



IUCN VISION FOR AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES)

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

1. IUCN strongly welcomes the considerable progress already achieved to establish the platform including the Busan Outcome which is fully recognized by governments as embodying the basic principles for the future operationalization of the platform and congratulates all governments and other relevant stakeholders for their efforts to date.
2. This paper lays out IUCN's position on issues in the agenda of the first session of the plenary meeting. IUCN's position is the result of the discussions and negotiations to date, including the first, second and third meetings of IPBES, notably the Busan Outcome.
3. IUCN strongly supports the **operational establishment in 2012** of IPBES as a global mechanism to further strengthen the science-policy interface, through enhanced credibility, legitimacy and saliency of the information on which policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders depend when making decisions on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human wellbeing. IUCN urges governments and other relevant stakeholders to provide the platform with a strong set of operational modalities including an **ambitious and robust interlinked work programme** for the first years of implementation of IPBES supported by adequate funding.
4. IUCN supports the principle by which non-governmental stakeholders are recognized as **major knowledge providers** and **central users of the outputs** of IPBES and considers that the platform should answer the needs expressed, not only by governments - which form the core of the platform - but also by civil society including the scientific community, conservation NGOs and business actors.
5. The future modalities and institutional arrangements of IPBES, to be discussed at this meeting, must reflect the functions and operating principles of the Busan Outcome as well as reflect the importance of **an ex officio participation of non-governmental stakeholders** in the IPBES.
6. Due to its long experience in the science, knowledge and policy tools of biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as its contribution to the negotiation process for the establishment of IPBES since 2008 and solid expertise and resources, IUCN is **uniquely positioned to support the implementation** of the future work programme as well as the future governance of IPBES.

I. IPBES ESTABLISHED AS THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY, OVERARCHING MECHANISM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

7. The overarching role of IPBES should be to provide relevant insights for decision-making with independent, authoritative and internationally peer-reviewed scientific information with respect to changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the implications of these changes for human well-being, and possible response measures on multiple scales.
8. IPBES should be operationalized with a view to becoming the standard international source of policy-relevant scientific information on knowledge relating to biodiversity and ecosystems services, and therefore meet the needs of decision-makers in the environmental sectors, as well as at the environment-development nexus.
9. The overall thematic scope of IPBES should be biodiversity and ecosystem services at the environment-development nexus, and as such the scope of IPBES assessments and other functions will need to include the status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services degradation; their drivers and impacts on human well-being. Therefore IPBES will need to draw on both scientific and traditional knowledge, as appropriate.
10. The future work programme of IPBES should reflect the key principles described above and its design should address the inter-linkages between the four main functions of the Busan Outcome, i.e. knowledge generation, assessments, policy support and capacity building, as well as being appropriate and relevant to the scientific community's perspectives and the knowledge-holder community.

II. IPBES ESTABLISHED TO RESPOND TO GOVERNMENTS' AND CIVIL SOCIETY'S NEEDS AS USERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF ITS RESULTS

11. Conserving biodiversity, and maintaining and restoring ecosystems and ecosystem services is achieved through local, national, regional and global efforts with input from a broad set of actors - governments as well as civil society organizations, including scientists, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, indigenous communities and the private sector.

The critical role of the scientific community and importance of input from other non-governmental stakeholders, including traditional knowledge-holders, reflect an immense resource for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The Busan Outcome considers that civil society does not play a central role, and limits its place to the submission of requests, being observers and providing funding.

As part of the legitimate role on biodiversity and ecosystem services, conservation and sustainable management played by civil society, non-governmental organizations are fundamental users of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Finally, both principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, adopted in 1992 by UNCED, and the principles set by the Aarhus convention fully recognize the central role civil society must play in the governance of sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity conservation.

12. Based on the above, IUCN considers that non-governmental organizations should also be considered as **legitimate beneficiaries** of the services provided by the platform.

13. IUCN considers that IPBES will only succeed as an internationally-recognized and legitimate entity through clear and overt support from governments and non-governmental stakeholders, following the **full participation of civil society** in the governance and the work of the IPBES, and has submitted **proposals** for models of civil society involvement within the observer status framework recognized by the Busan Outcome (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/13).
14. These proposals stem from an analysis of the comparative advantages of three different models of civil society participation in intergovernmental mechanisms (minimalist, policy development and *ex officio*) and intend to provide information on the participation of civil society in the governance and work of the platform.
15. IUCN invites governments to consider these proposals which are aimed at facilitating consideration of the most appropriate role and level of participation in IPBES.
16. IUCN **recommends the Ex Officio Model** as that which would best address the needs of a full and effective participation of civil society in the platform and requests that this is reflected in the modalities and institutional arrangements.

III. IUCN POSITIONS ON ITEM 4 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA: CONSIDERATION OF THE MODALITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

17. IUCN's detailed Positions on item 4 are presented in Annex I of this Position paper (Table: "Proposals and recommendations of IUCN on the considerations of the modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES").
18. These recommendations include:
 - Effective operationalization at the earliest opportunity in 2012;
 - Response to the needs expressed by civil society in addition to those expressed by governments;
 - Permanent Observer status in the plenary along with ad hoc observers;
 - Scientific independence in the subsidiary bodies through the nomination process;
 - Specific evaluation of the quality of knowledge used;
 - Dedicated mechanism to interface IPBES and civil society expressions;
 - Broadly-targeted dissemination of IPBES findings.
19. Information is also provided to contribute to the discussions on the work programme, highlighting IUCN's experience in knowledge management and biodiversity assessment.

IV. IUCN AND IPBES: A UNIQUE ROLE FOR STRENGTHENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IPBES AND CONTRIBUTING TO ITS FUTURE SUCCESS

20. At its core IUCN is a science-policy organization, and has been linking the scientific and policy communities for much of its 60-year history. It is an Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder organization, with 87 State members and over 100 government agency members in addition to 1,000 members from civil society. IUCN works closely with a number of international organizations including UN agencies (UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO), the scientific network such as ICSU and DIVERSITAS, and with the full range of MEAs and their scientific subsidiary bodies including the CBD, the World Heritage Convention, CITES, and the Ramsar Convention – the latter being hosted by IUCN at its headquarters;
21. IUCN has a long history of work on biodiversity and at the interface between biodiversity and development at local, regional and global levels, including through the provision of knowledge products and convening multi-

stakeholder processes to support this interface. With its volunteer network of over 10,000 natural and social experts in biodiversity and ecosystem services, IUCN has long been a leader in generating knowledge about biodiversity and ecosystem services. It has contributed to virtually all of the relevant global environmental assessments including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and its follow up. It has designed numerous knowledge tools to support policy development and implementation including the IUCN Red List of threatened species and the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems under development, and helped build capacity for enhancing the science-policy interface on biodiversity-related issues;

22. IUCN has been participating in the discussion and negotiation on the establishment of the IPBES for several years and its involvement has been strengthened since the Putrajaya Conference in 2008. In addition to its technical contribution, IUCN brings a multi-stakeholder perspective to IPBES through its diverse Membership, Commissions, Secretariat and its considerable capacity to convene multiple stakeholders from the scientific and policy communities to discuss and advance thinking on biodiversity and ecosystem services; IUCN is a member of the informal Plenary Planning Group established by UNEP for the preparation of the sessions of a plenary on IPBES during 2011 and 2012;
23. This considerable knowledge and vast experience would be an important contribution to IPBES. IUCN offers to play **a significant role** in the implementation of the future work programme of the platform as well as in the design and development of a strong civil society interface in close collaboration with relevant key stakeholders. **An official offer of services and contributions to the platform, including IUCN potential participation in future governing bodies** (technical support function), is under development and will be submitted for the 2nd session of this plenary.

v. ANNEXES

- Annex I:** Proposals and Recommendations of IUCN on the Considerations of the Modalities and Institutional Arrangements for an IPBES;
- Annex II:** Options for Civil Society Organizations Involvement in IPBES – UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/13;
- Annex III:** WBCSD-IUCN Joint Statement on Business and IPBES;
- Annex IV:** IUCN Information paper on Knowledge Management
- Annex V:** IUCN Information paper on Experience and Lessons Learned from Assessments.

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PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF IUCN ON THE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE MODALITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN IPBES

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

Reference	Version of the working paper	IUCN's proposals and recommendations	Rationale
Item 4(a) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/2 Legal issues relating to the establishment and operationalization of the platform	<p>Four options are presented:</p> <p>1 The platform has already been established ;</p> <p>2(a) Establishment at the current plenary meeting, by the members;</p> <p>2(b) Executive heads of selected organizations to establish the platform;</p> <p>2(c) Intergovernmental organs of the United Nations, its programmes and funds and/or specialized agencies to establish the platform.</p>	<p>Modalities and institutional arrangements should be all set before the end of 2012. The operational working of IPBES should begin no later than early 2013.</p> <p>Adequate funding for the operationalization of the platform should be provided on the basis of the 1st work programme.</p> <p>Option 2(a) offers the best guarantee and the highest flexibility to reach operationalization at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>The conservation community needs an authoritative and reliable tool.</p> <p>The credibility of IPBES will strongly depend on its first results.</p> <p>The 2 sessions of the plenary offer good opportunity for debate and sharing views. The work has been seriously prepared through in-depth work especially through an informal multi-stakeholder planning group.</p>

Reference	Version of the working paper	IUCN's proposals and recommendations	Rationale
<p>Item 4(b) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/3 Functions and operating principles of the platform</p>	<p>Functions and operating principles originate from Busan Outcome.</p>	<p>The platform should address both needs expressed by governments and by non-governmental stakeholders.</p> <p>A dedicated operating principle should recognize the need of a strong participation of civil society in implementing the functions of the platform, with priority involvement of relevant NGOs and scientific organizations.</p> <p>A dedicated operating principle should stress on the need for a broadly-targeted dissemination of all the findings and insights of IPBES. Resource should be permanently mobilized on this purpose.</p> <p>Clarify modalities of the periodic review of the platform's efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>The knowledge and datasets used to achieve IPBES work programme should be regularly monitored for quality and reliability. Recognized existing assessments built on extensive datasets, like the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, should be taken into account as a high-quality input.</p>	<p>Civil society should be considered as the main beneficiaries of IPBES. This will improve saliency of the work.</p> <p>Civil society participation should inspire every aspect of governance and working of IPBES.</p> <p>Transparency and impact would be highly optimized by communication of IPBES findings and insights. This should include vulgarizing at global, regional and sub-regional, and national scales.</p> <p>Lessons learnt from other intergovernmental mechanism to improve legitimacy and credibility (e.g. IPCC).</p> <p>Rely exclusively on expertise and simple peer-reviewing could bias the findings because biodiversity and ecosystem services are such a wide topic and because there is no universal metrics to measure status and trends so far.</p>

Reference	Version of the working paper	IUCN's proposals and recommendations	Rationale
<p>Item 4(c) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 Functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform</p> <p><u>I Institutional arrangements for the platform</u></p>	<p>Membership is detailed along with the definition of main bodies as the plenary and the secretariat. Some insights are presented on the evaluation of the operation of the platform.</p>	<p>Creation of an institutional permanent mechanism to ensure an interface between IPBES members and civil society.</p> <p>This mechanism could have the following functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stimulate expression of civil society requests; - Identify participants to serve as ad hoc observers and develop logistics and process understanding so the relevant CSOs will be able to maximize their presence at plenary; - Organize, manage and disseminate data and information on knowledge held by relevant CSOs; - Inform and constantly liaise with relevant stakeholders to improve ownership; - Check that IPBES scientific information is effectively delivered to decision-makers; - Propose terms of reference to address specific needs for tools and methodologies for non-governmental stakeholders; - Consult with networks to identify common views on progress made, outline obstacles, constraints to implementation, new challenges. 	<p>This recommendation is aimed to fully recognize the need for the platform to benefit from the civil society engagement as knowledge provider and user. As crucial inputs are expected, it is vital to organize this participation.</p> <p>Transparency would be enhanced since this mechanism will multiply the targets for IPBES findings and will give a feedback on how it is used.</p>
<p>Item 4(c) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 Functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform</p> <p><u>II Plenary</u></p>	<p>Membership of the plenary is specified. The participation of UN bodies, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations is clarified.</p> <p>Functions of the plenary are detailed following the Busan Outcome</p> <p>Details are provided on the officers of the plenary.</p>	<p>Permanent and high participation of civil society organizations in the plenary under an <i>ex officio</i> capacity.</p> <p>This requires introducing permanent observers on a closed term. This status could be granted to relevant coordinating civil society organizations, including scientific community and NGOs, that can be selected among the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intergovernmental organizations; - international research organizations; - concerned regional research organizations; - environment trust funds; - NGOs; - private sector. <p>Additional <i>ad hoc</i> observer status should be available through a simple accreditation scheme.</p> <p>IUCN welcomes that the plenary should encourage and take into account inputs and suggestions from relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>Relevant stakeholders should be recognized as credible and permanent contributors to the work of the platform.</p> <p>Their <i>ex officio</i> place should not be questioned to preserve a high quality dialogue with policy-makers.</p> <p>The status of Permanent observer, coupled with extended rights to introduce requests, to provide and to circulate statements, is the appropriate option in this regard.</p>

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<p>Item 4(c) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 Functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform</p> <p><u>III Subsidiary bodies of the plenary</u></p>	<p>Three options are proposed to organize the implementation of support, administrative and technical functions:</p> <p>Option 1 states for the creation of a unique body in the form of a bureau Option 2 implies the creation of an executive committee and a bureau Option 3 is about creating three subsidiary bodies: a bureau, an executive committee and a scientific advisory panel and propose to share functions amongst these three.</p> <p>The administrative function of the potential subsidiary body encompasses the reviewing requests by observer organization for admission by the plenary°.</p> <p>The possibility to establish working groups is detailed and propositions are made to precise their role.</p>	<p>IUCN favors the option that enhances efficiency, effectiveness and provides adequate and equitable participation of government nominees and representatives of non government stakeholders.</p> <p>The nomination of members of any subsidiary body should be transparent. Representatives should be individuals nominated following criteria among others scientific experience, peer-recognition, and list of publications.</p> <p>Open process for reviewing and prioritizing the requests should be established. All requests to be submitted to the plenary should undergo the same processing. The appropriate subsidiary body should be accountable for reviewing the requests according to a set of objective criteria. That could include among others: consistency with the scope of the work programme, relevance, urgency and quality of the process that originated the request, etc.</p> <p>While the supporting, administrative and technical functions proposed by UNEP could be undertaken by adequate subsidiary body of the plenary, there is still a need for an independent panel specifically dedicated to monitor the quality of knowledge mobilized by IPBES.</p> <p>IUCN acknowledges the openness for the composition of the working groups and asks that no restriction would be added to this respect.</p>	<p>Together with governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations could mobilize the best possible level of expertise to implement the 4 functions and follow the work programme.</p> <p>The composition of the subsidiary bodies is of great importance for the legitimacy of IPBES findings. The institutional arrangements should favor technical and scientific debates among individual experts.</p> <p>The reviewing and prioritizing process is crucial for the saliency of the platform's work. The proposed option will lead to address useful and salient questions pertaining drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem services degradation.</p> <p>Data and knowledge quality is highly variable even under peer-reviewing. Particularly, the topics of biodiversity and ecosystem services require long-term monitoring and interdisciplinary approaches. The variability and the heterogeneity of the data to be mobilized could lead to serious biases. This explains the need for a constant and independent evaluation.</p>
<p>Item 4(c) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 Functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform</p> <p><u>IV Secretariat</u></p>	<p>The administrative functions of the secretariat are defined. It includes the function to liaise with Governments, civil society organizations and all other relevant stakeholder organizations (paragraph 28 (e)).</p> <p>The secretariat is in charge of facilitating the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness (paragraph 28 (m)).</p>	<p>The secretariat should be in charge of building an interface between IPBES and civil society, further than only liaising with non-governmental organizations.</p> <p>IUCN proposes that a special mechanism, adequately funded, to be designed as a permanent function of the secretariat to run the interface between members and civil society.</p> <p>An autonomous body or process could be established to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency. This needs further specifications.</p>	<p>The interface will enhance cross-viewing on the needs for knowledge, tools, methodology and capacity building. This will improve legitimacy and saliency of IPBES and broaden ownership on its findings.</p> <p>Evaluation is a crucial part for public policies. Credibility of IPBES relies very much on the value of its product and the conduct of its business. The evaluation of efficiency is crucial to maintain financial resources.</p>

Reference	Version of the working paper	IUCN's proposals and recommendations	Rationale
<p>Item 4(c) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 Functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform</p> <p><u>V Trust Fund</u></p>	<p>It is proposed that funding is established under voluntary basis. It targets governments, United Nations bodies, the Global Environment Facility, other intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, such as the private sector and foundations.</p>	<p>Voluntary contribution from non-governmental sources would be enhanced by a clear recognition of the role of non-governmental stakeholders in the work and governance of IPBES.</p>	
<p>Item 4(d) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/5 Rules of procedure for meetings of the platform</p>	<p>It is proposed a simple process for accreditation for observers.</p>	<p>The representation and credentials framework for permanent observers should be the same as the one for members.</p> <p>Accreditation Permanent observers should remain simple and widely open.</p> <p>The rules of procedure should allow written and oral statements provided by non-voting members to circulate and fertilize the debates.</p> <p>Designing a special process to enable supplementary items to be added or completed in the agenda by observers.</p>	

Reference	Version of the working paper	IUCN's proposals and recommendations	Rationale
Item 4(f) UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/7 Work programme	Work programme is merely addressed through voluntary contributions of several institutions and governments that have been made in the course of year 2011.	<p>IUCN welcomes the importance and quality of work already done in this scope and thanks the institutions which undertook these initiatives.</p> <p>Several options could be followed to define the work programme. IUCN considers that the four functions of IPBES, knowledge generation, assessment, capacity building and policy support, are intimately interlinked and has to be reflected in the work programme.</p> <p>IUCN contributes to the debates about the work programme with the following:</p> <p>On knowledge management, IPBES should (see Annex IV):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote open access to data and products; - design appropriate access restriction ; - assess the quality of the different datasets; - promote long time-series datasets; - acknowledge the need to respect IPR of data providers. <p>Assessments, undertaken by IPBES should (see Annex V):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seek comprehensiveness; - undergo a review process; - characterize and communicating uncertainty; - be transparent on the methodologies; - identify the need for original research (to be linked with the knowledge generation function of IPBES); - be flexible and adaptable for any scale of action, from global to national; - be kept up to date. <p>IUCN wishes that its top-leading and recognized products, in relevance with the work programme to be defined, would be use, including the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the World Database of Protected Areas, the Global Invasive Species Database and the coming IUCN Red List of Ecosystems.</p>	

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CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES)

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The present document focuses on the ways and means to strengthen the participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the IPBES work and governance. It is proposed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which is an intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder organization composed of over 70 governments, 120 government agencies and 800 non-governmental organizations.
2. This paper is intended to stimulate discussions on the role of civil society in IPBES and serve as a basis for the proposals on existing examples and the preparatory documents for the First IPBES Plenary to be held in Nairobi, in October 2011. These proposals therefore need further discussion before being finalized for the operationalization of IPBES.
3. IUCN considers IPBES as a science-policy interface and acknowledges the role of the scientific community and other knowledge holders as crucial for the success of the delivery of the IPBES work programme. Therefore the way scientific community and other knowledge holders are involved in IPBES is a key issue.
4. Taking into account the scope of civil society participation agreed/formulated by governments in the Busan Outcome, in June 2010, three models for the involvement of civil society in IPBES are considered in this paper. They are based on the participation of CSOs in various existing intergovernmental mechanisms and Multilateral Agreements.
5. The Minimalist model stands for the most restricted level of the civil society engagement. According to this model, the civil society engagement is restricted to the submission of research and science and the civil society participation is limited in the plenary deliberations.
6. According to the Policy Development model, CSOs are actively involved in the agenda-setting and the development of norms but they do not participate in the work of the governing bodies.
7. According to the *Ex Officio* model, civil society participates in all aspects of the deliberative work and is directly involved in the work of the governing bodies, as non-voting members.
8. All three proposed models, including the one that allows the highest participation of civil society, do not necessarily diminish the authority of governments.
9. These three models are based on detailed analysis of the existing systems. The design of the role of civil society for IPBES could also be innovative. Given that applications of the models to IPBES case study are not mutually exclusive, a combination of them could be adopted.

10. This paper proposes an assessment of the three proposed models regarding to credibility, saliency, legitimacy, transparency, ownership and policy impact of the work of IPBES.
11. Given that, according to the Busan Outcome, the most of decisions at all governance levels will be taken by consensus amongst governments and not by majority voting, the non-voting participation by civil society in the governance bodies provides an important opportunity for governments to benefit from input by CSOs. This might also foster a sense of legitimacy among CSOs without detracting from the decision-making power of the governments whose financial and political support is a prerequisite for the success of IPBES.
12. The possibility for CSOs to play a role in shaping the scope of IPBES and to contribute to the decision-making process might also enhance the likelihood of the acceptance of the IPBES findings and of the implementation of its recommendations. Therefore the involvement of CSOs in all IPBES aspects of work and governance would facilitate the implementation of the IPBES activities and increase its impacts on both policy and practice worldwide.
13. Finally, the paper proposes an assessment of the three proposed models in regards to credibility, salience, legitimacy, transparency, ownership and policy impact of the work of IPBES.
14. A summary of options and their implications is presented below:

	CSOs involved according to a Minimalist Model	CSOs involved according to a Policy Development Model	CSOs involved according to an Ex Officio Model
Status of participation	Consultative voice CSOs would be only ad hoc observers, accredited for each plenary.	Consultative voice Relevant stakeholders would be permanent observers. Other CSOs could be accredited as ad hoc observer.	Consultative voice Relevant stakeholders would be permanent observers. Other CSOs could be accredited as ad hoc observer.
In the Plenary	Silent observer: access to documents but no written or oral statements during sessions Written inputs prior the session but no requests	Silent observer: access to documents but no written or oral statements. As far as they participate to the plenary, CSOs would be involved in provisional agenda setting and proposed development of norms	Written and oral statements allowed, provided, circulated and taken into account, prior to and during sessions. Options for oral interventions: the Plenary could be either defined slots or permanent access
Application for requests to be submitted to the Plenary	Only requests from members would be examined	A process is established to receive and prioritize requests by anyone Priority given to requests by members	A process is established to receive and prioritize requests by anyone All applicants would fall under a unique and transparent set of criteria and would be treated equally

	CSOs involved according to a Minimalist Model	CSOs involved according to a Policy Development Model	CSOs involved according to an Ex Officio Model
In the subsidiary bodies			
Executive Board/Bureau	No participation	No participation	Participation of CSOs to a level determined by the plenary along a defined ratio that could span from a low rate to total equity.
Executive committee	No participation	No participation	Participation depending on level of expertise and relevance
Scientific Advisory Panel	Scientists from governmental institutions	Scientists nominated as <i>intuitu personae</i> using a set of criteria including independence and leadership	Scientists nominated as <i>intuitu personae</i> using a set of criteria including independence and leadership
Working groups	No restriction on the origins of experts	Full participation of experts including: -Submitting names of authors for the assessments; -Providing assistance in conceptual approaches and methodology development -Participating in the peer-review process.	Full participation of experts including: -Submitting names of authors for the assessments; -Providing assistance in conceptual approaches and methodology development -Participating in the peer-review process.
Level of the expert implication	Experts do not interact with decision-makers	Experts work and report under ruling of decision-makers	Experts work, report and directly interact with decision-makers
Assessment of the credibility, legitimacy transparency, saliency of the governance	Low credibility and legitimacy, could be balanced through communication	Medium credibility and saliency but high transparency Speeding up policy impact	High credibility, legitimacy and transparency Very strong ownership Permanent monitoring of implementation

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I. BACKGROUND

I.1. Preliminary note

1. The first sessions of the plenary meeting of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) will be held on the 3-7 October 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya to consider modalities and arrangements to fully operationalize the IPBES.
2. This paper informs the sessions on Item 4 (b) "Functions and operating principles", Item 4 (c) (b), "Functions and structure of bodies" and Item 4 (d) "Rules of procedures" for meetings of the Platform of item 4 of the agenda: Consideration of the modalities and institutional arrangements for IPBES.
3. The present document will focus on the ways and means to strengthen the participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the IPBES work and governance.
4. The options developed in this paper are based on the document "Assessing the value of civil society involvement in IPBES governance" prepared under the auspices of IUCN in 2009.¹
5. The governance structure that this document follows is based on the working document Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 on the functions and structures of bodies that might be established under an IPBES; i.e. the document presents options for the participation of CSOs in the IPBES Plenary, in the Executive Board/Bureau as well as in the Scientific Advisory Body, if it is decided that this Scientific Advisory Body should be established.
6. It also refers to the working document Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/5 on the draft rules and procedures for meetings of IPBES and provides relevant information to specific issues such as observers, level of the participation of CSOs and potential rules governing the treatment of requests from CSOs.
7. This document presents options for procedures that would ensure different levels of the participation of civil society in the IPBES work, taking into account the scope of participation established in Busan in 2010. Existing examples of the different options are also provided. They are based on the precedent set by eight selected intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder institutions, platforms and processes from the environment, development, economic and humanitarian sectors which include the mechanisms for multi-stakeholder engagement, including NGOs, IGOs, industry groups and other stakeholders in consultation processes, discussions, and decisions related to their work and mandates. They are the Advisory Scientific and Technical Group for the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, The United Global Environmental Outlook (GEO), the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), the International Criminal Court (ICC), the OECD Development Assistance Committee, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

I.2. Definition and scope of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

8. For the purpose of this paper, civil society is defined as any non-state actor, including the private sector.² In the context of IPBES any non-state relevant actor therefore includes inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, scientific organizations, business and industry, farmers, indigenous peoples, local authorities, workers and trade unions. Some of those are already included in the nine Major Groups represented at meetings sponsored

¹ Briefing paper prepared for IUCN by Johann Bernsten Environmental Law and Policy Consulting- Bernsten J. et al., May 2010.

² See Organization of American States, 2010.

by UNEP.

9. If considered the past discussions to create a permanent interface science-policy on biodiversity and ecosystem services, the main actors from civil society are to be found among NGOs focused on environment and scientific organizations.
10. This paper does not include options for the participation of the United Nations organizations/agencies (UNEP, UNESCO, UNDP and FAO) and the secretariats of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the IPBES work and governance.

I.3. Scope of expected added values of CSOs for IPBES

11. In the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being, civil society (including NGOs, academia, scientific and research organizations sometimes related to governments but many times independent from the governmental bodies) is holder of relevant data and information. These institutions have long experience in, among other functions, monitoring the status of biodiversity and ecosystems as well as the trends in economic and social sciences in developing and developed countries. Further, governments have developed policies using outputs of such assessments. In addition to the above mentioned institutions, actors within the private sector at a local to global scale are also important users of biodiversity and ecosystem services and have direct impact on human well-being. Furthermore, they have the potential to reverse negative trends through investment and innovation. They also hold information on the use, practices and existence of species and varieties, that is not always scientifically documented.
12. As provider and user of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services, organizations representing civil society should have a role in the governance and work of IPBES. Consequently, the value, legitimacy and utility of IPBES would be strengthened through a fair representation and participation of CSOs in its governance structure as well as in the work programme. IPBES would benefit from the participation of CSOs in terms of credibility, saliency, legitimacy, transparency, ownership and policy impact.
13. It would increase the capacity of IPBES to produce credible outputs by involving the highest possible level of expertise, by broadening perspectives and by mobilizing a wider body of knowledge (credibility);
14. The ability to identify and formulate the pertinent questions and answers and the relevance of the findings would be strengthened by CSOs that are working on these issues closely and on a daily basis (saliency);
15. The widest possible representation and involvement of multi-stakeholders would foster the acceptance and justification of IPBES and its mandate to carry out work and provide valuable outputs to the relevant community or actor (legitimacy);
16. It would improve the degree of openness of the IPBES decision-making processes (transparency);
17. It would help to create a collegial platform where different expertise, disciplines and roles meet to address the same objective (ownership);
18. The implementation of the findings emanating from IPBES would be improved (policy impact).
19. A full assessment of the three models for the civil society participation according to these principles is presented in the final section of this document.

I.4. Agreed elements of civil society participation (the Busan Outcome)

20. According to the Busan Outcome³, IPBES is established as an intergovernmental body and the Plenary is the IPBES decision making body. It is already agreed that the plenary has a role in liaising with CSOs

³ Third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, Busan, Republic of Korea, 7-11 June 2010

however this role is still to be defined.

21. Based on Paragraph 6 (a) of the Busan Outcome: “The platform should respond to requests from Governments, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The plenary should welcome inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The plenary should also encourage and take into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. To facilitate this, and to ensure that the platform’s work programme is focused and efficient, a process to receive and prioritize requests should be established by the plenary”.
22. Furthermore as stated in Paragraph 6 (g): “The plenary, which should be the platform’s decision-making body, should be open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations and by regional economic integration organizations. Intergovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should participate in the plenary as observers, in accordance with the rules of procedure established by the plenary.”

II. OPTIONS FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF CSOS IN THE IPBES WORK AND GOVERNANCE

II.1. Introduction to options for civil society participation

23. The three proposed models for the civil society participation in international institutions governance and work are presented below, taking into account the scope adopted in Busan. They range from minimal engagement to full participation in governance, without voting power.
24. The Minimalist Model is applied to international institutions with the most restricted level of civil society engagement. In these forums, the only mechanism available for the civil society engagement is in the submission of research and science and limited participation in the plenary deliberations. In terms of the key criteria of salience, credibility, legitimacy, policy impact, ownership and transparency, this model of engagement mechanisms ranks low. IPCC is an example of this model.
25. According to the Policy Development Model, CSOs are actively involved in the agenda-setting and the development of norms. The institutions that operate according to this model include the CSD, ICC, the OECD Development Assistance Committee, and the United Nations International Strategy on Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). The engagement is significantly greater than in the previous model, where it is limited to the submission of research and scientific evidence. However, the institutions falling into this model offer limited involvement by virtue of the fact that CSOs do not participate in the actual governance of these institutions.
26. The *Ex-Officio*⁴ Model sets out a permanent regular and extensive participation of CSOs by enabling deep and iterative interaction between civil society and governments. Examples of institutions or processes running under this model of participation include the GEO, IAASTD and UNAIDS. In each of these bodies and processes, civil society representatives are recognized *de facto* as participants in all aspects of the deliberative work and are directly involved in the governing bodies, albeit as non-voting members. According to this model, public debates on specific matters are common as well as the elaboration of specific products and assessments through a collaborative process regardless the voting power of the participant. In terms of the key criteria of salience, credibility, legitimacy, policy impact, ownership and transparency, this model of engagement ranks very high.
27. Some organizations run under a full participation model, along which CSOs have voting rights. Millennium

⁴ *Ex-officio* stands for ‘from the office’ meaning that access to discussions is automatic regarding your position

Ecosystem Assessment, International Labour Organization, and World Commission on Dams are examples of precedent. As models are not mutually exclusive, the options proposed took consideration of these models, in full respect with the Busan Outcome.

28. The three models presenting the options for the participation of CSOs in the IPBES work and governance are presented below:

	Minimalist Model	Policy Development Model	Ex-Officio Model
Scope of role:	Civil society role limited to mere submission of research. Experts <u>do not directly interact</u> with policy-makers	Civil society involved in the agenda- setting, the development of norms and policy development Experts work <u>for</u> decision-makers	Civil society involved in all aspects of the work of IPBES, helping to shape scope and substance Experts <u>work directly</u> with decision-makers
Level of participation	Through tokens	No involvement in the governance bodies	Participation on the governance body as non-voting members
Status in governing body	Silent observer	Silent observer	Observer with non-voting rights
Examples of Organizations running under this model	IPCC ICCM	ICC OECD Advisory Committees CSD UNISDR	UNEP GEO Land Mines Treaty UNAIDS IAASTD

II.2. Options for the Observer Status of CSOs

II.2.1. Types of observer status and eligibility

29. According to the existing examples in the international context, the purpose of an observer status is to enable CSOs to follow discussions on matters of direct interest to them.
30. In the context of IPBES, the Busan Outcome states that the Plenary should encourage and consider inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders.
31. The preparatory paper under the reference Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/5 proposes, under its rules 5 to 7, a procedure to introduce request for accreditation. After being admitted as observers, CSOs could, , designate their representatives to attend the IPBES Plenary sessions and working groups, similarly to the processes of IPCC. The Observer organizations would be required to register their representatives for each session in advance. The participation of CSOs as an observer in the Plenary sessions or working groups would not imply their admission or invitation to every workshop and expert meeting. Certain meetings might be closed to the observers. The status of the observer might be granted for a limited period of time.
32. One should consider, with regards to the type of CSO and their area of expertise, the permanent and the *ad hoc* observer status.

33. The status of the Permanent Observer is an established precedent in some international organizations where national governments are the members. The Permanent Observers are the non-Members that have certain specified rights beyond those of other stakeholders.
34. The Permanent Observers typically have some, but not all, of the rights and privileges of the Members of such organizations. They do not have the right to vote, however other rights and privileges may be given such as an attendance to meetings, a right to present information and speak at meetings and a participation in working groups.
35. Typically, governments or intergovernmental organizations become permanent observers when they either do not qualify for membership or do not wish to become full members. WTO is an example of organization that has permanent observers. The purpose of the observer status in WTO is to enable permanent observers to follow discussions on matters of direct interest to them. According to practice, the permanent observer status is generally granted to organizations which already have an observer status with the United Nations co-sponsoring organizations/agencies.

II.2.2. Options for eligibility as Observers

36. The Busan Outcome particularly pinpoints the organizations whose inputs and requests should be considered: intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, NGOs and the private sector.
37. According to the Minimalist Model of participation of CSOs, there would be no Permanent Observer accreditation given to any CSO. CSOs would be required to request accreditation on a one-shot basis requiring application for observer status at each meeting. This would lead to a progressive lack of interest to participate and generate instability of participants.
38. According to the Policy Development Model and the *Ex-Officio* model, there would be both permanent observers and ad hoc observers.
39. The Permanent Observers would be designated along the relevant following groups: intergovernmental organizations, international research organizations, relevant regional research organizations, environment trust funds, NGOs and the private sector (see above). Regarding the maximum number of the permanent observers that could be decided by the Plenary, it would be necessary to institute a rotational mechanism to enable different CSOs ranking among these groups to participate. There would be an additional *ad hoc* complementary participation of CSOs. This participation would then follow the same rules of procedure than in the Minimalist model, stated above.

II.3. Options for the participation of CSOs in the IPBES Plenary

40. Based on the three proposed models - The Minimalist Model, the Policy Development Model and the *Ex Officio* Model, the following sections of this paper address options for the participation of CSOs in each of the possible IPBES governing bodies, taking into account the agreement reached in Busan, in 2010.
41. According to the role of the Plenary as proposed in the working paper Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4, the plenary is the main governing body of the platform and is responsible for: Overseeing the platform's operation; Establishing priorities for action by the platform in response to the needs of and requests from Governments, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies; Adopting a programme of work for the platform and reviewing its implementation; Approving a budget and providing oversight of the allocation of funds; Reviewing, adopting or approving major reports or executive summaries; Establishing subsidiary bodies and working groups; Considering and undertaking any

additional action that might be required to achieve the platform's objectives⁵.

42. The granting of observer status, either Permanent or *ad hoc*, entails different participation rights in the governing bodies where they are applied to.
43. Under the Minimalist Model or the Policy Development Model, the following rules might apply: the observers may have access to documents but do not have right to speak and/or make circulate any statement. They are attending the sessions as silent observers. The participation in the IPBES Plenary is thus restricted only to government delegations. Accredited CSOs, including IGOs, NGOs, academia and scientific institutions as well as the private sector, would be allowed to participate as the silent observers at the opening plenary session and some other sessions over the course of the report production cycle. While CSOs might sometimes participate in the IPBES assessment process, they would not be entitled to provide any written or oral statements. The decisions would thus be made entirely by the government representatives.
44. Thus, according to the Minimalist Model, CSOs would not have any voice in shaping the scope and content of the assessment reports. However, the Policy Development Model would enable CSOs as the Permanent Observers and they would provide regular and continuous inputs thanks to the regularity of their participation. The rules could allow a parallel process to the Plenary for the expression of civil society. The revised examples suggest organized multi-stakeholder dialogues, a multi-stakeholder implementation follow-up process, a dedicated steering committee, introduction of days dedicated space and opportunity to share their field-level experiences and views. CSD provides an example of the precedent for this kind of involvement.
45. By contrast, in the *Ex Officio* Model, accredited CSOs (including IGOs, NGOs, academia and scientific institutions as well as the private sector) are allowed to fully participate in the Plenary as the observers without the right to vote. However, CSOs are entitled to provide written and oral statements on matters within the scope of their activities related to the IPBES functions. Written statements would have to be communicated to the IPBES Secretariat for consideration by the Members before the Plenary or during sessions. Such statements might be circulated prior to the sessions for the consideration of the members. The release of such statements may be placed under the supervision of the Chairperson. Examples of the precedent for this kind of involvement include ILO.
46. The Observers may request to include issues of a particular interest to them in the provisional agenda of the governing body. Regarding oral statements, CSOs would have the right to intervene at each item of the agenda by asking for the floor and the right to intervene at the end of each session, after governments have spoken. Under the conditions to be determined, the Chairman may give the floor to the observers to respond to questions directed at them by the participants. Although CSOs would be entitled to participate in the sessions, they would not have the right to vote.
47. The rules of procedures could define specific rules for statements to be made by the non-members. This would be crucial during the adoption of executive summary of reports, as the precedent of IPCC shows. The rules of procedures could then allow to introduce oral statements at any time of the discussion, for instance on each paragraph of a text. The rules of procedures should not discriminate between the member and observer speaking rights. Or, they could be only granted to a specific slot of speaking (for instance, at the beginning or at the end of the sessions) or be allowed to speak in groups (the observers would be obliged to form a group to introduce a statement).
48. The *Ex Officio* Model improves the permanent expression of ideas, experience, feedback and inputs from civil society. Such open debates might be of great importance for the IPBES work since CSOs can provide a ground checking for policy discussions (An example of THE precedent through the participation of AIDS affected communities is UNAIDS).

⁵ UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4, Part. II. C (paragraph 11).

II.4 Options for a process to receive and prioritize CSOs requests submitted to the Plenary

49. In respect to the Busan Outcome, different options could be considered for the application of requests. There are very few existing examples of rules to prioritize requests in order to improve the involvement of civil society. ILO could be a source of inspiration in this area. The working paper UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/5 (rule 8) states that any participant could introduce a request. The working paper UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 paragraph 19 (b) (v) proposes that the Bureau could perform the reviewing requests.
50. Following the IPCC example, which relates to the Minimalist Model, only the requests from the members of the Plenary would be simply reviewed and introduced in the agenda. Thus, the requests would only emphasize some issues that, unless the requests are adopted by a member, have no chance to be examined.
51. The Participants to the plenary, including the members and non-members, might wish to ensure that civil society participate effectively in the design of the work programme. This implies the selection of a more participative model. In the case of the Policy Development Model or the *Ex Officio* Model, broader participation should be considered and thus to a process to receive and prioritize request of non-participants to the plenary should be designed
52. This process could run under the following principles:
 - a) The requests should be addressed to the Secretariat within a period of time that allows reviewing and prioritizing;
 - b) Reviewing and prioritizing could be decided by the Bureau after a formal consultation of the members and permanent observers. This consultation could lead to an informal reviewing or to a formal vote among the participants, if consensus on a point to be included in the agenda is not attained;
 - c) The requests of the applicants would be only eligible to be submitted if they strictly fall within an appropriate set of objective criteria. That could include: consistency with the scope of the work programme, relevance, urgency and quality of the process that originated the request.
53. It is suggested that, according to the Policy Development Model, a priority rule would be designed to favour the requests introduced by permanent members. According to the *Ex Officio* Model, all requests would be examined and so every participant would have an equal chance to see its request introduced in the agenda.
54. In order to ensure an equitable treatment of requests submitted by governments and CSOs, transparent rules must be adopted and used by the Plenary.

II.5 Options for the participation of CSOs in the IPBES subsidiary bodies

II.5.1 In the Executive Board/Bureau

55. According to the working paper Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4, a subsidiary body such as an Executive board/Bureau might be established by the Plenary.
56. Such body would support the functions of IPBES regarding urgent issues arising between sessions of the plenary. If needed, it would address issues and requests related to the IPBES programme of work. The Executive body/Bureau would also perform administrative functions such as monitoring the effective implementation of the decisions of the plenary, the work of any task groups established, the observance of the IPBES principles and procedures; reviewing requests by the observer organizations for admission to the plenary; identifying donors and developing partnership arrangements for the implementation of activities; and supervising the management of financial resources⁶.

⁶ UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4, Part. III. A (paragraph 19).

57. In the case that no scientific body would be established, the Executive board/Bureau would ensure the scientific and technical functions such as providing advice on scientific and technical aspects of the platform's programme of work and by overseeing the scientific quality of the platform's products.
58. According to the Minimalist and Policy Development models, the CSOs participation would not be allowed in this specific body. Only representatives from Governments would be allowed to have a seat.
59. However, the *Ex Officio* model for the participation of CSOs would entail the need for an adequate participation, regarding the urgency or the nature of the issue. Thus, the delegates of CSOs with scientific expertise would be represented at the Executive board/Bureau so that urgent decision-making is appropriately scientifically informed, and if so formed, the bureau itself could oversee the scientific aspects of the IPBES governance.
60. Under this model, the Executive board/Bureau of IPBES, to be designated by the plenary among nominates by all participants to the plenary, including observers, should ensure a balanced geographic representation and the relevant multidisciplinary stakeholder expertise. The Executive board/Bureau could then be comprised of a shared number of seats between Governments and representatives of CSOs.
61. The structure of the body would define the ratio chosen. IAASTD is established under equity in number since it includes 30 governments and 30 CSOs. The Bureau of the ILO is another example of such equity since it comprises 28 Government regular members, 14 Worker regular members and 14 Employer regular members.
62. Other criteria could be defined for the nomination of the Executive board/Bureau members, such as reflection of the different types of relevant Civil Society stakeholders (NGOs, academia and scientific organizations and the private sector) or geographical representation and a balanced gender representation.
63. While CSOs would not have the voting right in the Executive board/Bureau according to this model, they would share the same participation/intervention opportunities as governments. They would be entitled to submit reports, proposals and amendments. The modalities and functions of the CSOs representatives and participation in the Executive board/Bureau might be determined by the plenary. The term of office might be a maximum of three years or otherwise correspond to the duration of a global assessment cycle or have a permanent observer status (all or some of the CSOs).
64. Thus, the integrated Executive board/Bureau would allow the full range of non-voting civil society stakeholders to meet with the governments representatives creating opportunities for constructive exchanges and consensus-building, while maintaining ownership by governments.

II.5.2. In the Executive Committee

65. As an option proposed in the working paper Nr. UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4, the plenary might establish a subsidiary body focused on supporting the functions of the platform regarding urgent issues, while the Bureau will be in charge of administrative and scientific overseeing and advice. Based on the lessons learned in the IPCC, it might be valuable to consider such a body to support the plenary and to act on its behalf and address urgent issues arising between plenary sessions. This body is elected by and reports to the Plenary.
66. According to the Minimalist and Policy Development models, CSOs may not be represented at this specific body. In contrast, according to the *Ex Officio* model, the representation of civil society with relevant experience and qualifications would be allowed. The most of the members of the Executive Committee could be drawn from the Bureau and thus could be knowledgeable about the assessment process. A small number of the members could be gathered to optimize mobilization: the members could be comprised of the IPBES Chair, the Working Group Co-chairs, one representative of the UN agencies and three representatives from Civil Society Organizations. These representatives would be widely respected in their fields and might be drawn from the three following groups: academia or scientific organizations, NGOs and the private sector. The identification and selection of the individuals might be

made among the qualified scientific experts from organizations that currently submit nominations for the Bureau and other positions.

67. The members of the Executive Committee might serve for three years or otherwise correspond to the duration of global assessment cycle.

II.5.3. In the Scientific Advisory Panel

68. In the case of the Bureau with a separate Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP), the latter will primarily serve to oversee the IPBES scientific credibility.
69. The functions of the SAP might include the following: to participate in an editorial board in finalizing technical papers; to provide advice on scientific and technical aspects of the IPBES programme of work; to provide advice and assistance on technical and/or scientific communication matters; to oversee a peer-review process to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality and credibility for all products delivered by the platform; to develop and agree upon a list of authors, review editors and expert reviewers, taking into account the need for balance in expertise, geographical coverage and gender; to engage the scientific community both globally and regionally on issues relating to the platform; to approve specific scientific procedures related to the conduct of assessments and to oversee the scientific quality of the IPBES products.
70. The composition of the SAP might reflect a multi-disciplinary approach (economic, social and environmental) and therefore experts might be drawn from various fields. In addition, members might be drawn from different geographical regions and from among renowned individuals and institutions. Scientists might be nominated by relevant scientific bodies and Governments in respective regions and approved subsequently by the plenary.
71. The members of Scientific Panels would be nominated *intuitu personae*, meaning that they would not represent the institution they belong to. The GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel is an example of the precedent.
72. Two main criteria might be considered when selecting the members of the Scientific Advisory Panel: a) Professionalism: the selected members should be able to work across different sectors and to manage scientific research involving multiple stakeholders; they should be also capable of bridging scientific, technological, economic, social and political issues; b) *Leadership*: members should have an extensive access to scientific networks and an ability to engage with these networks, as well as a demonstrated expertise in the matters related to IPBES.
73. Regarding the Minimalist Model of the civil society participation, the scientific community which would be represented in the SAP would consist of experts originating in governments or governmental agencies. This would nevertheless not deter other leading scientists to participate in the assessment process by providing research but this would prevent them from interacting in the decision and verification process.
74. Following the Policy Development Model and the *Ex Officio* Model, the scientific and technical contribution of CSOs to the fulfilment of the SAP mandate is strongly encouraged. The IGOs, NGOs, academia, and private sector might apply and present delegates to be part of the SAP. The delegates could be qualified experts. The list of applicants could communicate to the SAP and approved by the plenary.
75. The SAP might take decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, decisions on proposals might be taken by a simple majority vote. In this case, the CSOs expert might be entitled with a deliberative voice (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) & Advisory Scientific and Technical Group for the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction - examples of precedent).
76. Additionally, the rules of procedures for the Scientific Advisory Panel should ensure a fair share of each side of the scientific debate. In case of dispute on the statements and outcomes of the panel, there would be an obligation to clearly mention on which points the consensus has not been reached. These disagreements might be duly mentioned in the issued statements (see example of IPCC). This rule would ensure transparency of CSOs not only in the process of IPBES production but also in the process of

scientific debates⁷.

77. In order to encourage the widest participation of the scientific community, while ensuring continuity in the work of the Advisory Scientific Panel, the membership might correspond to the duration of a global assessment cycle.

II.5.4. In the Working Groups

78. The working groups overseeing the work programme will be central to the work of the platform. Working groups will be composed of individuals and not representatives.
79. Regarding their respective inputs of knowledge, scientific institutions and other CSOs encompass high-quality profiles to take an active part in the working groups. Thus the founding texts of IPBES should not restrict the origin of experts that will participate to working groups.
80. The precedent of the UNEP GEO proved that a high participation of experts from various origins is crucial for the effective operation of the groups. Experts originating from civil society organization would improve:
- a) the range of names of authors for the assessments: the working groups might write reports produced under the responsibility of a lead author and associated authors. The CSOs might be able to submit a proposal for names of authors to the Plenary/Scientific Advisory Panel which could then validate the names. The proposal might come along with full and supportive arguments based on legitimacy, leadership, relevance and experience.
 - b) the assistance in conceptual approaches and methodology development: CSOs have developed a wide variety of capacity building experiences tools and methodologies.
 - c) the participation in the peer-review process: a comprehensive peer review of the assessment might be made in consultation with governments, CSOs and scientific institutions. Two rounds of peer review might be envisaged for the assessments. The drafts could be sent to experts and copied to the plenary members and the observers. The reports might be finalized by working groups, and the peer review comments on scientific matters would need to be based on scientific studies; likewise, policy-relevant comments would be made on a policy-sound basis. After a revision phase, there might not be any option for further changes; eventual objections by the plenary or its members, and their respective scientific rationale, could supplement the reports as separate descriptive documents (see IPCC).
81. As far as the composition of working groups is concerned, it would be essential to follow a transparent process in designating members, which were accredited by the plenary.

II.6. Options for the participation of CSOs in the Secretariat

82. The implementation of the Policy Development Model and of the *Ex Officio* Model, would be facilitated if formal links are established between the Secretariat and one or several Civil Society Organization. Indeed, the future secretariat administrative functions could provide opportunities for civil society to be involved at the level of the secretariat (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 paragraph 28(e)). In this regard, CSOs would not play a central role in the secretariat but be in charge of specific functions pertaining civil society involvements. For instance, they could be in charge of an interface mechanism between IPBES and civil society, running and coordinating inputs and playing an active role in dissemination of the platform's production.
83. Furthermore, in regards to the decision by the Plenary to request the Secretariat to undertake technical functions, civil society would be able to provide relevant assistance to ensure that the platform implements its work programme (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 paragraph 29). It could be achieved by hosting the

⁷ Conservation for a New Era, Mc Neely, J. and Moina, S. IUCN 2008.

Secretariat of a specific Working Group: like in the case of the IPCC, it could be envisaged that, on a rotating basis and in accordance to the assessment cycle, a civil society institution hosts the Working Group and assists members of the Working Group fulfil its specific function.

84. With regards to the institutional arrangements for the Secretariat and in accordance with the Busan Outcome, decision on the participation of CSOs to provide support for carrying out a part of the administrative functions of the Secretariat could be taken. In this case, CSOs might partner central secretariat or a central secretariat hub. The form of this partnership would then need to be defined (strategic partnership, staff secondment...).

III. ASSESSMENT OF THE THREE MODELS OF CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN THE IPBES WORK AND GOVERNANCE

85. The different options proposed in this document were duly assessed regarding credibility, legitimacy, saliency, transparency, ownership and policy impact of IPBES. Results are shown below:

	CSOs involved along a Minimalist Model	CSOs involved along a Policy Development model	CSOs involved along an Ex-Officio model
Credibility	Low	High but depending of the gap to be filled and thus the existing initiatives	High
Legitimacy	Low due to the limitation in inputs	High. Science directed by policy	Very high, effective science-policy interface
Saliency	Low due to limitation for introducing requests	Medium Very dependent on the participation	Strong Ability to deal with complexity and interlinkages.
Transparency	Strongly dependant on the communications efforts of the Secretariat	High Some communication relays	High Many communication relays
Ownership	Low No reduction of government authority	Strong No reduction of government authority	Very strong Should be maintained very strong for governments by having a final approval stage only by them No reduction of government authority
Policy impact	Low but depending on social and political factors in the implementation	Speed up	Monitoring implementation and compliance with the products, tools and funds provided



First session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities
and institutional arrangements for IPBES
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BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES)

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) could become the international reference for independent, credible scientific advice for decision-making. At the third meeting on IPBES in Busan, Republic of Korea in June 2010, governments and other stakeholders agreed to establish this new science-policy platform. This Busan Outcome was then welcomed by the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010.

Through this joint statement, WBCSD and IUCN demonstrate the potential role of business in the design and implementation of IPBES.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS, BIODIVERSITY, AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES?

All businesses depend and impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and face increasing risks linked to natural resources scarcity. Some businesses are highly dependent on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity for their productivity. For instance, it has been estimated that the degradation of fishing stocks results in an \$ 80-100 billion loss of income to the fisheries sector, putting at risk 27 million jobs (TEEB, 2008).

Concurrently, the need to respond to pressing environmental challenges stimulates the emergence of new markets and business models. Businesses are actors of change and dynamic in innovation for creating ecosystem-friendly markets and developing more sustainable technologies. Biodiversity conservation is a source of innovation for pioneering businesses in emerging markets for ecosystem services and biodiversity-related products. One example includes forest industries, which have partnered with environmental organizations and social groups to develop new models of doing business, and to make use of market forces to promote sustainable forest management.

IPBES AND BUSINESS: MUTUAL BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE

The challenges to maintain, sustainably use, and restore, where needed, biodiversity and ecosystem services are complex, and require the contribution of all stakeholders to develop effective solutions. The need to engage business in IPBES is two-fold:

On the one hand, business will benefit from IPBES as it will set the reference for credible and relevant scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Businesses are encouraged, and in many instances incentivized, to find sustainable solutions to avoid, minimize, and offset their impacts on ecosystems. Methods and tools emanating from IPBES could support decision-making on business environmental strategies and policies, the measurement of ecosystem impacts and dependencies as well as accounting and reporting. Additionally, the provision of knowledge from IPBES could set the foundations for market-based mechanisms, like biodiversity offset frameworks. Using information from IPBES would give more credibility to mechanisms used by businesses and help improve their environmental standards, therefore increasing business competitiveness and innovation.

On the other hand, involving business in IPBES will bring important, value-adding legitimacy to IPBES. Businesses are providers of information and can therefore contribute to the generation and assessment of knowledge: good practices developed for the sustainable use of biodiversity for instance are valuable sources of knowledge to be assessed by IPBES. Businesses are also decision-makers and have an important role to play in the conservation, use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services upon which they depend. Business brings complementary perspectives to the ones from governments, which will help identify and prioritize the most relevant information gaps to be addressed by IPBES.

MESSAGES FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PLENARY MEETING ON IPBES: TOWARDS A MULTISTAKEHOLDER PLATFORM THAT RECOGNIZES THE ROLE OF BUSINESS

In order to ensure mutual benefits for both business and IPBES, WBCSD and IUCN support the establishment of an overarching and authoritative platform to provide independent policy-relevant scientific information:

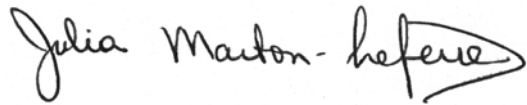
- WBCSD and IUCN acknowledge the Busan Outcome especially the ability given to the private sector to provide inputs and suggestions for IPBES governing bodies. They also take note of the possibility to contribute to the IPBES core trust fund.
- IPBES should be designed to be the authoritative source of credible policy-relevant knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being in order to facilitate access of relevant information to all decision-makers.
- IPBES should particularly aim to:
 - Assess existing knowledge, identify gaps and encourage further research in areas where it is needed;

- Deliver methods and tools that are relevant and readily usable for decision-makers and practitioners, including in the private sector.
- IPBES needs to continuously ensure the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders to secure its credibility, legitimacy and transparency. It needs to respond to the needs of the wide range of decision-makers and practitioners contributing to biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being, including in the business sector.
- Business wants to engage, participate and benefit from IPBES. The first session of IPBES plenary meeting will need to further define the role of business in the governance, functions and work program of IPBES.

We wish the plenary meeting success in its deliberations, and look forward to an outcome that takes into account the needs of business as custodians and users of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and that recognizes the role that business can play in the success of a new mechanism.



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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES)

By Susan A. Mainka, IUCN

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is being established to provide authoritative, independent, inclusive, peer-reviewed policy-relevant science-based advice for decision-makers. While IPBES itself is not expected to generate any new data, in undertaking assessments and developing policy relevant advice, biodiversity data and information from many sources will nevertheless be mobilized. IUCN believes that IPBES should have a clear statement of principles and expectations when making use of this information.

The foundation for principles to be considered in knowledge management is enshrined in several existing documents and organizations that are relevant to the work of IPBES including:

- The Principles of the Conservation Commons, supporting open access, conscious, effective, and equitable sharing of data, information and knowledge for all conservation purposes;
- The Partnership for Principle 10 of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, which notes that environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level, and that at the national level each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, along with the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes;
- The principles of the Aarhus Convention¹ regarding access to information and public participation and access to justice;
- The Convention on Biological Diversity's Articles 17 (Exchange of Information) and 18 (Technical and Scientific Cooperation) referring to the need for information exchange and sharing;
- The UN's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples² whose text, especially articles 27 and 31 and to a lesser extent 19 and 32, recognizes the proper measures to ensure that information about indigenous peoples is collected and distributed appropriately.

¹ Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, Aarhus, Denmark, 25 June 1998, <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/>

² <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html>

IUCN believes that relevant, accurate, usable, timely biodiversity data and information are essential for sound decision making and supports efforts to strengthen biodiversity information sharing, through the development and promotion of **standards** and **best practices** for information management. For the purposes of IPBES assessments and other products, relevant data and information could include data³ which concerns the status, distribution, trends, scenario, drivers of change and impacts relating to the components of biodiversity (genes, species and ecosystems) and can encompass many forms of delivery including hard copy documentation, media, and electronic files and other information in digital form. These data have mostly a strong geographical pattern, leading to the need for spatial informations reference⁴.

The key knowledge management principles that IUCN believes that IPBES should adopt relate to two key areas, namely i) full and free access to information being used to inform IPBES assessments and ii) respect for rights of data providers, be published literature or grey data. IPBES should also be explicit about its expectations with respect to the responsibilities of data providers and data users. Finally, IPBES should have a clear mechanism, embedded in its governance, through which to monitor and enforce the use of these principles.

ACCESS TO IPBES DATA AND INFORMATION

IUCN believes that IPBES should promote open access to biodiversity data and information that are used in IPBES assessments and, within the responsibilities agreed when data is provided to IPBES (discussed below), apply as few restrictions as possible on the use of that data and information. IUCN believes that all biodiversity data and information used for non-commercial purposes, such as IPBES assessments, should be available with minimal, reasonable restrictions on who can access the data and information used for IPBES assessments and how they can be used.

While promoting open access, IPBES will also need to recognize that generating and processing biodiversity data and supporting the maintenance of systems that underpin ongoing data management and improvement of data quality require resources, and therefore IPBES should support the use of mechanisms, as appropriate, to achieve cost recovery in support of those efforts for data and information used in IPBES assessments.

While recognizing the importance of access to IPBES data and information, IPBES will also likely need to recognize that in some cases, access may need to undergo some restrictions when the data or information in question is sensitive in nature. Data and information provided to IPBES may be sensitive for several reasons including, 1) data and information that, if released, could compromise effective biodiversity conservation; 2) time-sensitive data and information that can be released following a specific event (eg. publication of a peer-reviewed paper); or 3) proprietary data and information that is commercially sensitive.

While emphasizing on the use of all available data to nourish IPBES functions, IPBES will be wise to assess the quality of the different datasets that could be used. Since biodiversity is a real complex matter, lacking universal standards of measurements, not all datasets are equal in terms of quality. IUCN would suggest to introduce a rating system that allows to publicize the quality of datasets under use. This would provide an incentive to improve existing datasets and to stimulate development of quality.

³ Data = raw data, aggregated data, metadata, synthesis and analysis

⁴ See for example the INSPIRE Directive enforced by the European Commission (<http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>)

IUCN urges IPBES to recognize the important contributions that will be made to IPBES work by data holdings from developing countries and that, as a result, IPBES will recognize the full ownership of biodiversity data used by IPBES to those countries. IUCN believes that an extensive involvement of data providers from the developing countries will be a key of success.

Data being open access often results in a lack of incentive to provide funding to maintain and extend existing datasets, which may be of great value considering the long time series they compile. IPBES should take into account this value of already existing datasets and define a mechanism that, if needed and appropriate for future use, will help to maintain existing datasets.

RESPECT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)⁵, INCLUDING COPYRIGHT⁶ AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

IPBES should acknowledge the need to respect IPR of data providers and expect other users of biodiversity data to respect such rights. IPBES itself should not assert any IPR in the data made available for its assessments unless such IPR have been validly transferred by the rightful owner to IPBES. In any case, IPBES should, as far as reasonably possible, keep a record of the ownership and any other IPR associated issues for the biodiversity data sets it draws upon, and ensure the necessary licenses or permissions are in place for its use. Should ownership and IPR be unclear, IPBES should endeavor, as far as reasonably possible, to make fair and equitable arrangements with key stakeholders to facilitate deployment of the data to the benefit of conservation. All IPBES products should include acknowledgement of the sources of the data and information used and urge that attribution be maintained in any subsequent use of the IPBES products.

With respect to traditional knowledge and data that is shared with IPBES for its assessments, IPBES should respect the rights of indigenous peoples and not share, without permission, such knowledge and data without prior informed consent unless the knowledge and/or data is already publicly available in ways that respect the rights of the knowledge holders.

IPBES should consider a 'take-down' policy such that in the event of any reasonable claim of a potential breach of IPR, or other reasonable notice of a possible violation of rights or rules, regarding the content of an online service, the contested item will be removed from the service as quickly as possible pending further investigation and decision by the IPBES Governing Body.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DATA AND INFORMATION PROVIDERS AND USERS

When accepting data and information for use in IPBES, the Platform should require that such data and information providers ensure the following conditions:

⁵ Intellectual property rights = property rights for intellectual creations; can include copyright, design rights, trademarks, patents and trade secrets

⁶ Copyright = a legal concept giving the creator of an original work exclusive right, usually for a limited time. It gives the copyright holder the right to be credited for the work, to determine who may adapt the work to other forms, who may perform the work, who may financially benefit from it, and other related rights.

- **Data quality and currency.** Individuals or institutions that provide their biodiversity data on a voluntary basis have a responsibility for ensuring that the data are accurate, up-to-date and complete;
- **Rights to provide the data.** Data providers will ensure that they have secured from the rightful owners all the necessary IPR in the data permitting them to transfer the data to IPBES;
- **No undue restrictions are placed on use of the data.** IPBES should request that biodiversity data be provided free of restrictions on use, unless otherwise negotiated. In the case of sensitive data⁷, IPBES reserves the right to request regular reviews of the need to continue to treat the data as sensitive and to have sunset clauses inserted in specific data agreements relating to sensitive data;
- **Transparency in processes used for synthesis and analysis of data.** Data users, including IPBES itself, have responsibilities to ensure the processes by which assessments are undertaken are transparent and clear to all other users.

GOVERNANCE OF IPBES DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The responsibility to manage compliance with agreed knowledge management principles should rest in the senior governance of IPBES. When institutional arrangements for IPBES are finalized, this function should be explicitly included in the mandate of the senior most body designated. On a day-to-day basis, the IPBES Secretariat should be tasked with facilitating and monitoring compliance with the principles and with reporting to the relevant governance body when issues arise.

Should IPBES be part of a consortium delivering a biodiversity information product, IPBES should seek to standardize the principles of management for products relating to those partnerships in line with this principles already adopted by IPBES itself.

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⁷ Sensitive data = 1) data that, if released, could compromise effective biodiversity conservation; 2) time-sensitive data that can be released following a specific event (eg. Publication of a peer-reviewed paper); or 3) proprietary information that is commercially sensitive

ENSURING EFFECTIVE ACTION FROM ASSESSMENTS

By Jeffrey A. McNeely, consultant for IUCN

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is being established to provide essential information for decision-makers, including the many multinational environmental agreements. A major foundation of the work of IPBES will be the assessments that it undertakes to inform policy. These assessments are intended to be authoritative, independent, inclusive, peer-reviewed, policy-relevant, and based on all available sources of knowledge. They will be carried out at global, regional, and thematic levels.

The range of possible assessments that could be useful to IPBES is vast, requiring the IPBES Plenary to establish a credible methodology for selecting which assessments should receive the highest priority. Governments have agreed that the priorities should be established by the Plenary, responding to requests from governments, including the governing bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. In addition, the IPBES Plenary should welcome suggestions from relevant United Nations bodies, other intergovernmental organizations, regional and international scientific organizations, and non-governmental organizations. By drawing on this wide and diverse range of perspectives, IPBES will maintain flexibility and ensure that the most important issues are being assessed. The assessments produced will therefore be relevant to a wide audience, and can guide action in many fields.

The most general assessments will address the global status and trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services, which will require that metrics be established for ensuring consistency over time; this will provide the necessary credibility to the assessed trends. More narrowly-focused assessment of trends on critical issues should also be conducted, addressing topics such as effective conservation, changes in the impacts of invasive alien species, restoration of degraded ecosystems, impacts of new biotechnologies, identification of priority sites for conservation, and status and trends of biodiversity in specific regions.

Given the uncertainty of future conditions, IPBES should also assess alternative scenarios that may reflect alternative approaches to managing biodiversity and ecosystem services. Finally, the IPBES assessments should be of interest to a wide range of audiences, including ministries of environment, agriculture, finance, trade, security, and many others. They should also contribute to other interests of IPBES, including capacity building and knowledge generation.

IUCN is ready, willing, and able to support the assessment work of IPBES. As a science-based organization with 1156 Member organizations (including 87 State Members and 117 Government Agency Members) and a global network of over 10,000 scientists, lawyers, and conservation practitioners, IUCN is uniquely placed to offer such support, at global, national, and local levels. It also has long experience in conducting various kinds of assessments at many levels. For example, it was a partner in the 1992 **Global Biodiversity Assessment**, the 2005 **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment**, and the 2010 assessment of **The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity**. The **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species** is the standard reference on the global status of species, and has led to dozens of national assessments of species status; it is the most authoritative assessment of species status and trends and the global level. The **World Database of Protected Areas** and the **Global Invasive Species Database** provide the latest information on those themes. **ECOLEX**, in partnership with FAO and UNEP, provides a comprehensive guide to environmental legislation and regulation globally. All of these are possible due to the strong Commission networks that IUCN has supported and partnerships with organizations such as FAO, UNEP and others.

IUCN has also supported many governments in preparing national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including providing guidelines for carrying out such national-level assessments.

Lessons IUCN has learned in carrying out such assessments or contributing to them can help deliver IPBES assessments of the highest possible quality and utility. Reviews of factors involved in ensuring that scientific information is effectively delivered to decision makers indicate that the level of policy influence is related to “the extent that the information is perceived by relevant stakeholders to be credible, relevant and legitimate.” Scientists have tended to focus on ensuring credibility, but the other aspects are equally important to provide the information needed by policy makers (Cash et al., 2002). The IPBES assessments will be effective to the extent that they are able to combine all three of these qualities, requiring a synthesis of various disciplines and perspectives.

Credibility is based on the level of scientific confidence in the assessment results. It is the result of ensuring that the most appropriate methodologies are used, the best available evidence is included, and clear peer review procedures are in place.

Relevance ensures that the assessment undertaken responds to the questions or issues being posed and requires that IPBES assessments are based on clear specifications of needs and objectives.

Legitimacy indicates the political acceptability of the assessment, which requires an intergovernmental structure. Legitimacy will be further enhanced by building support from the scientific community and the communities likely to be affected by policies resulting from IPBES-supported policies. Thus legitimacy will also be based on which stakeholders were involved in the assessment as well as respect for the rights and responsibilities of the participants and users of the assessments.

Adapted from Cash et al. 2002; EEA 2001

Box 1. Credibility, relevance and legitimacy: Crucial elements of successful assessments

In addition to data and expertise in managing data, IUCN is recognized as an authority on synthesis and assessment of that data to address questions set by conservation policy makers (for example, the IUCN Red List Index, the World Heritage nomination process for natural sites and the IUCN/Traffic Analysis of Proposals to amend the CITES Appendices).

In this brief information document, IUCN shares perspectives on its own experience in undertaking assessments for intergovernmental processes. The assessment processes used as examples for this review have taught lessons that could be useful as IPBES establishes its own assessment procedures and processes.

LESSONS FROM IUCN ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

IUCN assessments are regularly reviewed, seeking improved quality, accuracy, balance, and relevance. As the conservation movement has matured, the quality of science has also improved, providing the basis for more useful assessments. IUCN has also found that participating with numerous partners in major assessments (such as the **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment**, the periodic assessments of the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**, and **The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity**) has provided opportunities for improving methodologies for other, more limited, assessments, for example of species or ecosystems (such as coral reefs), or at the national or local level.

- **Comprehensiveness.** While IUCN assessments have never been as comprehensive as it would have liked, considerable efforts have been taken to include as many taxa and ecosystems as possible, including freshwaters (Garcia et al., 2010), coral reefs (Wilkenson, 2002), the high seas (Gjerde and Breide, 2003), plants (Radford et al., 2011), and many others. These different components of biodiversity often require somewhat different approaches, indicating the value of some flexibility in approach..
- **Review process.** IUCN has sought to incorporate strong and independent peer review processes in its assessments, and seeks to reflect alternative perspectives where observations or conclusions are controversial. While peer review can be time-consuming and expensive, it is essential to maintaining credibility of the assessment.
- **Characterizing and communicating uncertainty.** While science can often provide fairly conclusive results, these are often better presented as probabilities rather than certainties; for example, species that were assessed as extinct have sometimes reappeared even a century after they have last been seen, leading IUCN to use “possibly extinct” as a more accurate term (Butchart et al., 2006). Quantitative probabilities (on a likelihood scale) can be used to describe the probability of well-defined outcomes when the evidence warrants such caution (InterAcademy Council, 2010).
- **Communications.** Assessments need to be accompanied by a strong communications strategy that reaches the target audience effectively, emphasizes transparency, provides rapid and thoughtful responses, and emphasizes relevance to stakeholders. It is also helpful to identify who can speak on behalf of the assessment so that its key messages do not become confused if the media reach out to someone who is not fully informed.
- **Transparency.** IUCN has found it helpful to publish in advance the methodologies that are being used to conduct its assessments, and major multi-stakeholder assessments like the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment have published the proposed approach well in advance of the assessment being conducted (Alcamo et al, 2003).
- **Original research.** During the process of preparing assessments, IUCN has often identified major gaps in knowledge. While the assessments avoid carrying out original research, they are often useful in identifying priorities for new research that could be carried out by relevant research institutions, with the resulting

published findings available for subsequent assessments. This provides a link to the knowledge-generating component of IPBES.

- **Identification of new methodologies.** In the process of preparing assessments, IUCN has often identified new approaches to compiling and presenting data. These methodologies can be effective in enhancing the credibility or relevance of the assessment; for example, the guidelines for preparing the **IUCN Red List** have been significantly modified over time, as the quality of science available has improved (IUCN Standards and Petitions Subcommittee, 2010). These improvements have also been applied to the preparation of Red Lists at the national and regional levels (for example, the 2010 Red List of Finnish Species)..
- **Implications for funding and capacity-building.** While the assessments themselves are not designed to influence funding decisions or indicate where capacity building is required, the agencies using the assessments may find that the assessments provide useful support for raising and allocating funds to some of the key issues identified by the assessment, or building capacity to address key priorities. The assessments do not identify priorities, they often do provide useful information that can be used by decision-makers. One example is the use of the Red List and the Protected Areas List in helping conservation organizations determine biodiversity hotspots. Assessments of Important Bird Areas can help local governments inform land use decisions.
- **Applications to policy.** Many of the IUCN assessment products are designed to be policy relevant. As just one example, the IUCN system of protected area categories has recently been used to prepare an empirical evaluation of what works for threatened species recovery in Australia (Taylor et al., 2011). This example shows that well-prepared and flexible assessments can be applied to policy at the national level in multiple ways, some of which may not have been considered when the assessment was being prepared.
- **Keeping up to date.** A major problem with global assessments is that they tend to be out of date by the time they are published. For example, the last version of the **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species** to be published as a hard copy was in 2004 (Baillie et al., 2004). The flow of new information on species status and trends has been so rapid that IUCN has decided to make its assessments available much more frequently, as often as 3 or 4 times per year, on the Internet (<http://www.iucnredlist.org>). This more flexible form greatly accelerates production of the Red List and makes the information available in an electronic form that can be applied in many ways.

CONCLUSIONS

IUCN warmly welcomes IPBES as an important new mechanism for providing policy-relevant information on biodiversity and ecosystem services to a wide range of potential users of such information. While the international environmental agreements (such as the CBD, CITES, Ramsar, World Heritage, Climate Change, and Desertification) are often the most important users, assessments are also relevant to many other interest groups. These include the private sector, the World Trade Organization, government agencies from virtually all sectors, non-governmental organizations, and the general public. IUCN has decades of experience in preparing assessments of various aspects of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and welcomes the opportunity to work with IPBES to make such information widely available, in a variety of forms that can be used by the numerous potential users of such information. Making policy-relevant information freely and widely available may be one of the most useful contributions the scientific community can make to ensure a sustainable future for Planet Earth.

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