensure that the results of the completed regional, thematic and methodological assessments, as well as any other relevant assessments undertaken by other international bodies, are taken into account in the preparation and finalization of the global assessment. The co-chairs reached out to 11 experts, including regional and land degradation and restoration assessments co-chairs and authors to review the draft global assessment summary for policymakers with targeted requests and to review any relevant sections of the chapters that had significant input from the regional assessment or from the land degradation and restoration assessment to align content and build from these past assessments. This group of experts, coined informally as the “regional and land degradation and restoration assessments ambassadors” was also requested to interact directly with the coordinating lead authors on alignment of content. As a result of their review or contribution, they were listed either as an expert reviewer or a contributing author. Furthermore, Markus Fischer, Luthando Dziba and Madhav Karki, who were elected to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, and are former co-chairs of several regional assessments, were additionally requested, in their capacity as members of the Panel, to review the summary for policymakers in multiple iterations to ensure that the global assessment built upon the regional assessments’ key findings.

20. The Plenary requested the co-chairs of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services to work with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to ensure that the policy questions set out in the scoping report of the assessment are addressed in the draft summary for policymakers. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, especially those members serving on the global assessment management committee, were asked to review the summary for policymakers several times during the course of its development, including in preparation for both the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (25-29 June 2018, and 22-26 October 2018). The 12<sup>th</sup> meetings invited the co-chairs of the global assessment to allow for an in-person interaction with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau, to in particular ensure consideration of the policy-relevant questions from the scoping report in the summary for policymakers. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau also participated in an internal review late December of a close to final draft of the summary for policymakers.

## **E. The indigenous and local knowledge approach in the global assessment**

21. The global assessment expert group interacted with the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems through to organize side events, dialogues and the online call for contributions for the global assessment, in order to implement the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge to the global assessment, following its approval. Following the approval (decision IPBES-5/1, section III, and annex II).

22. The global assessment organized a series of events and activities led by a subgroup of authors which formed the “indigenous and local knowledge liaison group”, summarised below:

(a) An indigenous and local knowledge online call for contributions, translated into three languages (English, French and Spanish), took place for five months from 25 July – 20 December 2017 in order to mobilize a wider network of individuals and people who would like to contribute and share information on topics being covered by the global assessment which might not otherwise be generated or discovered in traditional approaches to literature review. This online call for contributions resulted in almost 1200 relevant publications or pieces of evidence.

(b) Participation (Eduardo Brondízio (co-chair)) in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> sessions of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (24 April – 03 May 2017 and 16 to 27 April 2018, respectively) both held in New York, USA. Side events and statements were conducted at these sessions following an invitation to IPBES to continue to inform the Forum about the progress of its work.

(c) Three large dialogues were organized in order to contribute to the work of the global assessment:

- (i) In Eldoret, Kenya, Africa: Dialogue on Human Rights and Biodiversity Conservation, from 20 to 23 November 2017, with co-organizers SwedBio at Stockholm Resilience Centre, Forest Peoples Programme, Natural Justice, IUCN CEESP-TGER and with local hosts Chepkitale Indigenous Peoples Development Project;
- (ii) In Montreal, Canada, back-to-back with the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the

- Convention on Biological Diversity (9 December 2017). This was co-organized with the CBD, International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN), International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIF BES), and the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP);
- (iii) In Helsinki, Finland: the IPBES Dialogue Workshop on Arctic Indigenous and Local Knowledge, held from 06 to 08 June 2018. It was funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment, with support from the IPBES, the University of Helsinki and the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research (UfZ, Germany).

(d) More information on the specific approach and steps taken to implement the approach in the global assessment can be found in IPBES/5/INF/4 and IPBES/6/INF/13. Further details on these activities since the sixth session of the Plenary can be found in IPBES/7/INF/8.

## **F. Collaboration with other IPBES task forces and expert groups**

23. In addition to the support received from the task force and technical support unit on indigenous and local knowledge set out above, the global assessment received support from other IPBES task forces and expert groups, and from their respective technical support units as follows.

24. The global assessment expert group collaborated with the task force on data and knowledge, who helped facilitate the use of core indicators and related data and suggested visuals. The technical support unit on knowledge and data organized a workshop attended by experts of the global assessment on socio-economic indicators (5-7 December 2017, Seoul, Republic of Korea). This approach for the use of a bundle of indicators was piloted during that meeting and some of the results were subsequently used within the global assessment (IPBES/6/INF/14).

25. The global assessment expert group received assistance from the expert group on values, who assisted in reviewing the assessment chapters during the external review rounds. The technical support unit on values co-organized two workshops attended by experts of the global assessment to assist them in developing content (integration of multiple conceptualizations of values, Budapest 3-5 April 2017, and workshop to catalyse the integration of multiple conceptualizations of values, 18 -20 June 2018, Morelia, Mexico).

26. The global assessment experts from chapter 4 and 5 received support from the technical support unit on scenarios and models, following the offer by PBL – the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency to assist the global assessment for its work on scenarios and models, approved by the Bureau. The technical support unit on scenarios and models convened the chapter 4 and 5 meetings for the global assessment in early 2017.

27. The task force for capacity building, assisted the assessment through the organization of the fellowship programme and of the first workshop to develop the summary for policymakers (Rosendal, Norway, 23-25 February 2018). The technical support unit on capacity-building co-organized the workshop with IPBES national focal points (Bonn, Germany, 4-6 June 2018) on policy relevance and discussion on nature's contributions to people.

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