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

Kuala Lumpur, 22–28 February 2016

Item 7 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Rules and procedures for the operation of the Platform:
procedures for the review of the Platform****Procedure for the review of the effectiveness of the
administrative and scientific functions of the Platform
(deliverable 4 (e))****Note by the secretariat****Introduction**

1. In its decision IPBES-2/5, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in consultation with the Bureau to develop a procedure for the review of the effectiveness of administrative and scientific functions of the Platform (deliverable 4 (e)). Annex I to the same decision, on the work programme for the period 2014–2018, set out that, once agreed, an independent review body appointed by the Plenary would conduct such a review at midterm and at the end of the work programme for the period 2014–2018. It was anticipated that the midterm review would inform actions by the Plenary related to the implementation of the remainder of the work programme for the period and that the final review would inform the development of the work programme for the following period. The Plenary at its third session was informed about the progress made (IPBES/3/INF/11).
2. The Plenary will be invited to approve a set of suggested actions, set out in paragraph 16 below, based on the background information set out in the present note, and the terms of reference for the reviews, set out in the annex to the present note.

A. Timing and type of reviews

3. As specified in the work programme for the period 2014–2018 (deliverable 4 (e)), a midterm review and a final review will be undertaken for the first work programme.
4. In order for the final review to inform the drafting of the second work programme, as specified in the mandate of the review, it would have to be presented to the Plenary at its sixth session, tentatively scheduled for early 2018. This is based on the following considerations: the second work programme, which is expected to begin in 2019, would need to be adopted by the Plenary at its seventh session, tentatively scheduled for early 2019; the work programme would be developed in the intersessional period 2018–2019, between the sixth and the seventh sessions; and the midterm review would consequently have to be submitted to the Plenary at its fifth session in early 2017.
5. It is proposed that the midterm and final reviews have two components: an internal review to be carried out by a subset of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, Bureau and secretariat, and an

* IPBES/4/1.

external review to be carried out by an external evaluation team nominated by the independent review body. More information on possible arrangements is included in section B of the draft terms of reference, below.

B. Objectives of the reviews

6. The objective of both reviews is to evaluate the effectiveness of the administrative and scientific functions of the Platform, as listed in UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9 and below:

7. The administrative functions include the following:

- (a) Addressing requests related to the Platform's programme of work and products that require attention by the Platform between sessions of the Plenary;
- (b) Overseeing communication and outreach activities;
- (c) Reviewing progress in the implementation of decisions of the Plenary, if so directed by the Plenary;
- (d) Monitoring the secretariat's performance;
- (e) Organizing and helping to conduct the sessions of the Plenary;
- (f) Reviewing the observance of the Platform's rules and procedures;
- (g) Reviewing the management of resources and observance of financial rules and reporting thereon to the Plenary;
- (h) Advising the Plenary on coordination between the Platform and other relevant institutions;
- (i) Identifying donors and developing partnership arrangements for the implementation of the Platform's activities.

8. The scientific and technical functions include the following:

- (a) Providing advice to the Plenary on scientific and technical aspects of the Platform's programme of work;
- (b) Providing advice and assistance on technical and/or scientific communication matters;
- (c) Managing the Platform's peer-review process to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality, independence and credibility for all products delivered by the Platform at all stages of the process;
- (d) Engaging the scientific community and other knowledge holders with the work programme, taking into account the need for different disciplines and types of knowledge, gender balance, and effective contribution and participation by experts from developing countries;
- (e) Assuring scientific and technical coordination among structures set up under the Platform and facilitating coordination between the Platform and other related processes to build upon existing efforts;
- (f) [Exploring approaches to facilitating the sharing and transfer of technology in the context of assessment, knowledge generation and capacity-building according to the work programme of the Platform;]
- (g) Exploring ways and means to bring different knowledge systems, including indigenous knowledge systems, into the science-policy interface

9. The objective is to ensure that the procedures for the preparation of the deliverables have been adhered to and that they have functioned to safeguard the credibility, legitimacy and relevance of the Platform.

10. While it would be too early for both reviews, and especially for the midterm one, to evaluate the impact of the Platform, the final review could initiate some work on this key aspect. Questions could include the following: are the Platform assessments being used to inform decision-making and in what context? Is the work on policy-support tools and capacity-building on track to assist policymakers in using information from Platform products?

C. The independent review body

11. As specified in decision IPBES-2/5, the review is to be performed by an independent review body. It is proposed that the review body perform both midterm external and final external reviews.

12. It is proposed that the International Council for Science (ICSU) be asked to appoint the independent review body and to administer it. ICSU is a non-governmental organization established in 1931, with a global membership of national scientific bodies, such as national academies of sciences and national research councils (122 members, representing 142 countries) and international scientific unions (31 Members). The mission of ICSU is to strengthen international science for the benefit of society, for which ICSU mobilizes the knowledge and resources of the international science community to identify and address major issues of importance to science and society; facilitate interaction among scientists across all disciplines and from all countries; promote the participation of all scientists—regardless of race, citizenship, language, political stance or gender—in the international scientific endeavour; and provide independent, authoritative advice to stimulate constructive dialogue between the scientific community and Governments, civil society and the private sector.

13. It is further proposed that ICSU be asked to seek the advice of the International Social Science Council (ISSC) for the selection of experts from social sciences. The ISSC is an independent non-governmental organization established in 1952. It is the primary body representing the social, economic and behavioural sciences at an international level. The mission of the ISSC is to increase the production and use of social science knowledge for the well-being of societies throughout the world. ISSC is a membership-based organization governed by a general assembly and an elected executive committee. Its members include international professional associations and unions, regional and national social science research councils and academies, universities and institutes with major interests in the social sciences.

D. Budget requirements

14. The budget would need to cover the following costs:

- (a) *Midterm review:*
 - (i) Administrative support to the midterm review is estimated at three months full time equivalent, amounting to \$31,580. The estimate is based on the cost of a professional P-2 position in the United Nations system (\$126,320 per year).
 - (ii) It is proposed to give an honorarium of \$5,000 to each external evaluator, amounting to \$25,000 for five experts for the midterm review.
- (b) *Final review*
 - (i) Administrative support to the final review is estimated at six months full time equivalent, amounting to \$63,160.
 - (ii) Honoraria for ten external evaluators would amount to \$50,000.
 - (iii) Travel and daily subsistence allowance for the final evaluation team and administrative staff to attend the fifth session of the Plenary would amount to \$3,750 per person for ten evaluators and one administrative assistant, that is, \$41,250.

The costs are summarized in the table below and amount to \$210,990.

Table: Estimate of total cost of midterm and final reviews to the Platform trust fund

Item	Cost in USD
Midterm review	
Consultancy fees	31,580
Honoraria	25,000
Final review	
Consultancy fees	63,160
Honoraria	50,000
Travel + daily subsistence allowance to attend the fifth session of the Plenary	41,250
Total	210,990

15. The amount currently included in the budget of the Platform for the review is \$120,000, which means that an additional \$90,990 would need to be added to the budget. The item will be considered in the context of the discussions on budgets and expenditures.

E. Suggested action by the Plenary

16. The Plenary, in response to decision IPBES-2/5, in which it requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in consultation with the Bureau to develop a procedure for the review of the effectiveness of administrative and scientific functions of the Platform, may wish to take the following actions:

(a) Invite ICSU to select, in collaboration with ISSC, the independent review body for the midterm and final reviews in accordance with the terms of reference set out in the annex to the present document, and to administer it;

(b) Request the Panel and the Bureau, with support from the secretariat, to undertake internal midterm and internal final reviews, with regard to the questions specified for these reviews in the annex to the present document.

Annex

Terms of reference for the midterm and final reviews of the effectiveness of the Platform

A. Overall approach

1. A midterm and final review will be performed, for consideration by the Plenary at its fifth (early 2017) and sixth (early 2018) sessions respectively. Both reviews will include an internal component.
2. The final review will consider all administrative and scientific functions of the Platform as set out in UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9. It will analyse the efficiency of the Platform, as measured against its operating principles, in delivering its four functions (see UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9) through the objectives and 18 deliverables of the work programme and established support structures, as governed by its rules of procedure (see decision IPBES-1/1, annex) and the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables (see decision IPBES-3/3, annex I).
3. The midterm review will consider the same functions as set out in the paragraph above with a view to informing actions by the Plenary related to the implementation of the remainder of the work programme for the period, that is, from early 2017 to early 2019. It will focus its efforts on identifying key challenges for the period and assessing their likelihood and consequences.

B. Institutional arrangements for undertaking the review

1. Midterm review

4. The independent review body will consist of five experts, selected by the International Council for Science (ICSU) in consultation with the International Social Science Council (ISSC), taking into consideration geographical and gender balances. The body will perform its work through various methods including analysis of documents and interviews of key actors. The team will collectively have expertise in the following areas:
 - (a) Sciences related to biodiversity and ecosystem services (including biological and social sciences);
 - (b) Indigenous and local knowledge;
 - (c) Previous biodiversity-related assessments (e.g. the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and national assessments);
 - (d) Science policy interface processes;
 - (e) Multilateral environmental agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity;
 - (f) Policymaking at intergovernmental and national levels;
 - (g) United Nation system and procedures.
5. The independent review body will be supported by a staff member of ICSU and by the Platform secretariat, as appropriate. Work for this staff will amount to three months full-time equivalent to manage the process and produce the report.
6. An internal review will be conducted in parallel by a group consisting of two Bureau members, two Panel members and the Executive Secretary. The internal review team will meet by teleconference and during the Panel and Bureau meetings to carry out its work. It will address the same questions as those of the external review.
7. The independent review body team will consult the internal review team, as appropriate.
8. The midterm report will consist of the internal and external reports.

2. Final review

9. For the final review, and given the breadth and amount of work to be performed, the independent review body will consist of ten experts with the same collective expertise listed above, composed of the five experts selected for the midterm review to ensure continuity in the work and of five additional experts. Attention will be paid to geographical and gender balances. The team will be selected by ICSU in consultation with ISSC and will perform its work in a manner similar to that

described above (analysis of documents and interviews of key actors). In addition, the team will attend the fifth session of the Plenary to observe all discussions, interview key actors and hold other discussions, as appropriate. It will also invite input from Governments and stakeholders via a questionnaire.

10. The external evaluation team will be supported by a staff member of ICSU and by the Platform secretariat, as appropriate. It is estimated that the total amount of work for this staff will amount to six months full time equivalent to manage the process and produce the report.

11. An internal review will be conducted in a manner similar to that of the internal midterm review by a group composed of two Bureau members, two Panel members and the Executive Secretary. The internal review team will meet by teleconference and during the Panel and Bureau meetings to address the same questions as those of the external review.

12. The external review team will consult the internal review team, as appropriate.

13. The final review report will consist of the internal and external reports.

C. Schedule

14. The midterm and final reviews will be delivered according to the following schedule:

2016	Fourth session of the Plenary (February 2016)	Agree on process and budget for midterm and final reviews
	Secretariat (March 2016)	Put in place institutional arrangements with the independent review body for both internal and external reviews
	Independent review body (March-April)	Nominate the external review evaluation team (midterm review) Begin the external midterm review
	Seventh Panel/Bureau meeting (May)	Begin the internal review by the internal review team (midterm review)
	Eighth Panel/Bureau meeting (November)	Discuss the internal review and prepare report for the fifth session of the Plenary
	Independent review body (December)	Produce midterm report for the fifth session of the Plenary Appoint additional team members to allow the entire team to attend the fifth session of the Plenary
2017	Fifth session of the Plenary (March)	Midterm report submitted to the fifth session of the Plenary for information Plenary to provide further guidance for final review Final review evaluation team conducts interviews
	Independent review body (April-May)	Appoint final review team Begin final review, taking into account guidance from the Plenary
	Ninth Panel/Bureau meeting	Provide input/feedback to review team as necessary
	Final review evaluation team	Continue review
	Tenth Panel/Bureau meeting	Provide input/feedback to review team as necessary
	Final review evaluation team (December)	Produce final review report
2018	Sixth session of the Plenary (March 2018, tentative)	Final review report submitted to the Plenary at its sixth session (March 2018) for its consideration