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

Bonn, Germany, 3–9 July 2022

Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Building capacity, strengthening knowledge foundations  
and supporting policy: work programme deliverables and  
task force workplans****Information on enhanced recognition of and work with  
indigenous and local knowledge systems****Note by the secretariat**

1. The Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), in section II of decision IPBES-2/5, established a task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems for the period of its first work programme. In section III of decision IPBES-5/1, the Plenary approved the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge (hereinafter referred to as the IPBES approach to indigenous and local knowledge) set out in annex II to that decision; requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, supported by the task force on indigenous and local knowledge, to implement it; and requested the Executive Secretary to make the arrangements necessary to implement the approach, including arrangements for the establishment of the participatory mechanism, subject to the availability of resources. In the same decision, the Plenary invited indigenous peoples and local communities and their representatives, as well as experts on indigenous and local knowledge, to engage in the activities described in the IPBES approach to indigenous and local knowledge, in particular through the participatory mechanism, and invited Governments, stakeholders, strategic partners and others to support activities mobilizing indigenous and local knowledge where such knowledge was needed.

2. The Plenary, at its seventh session, in decision IPBES-7/1, adopted the rolling work programme of the Platform for the period up to 2030, which includes among its six objectives enhanced recognition of and work with indigenous and local knowledge systems (objective 3 (b)). The objective focuses on implementing the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES, taking into account the special needs of indigenous and local knowledge holders through the implementation of the participatory mechanism established under the approach, and the recommendations and findings set out in document IPBES/7/INF/8 and other relevant future IPBES processes.

3. In decision IPBES-7/1, the Plenary recalled the establishment of the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems, extended its mandate for the implementation of objective 3 (b) of the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030 in accordance with the revised terms of reference set out in annex II to that decision, and requested the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, through the Platform's secretariat, to constitute the task force in accordance with the terms of reference.

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\* IPBES/9/1.

4. According to its terms of reference, the task force will oversee and take part in the implementation of objective 3 (b) of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 and will act in accordance with relevant decisions of the Plenary and its subsidiary bodies, including by building on lessons learned in the implementation of deliverable 1 (c) of the first work programme; supporting the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in implementing the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES; and guiding the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit, in supporting the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in implementing the approach. The Plenary decided to review the mandate and terms of reference of the task force at its tenth session.
5. The general terms of reference of the task forces, set out in annex II to decision IPBES-7/1, stipulate that each task force will, among other activities, provide a regular progress report and, in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, develop and update a workplan that sets out clear milestones and deliverables with regard to the relevant topics and objectives of the rolling work programme up to 2030 for periodic consideration by the Plenary.
6. In decision IPBES-8/1, section IV, the Plenary welcomed the progress made by the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems in the implementation of objective 3 (b) of the work programme of the Platform up to 2030. The Plenary also approved the interim workplan of the task force for the intersessional period 2021–2022, as set out in annex V to the decision.
7. Deliverables for objective 3 (b), a workplan for the task force for the intersessional period 2022–2023 and a draft workplan for the intersessional period 2023–2024 are set out in annex III to document IPBES/9/10 for consideration by the Plenary. An overview of activities carried out by the task force since the eighth session of the Plenary is set out in the report of the Executive Secretary on progress in the implementation of the rolling work programme up to 2030 (IPBES/9/4).
8. Further information on activities carried out by the task force in addressing its mandate and on activities planned for the next intersessional period are set out in the annex to the present note, which has not been formally edited.

**Annex\*****Information on work related to indigenous and local knowledge****I. Membership of the task force**

1. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau, at their 13<sup>th</sup> meetings selected the members of the task force in line with its terms of reference set out in annex II to decision IPBES-7/1.
2. The current composition of the task force is as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Function</i>
Ana María Hernandez Salgar	Colombia	Task force co-chair, IPBES Chair / Bureau member
Adriana Carolina Flores-Díaz	Mexico	Task force co-chair, Member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel
Judith Fisher	Australia	Member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel
Bibiana Vila	Argentina	Member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel
Zemedede Asfaw	Ethiopia	Expert
Eduardo Brondizio	Brazil	Expert
Jocelyn Cariño-Nettleton	Philippines/ UK	Expert
Viviana Elsa Figueroa	Argentina	Expert
Jinlong Liu	China	Expert
Zsolt Molnár	Hungary	Expert
Sherry Pictou	Canada	Expert
Kamal Kumar Rai	Nepal	Expert
Kanyinke Sena	Kenya	Expert
Vyacheslav Shadrin	Russia	Expert
Simone Athayde	Brazil	Liaison expert from the values assessment
Marla Emery	USA	Liaison expert from the sustainable use assessment (alternate member)
Patricia Howard	UK/USA	Liaison expert from the invasive alien species assessment (alternate member)

3. The technical support unit located at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, which had provided technical support to the task force during its first work programme, was selected by the Bureau at its 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to also provide technical support to the task force under the 2030 rolling work programme until the tenth session of the Plenary. The technical support unit is funded by IPBES and a matching in-kind contribution by UNESCO.

**II. Third meeting of the task force on indigenous and local knowledge**

4. The 2021 meeting of the task force was held online on 9, 16 and 29 November 2021.
5. The task force reviewed progress and discussed the draft workplans for the intersessional periods 2022–2023 and 2023–2024. Areas of focus included reviewing and enhancing the methodologies used in the assessments and the methodologies and outreach for the dialogue workshops, building strategies to enhance engagement, planning post-assessment activities for the assessments of the sustainable use of wild species and on values, and discussing national- and local-level processes influenced by IPBES work with indigenous and local knowledge. The results of these discussions are set out below and in document IPBES/9/10.

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\* The annex has not been formally edited.

### **III. Progress in the implementation of objective 3 (b): Enhanced recognition of and work with indigenous and local knowledge systems**

#### **A. Implementation of the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES**

##### **6. Establishment of expert groups for assessments:**

(a) The task force disseminated the call for nominations of experts and fellows for the two new assessments (nexus and transformative change) through relevant networks to encourage applications from members of indigenous peoples and local communities and from researchers who have experience in working with indigenous and local knowledge;

(b) The task force supported the gap filling process for the nexus assessment, providing names of potential authors who are members of indigenous peoples and local communities or who have experience in working with indigenous and local knowledge.

##### **7. Indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups:**

(a) Indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups<sup>1</sup> were established for the nexus and transformative change assessments;

(b) Orientation and on-going capacity-building were provided to the new liaison groups through a series of workshops around the IPBES approach to indigenous and local knowledge and IPBES methodologies, including information on dialogue workshops, reviews of literature and other materials, free, prior and informed consent and writing about and presenting indigenous and local knowledge in assessment chapters;

(c) For the values, sustainable use of wild species and invasive alien species assessments, the task force and technical support unit continued to work closely with the indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups, providing methodological support as needed, including on literature reviews, dialogue facilitation and support for the identification of contributing authors.

8. The call for contributions on indigenous and local knowledge for the nexus, transformative change and business and biodiversity assessments is under development and is planned to be issued in the second half of 2022, aligned with the timelines of the new assessments.

##### **9. Dialogue workshops:**

(a) Since the eighth session of the IPBES Plenary, the following dialogue workshops were held or are planned:

- (i) For the assessment of invasive alien species, during the second external review: 1 to 3 February 2022, online (interpretation into English and Spanish);
- (ii) For the scoping report of the assessment of business and biodiversity, during the external review: 22 and 24 November 2021, online (with interpretation into English, French and Spanish);
- (iii) For the nexus assessment, for framing key questions and approaches related to indigenous and local knowledge: planned for June/July 2022;
- (iv) For the transformative change assessment, for framing key questions and approaches related to indigenous and local knowledge: planned for June/July 2022;

(b) These dialogue workshops provide a platform for dialogue between assessment experts and members of indigenous peoples and local communities on the scope and content of drafts and approaches taken in assessments;

(c) Online dialogues were and will be held in English, Spanish and French, to enhance participation across world regions. Participants whose internet connectivity was too low to support an online workshop were also engaged by email to enhance the reach of the dialogues;

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<sup>1</sup> Indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups are groups of assessment authors who focus on indigenous and local knowledge across the chapters of the assessments

- (d) Online dialogues were held in several sessions across different time zones to further enhance participation across world regions;
- (e) Comments made by participants from indigenous peoples and local communities on draft documents were documented and submitted into the formal review processes for the assessments to facilitate participation by indigenous peoples and local communities in the formal review process;
- (f) Reports on the dialogues for the ongoing assessments have been completed and are being used as resources by the authors of the respective assessments. They are publicly available on the IPBES website;<sup>2</sup>
- (g) A key outcome of the dialogues was also capacity-building of all participants, both to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in IPBES processes, and to enhance work with indigenous and local knowledge by assessment experts.

10. Participation in assessment reviews: The task force participated in the external reviews of the invasive alien species assessment and the draft scoping report of the business and biodiversity assessment, with a focus on providing comments to enhance the inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge.

11. Participatory mechanism: The participatory mechanism is part of the IPBES indigenous and local knowledge approach, and its objective is to facilitate the effective and meaningful engagement of indigenous and local knowledge holders and indigenous and local knowledge experts and their organizations or networks, in order to strengthen their ability to contribute to and benefit from IPBES. Many activities listed in section A above are central to the implementation of the participatory mechanism, including the dialogue workshops and the call for contributions. In addition, the following activities were undertaken:

(a) Engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities through side-events at relevant meetings: An online side event webinar was held for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, on 4 May 2022, with BES-Net and the Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge, titled “Indigenous and local knowledge in biodiversity assessments: from local to global”, with the aim of building capacity and interest of indigenous peoples and local communities and others to participate in IPBES. The video of the webinar and other materials are now available online at: <https://ipbes.net/ilk-publication-resources>;

(b) Keeping abreast of national and local processes around the findings of assessments, which include policymakers and indigenous peoples and local communities: As included by the Plenary at its eighth session in the workplan of the task force for the current intersessional period, the task force prepared a note highlighting the impacts of IPBES work on indigenous and local knowledge at the national and local levels, set out in the appendix to the present note (see below);

(c) The indigenous and local knowledge section of the IPBES website was further developed, particularly the section on resources to further enhance the display of information and the range of reports and information available;

(d) The communications and engagement strategy for strategic partners and collaborative supporters was further developed, with more indigenous peoples and local communities and their organizations engaged in relation to IPBES work on indigenous and local knowledge. Key organizations working with indigenous and local knowledge were also contacted and engaged in IPBES work, including in reviewing IPBES assessments and making nominations for IPBES processes;

(e) Monitoring of participation by experts on indigenous and local knowledge, and indigenous and local knowledge experts in IPBES processes: The technical support unit provided information to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel on participation of experts on indigenous and local knowledge and members of indigenous peoples and local communities in dialogue workshops and of experts on indigenous and local knowledge in ongoing assessments;

(f) Reviewing, with the task force on knowledge and data, options for making the IPBES library of materials on indigenous and local knowledge publicly available:

- (i) An initial review of the IPBES library of materials on indigenous and local knowledge was undertaken with the knowledge and data task force. This review revealed challenges in making the library fully publicly available, including free, prior and informed consent around community materials,

<sup>2</sup> <https://ipbes.net/ilk-publication-resources>

licenses and access rights around academic papers, and the need to adequately provide metadata for all materials and documents that will be made accessible;

- (ii) Future steps will explore the possibility of generating a smaller subset of materials that could be made publicly available, focusing on community-level materials that may not be easily accessible in other ways;

(g) Supporting the balanced participation of indigenous peoples and local communities from all regions in the review of the use and impact of the conceptual framework, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources:

- (i) The review of the use and impact of the conceptual framework was discussed by the task force at its meeting in 2021, and indigenous participants provided feedback on the review;
- (ii) Task force members also supported a review, including the submission of comments, by the Network of the Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge (a group of organizations of indigenous peoples and local communities), to further enhance input from indigenous peoples and local communities;

(h) Provision of technical assistance for the review of draft IPBES assessments on a chapter-by-chapter basis to provide recommendations based on indigenous and local knowledge systems, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources: As described above, support was provided for the reviews through the dialogue workshops and surrounding processes, including work by the technical support unit to manage the registration of participants and to support the submission of their comments in the review templates;

(i) Development and strengthening of regional and national networks of indigenous peoples and local communities' participation in IPBES deliverables, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources: As described above, efforts were made to enhance participation by regional and national networks of indigenous peoples and local communities through dialogue workshops and enhancing engagement with key organisations;

(j) Promotion of inter-scientific dialogue between academic science and traditional and local knowledge, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources:

- (i) As described above, efforts were made to enhance inter-scientific dialogue between academic science and traditional and local knowledge, including through training provided to indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups and through dialogue workshops;
- (ii) Support was given to inter-scientific dialogue processes taking place at national levels, including the national ecosystem assessments and work at the national and local level by indigenous peoples' organisations, including participation by task force members in a training on IPBES indigenous and local knowledge methodologies for author teams of national ecosystem assessments working within the BES-Net project;

(k) Provision of support for the functioning and strengthening of the participatory mechanism, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources: Most of the activities listed above relate to the provision of support for the functioning and strengthening of the participatory mechanism, including dialogue workshops, engagement and other processes. Most methodologies for working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES have participation as a key goal.

12. Provision of support to the work of other task forces regarding aspects related to indigenous and local knowledge, including organization of a consultation workshop on the nature futures framework from the perspective of indigenous and local knowledge:

(a) The task forces on indigenous and local knowledge and scenarios and models worked together to organize a dialogue workshop during the external review of the draft nature futures framework, as follows:

- (i) The dialogue was held from 28 to 30 September and on 19 October 2021 in English, French, Spanish and Russian;
- (ii) The workshop aimed to critically review the draft nature futures framework, and to further enhance work with indigenous and local knowledge and scenarios as this has been recognized as a significant gap by IPBES assessments;

- (iii) Review comments from this dialogue workshop were entered into the nature futures framework's formal review process and were considered by the task force as it revised the draft document;
  - (iv) A report from the dialogue workshop is currently being developed. This will be a publicly available resource for stakeholders interested in the subject of scenarios and indigenous and local knowledge;
  - (v) A second workshop on scenarios and indigenous and local knowledge is proposed for 2022 to continue this work.
- (b) The task force worked with the task force and technical support unit on knowledge and data on the development of the IPBES data and knowledge management policy and long-term vision on data management, to ensure that these documents give appropriate consideration to indigenous and local knowledge. A key aim is to further enhance the accessibility of IPBES products and data for indigenous peoples and local communities. See also document IPBES/9/INF/14.

## **B. Development of further methodological guidance on the approach**

13. The methodological guidance for recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES<sup>3</sup> was further developed to include text on working with scenarios and indigenous and local knowledge and free, prior and informed consent. It was also modified to make it more accessible for authors of the new assessments.

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<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://ipbes.net/modules-assessment-guide>

## Appendix

### Note highlighting the impacts of IPBES work on indigenous and local knowledge at the national and local levels

#### I. Introduction

1. The IPBES task force on indigenous and local knowledge, working with assessment authors and in consultation with indigenous peoples and local communities, has developed a rigorous and innovative approach to working with indigenous and local knowledge in global-scale biodiversity assessments. This is set out in the IPBES approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge, which was developed by the task force and approved by the IPBES Plenary at its fifth session in 2017 (see decision IPBES-5/1, annex II).
2. The task force also decided that more guidance was needed in order to implement the approach effectively, and to ensure that lessons learned during the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and future assessments were recorded. This led to the development of the methodological guidance on recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES, which is updated as a living document as new methods are developed by the task force.
3. Together, these two documents lay out a series of methods both for working with indigenous and local knowledge and for enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in IPBES, including dialogue workshops at key phases of an assessment cycle, calls for contributions, and engaging indigenous peoples and local communities as contributing authors.
4. As a result of these efforts, IPBES assessments have detailed text that assesses indigenous and local knowledge and its contributions to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The final summaries for policymakers of the assessments have key messages and background information that recognize the importance of indigenous and local knowledge. From the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the task force produced a document presenting the key messages of particular relevance to indigenous peoples and local communities<sup>4</sup>, with the aim of making this information more accessible for IPBES members, indigenous peoples and local communities and other stakeholders.
5. As part of its workplan for the current intersessional period, (decision IPBES-8/1, annex V), the IPBES Plenary asked the task force to prepare a note highlighting the impacts of IPBES work on indigenous and local knowledge at the national and local levels.
6. The task force therefore reached out through its networks asking for examples of how IPBES work on indigenous and local knowledge has had impacts at national and local levels. While it can be difficult to track direct impacts, as IPBES work takes place within a range of diverse processes, the following examples illustrate some of the avenues through which IPBES work has been influential at different scales.

#### II. National level

7. At the national level, impacts can be seen from the IPBES approach to working with indigenous and local knowledge. One of most significant examples of this has been the adoption of similar methodologies for working with indigenous and local knowledge in national ecosystem assessments under the BES-Net project, a consortium comprised of UNEP-WCMC, UNDP and UNESCO. Guided by BES-Net, the following countries have, in different ways, adopted or developed the IPBES approach and methodologies for working with indigenous and local knowledge to their national contexts: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Grenada, Malawi, Thailand, and Vietnam. Methods have included participatory mapping, dialogue workshops and indigenous peoples as authors of a separate assessment chapter. This attention to indigenous and local knowledge represents a significant evolution in how indigenous and local knowledge is recognized and included within national-level science-policy processes related to biodiversity.

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<sup>4</sup> Available at: <https://ipbes.net/ilk-publication-resources>

8. Other examples at the national level involve networks created around IPBES products. One example is the dialogue processes created by the BES-Net project. Dialogues are dialogues which bring together policymakers, scientists and practitioners to discuss completed IPBES assessments. Some participating countries have included indigenous peoples and local communities in the dialogues and their follow-up, for example one country has created a network to work on issues around pollinators that includes indigenous peoples and local communities. The recent incorporation of UNESCO into the consortium that manages the BES-Net project should further increase attention to indigenous and local knowledge in this space. Post-assessment dialogues run by other organizations have also been cited as enhancing dialogue between policymakers, scientists and indigenous peoples and local communities at the national level.

9. Another example of a national-level activity that was motivated by IPBES products is a self-organized project by indigenous peoples in an IPBES member country that aimed to raise awareness about IPBES among members of indigenous peoples and local communities and encourage participation in the future work of IPBES at regional, national and local levels.

### **III. Local level**

10. At the local level, available examples mostly involve the use of IPBES products, including indigenous organizations using the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, as well as the workshop reports on Biodiversity and Pandemics and Biodiversity and Climate Change as background materials for the development of courses and education materials on the sustainable use of natural resources and land management.

11. Other activities include indigenous communities using the results of the Global Assessment as background materials to enhance their work on biocultural community protocols, which aim to provide a roadmap for development and resource use with and by indigenous communities. Global Assessment messages were used to demonstrate the importance of indigenous and local knowledge in the context of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources in this context.

12. Indigenous peoples' organizations also report using IPBES materials, particularly the Global Assessment, when developing funding applications or project proposals for projects that will support knowledge revitalization and sustainable use of resources in their communities.

13. Respondents also noted that the attention given to indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES assessments, and the recognition of sustainable use and conservation by indigenous peoples and local communities, have helped to increase pride in their communities' knowledge and practices.

14. In terms of impacts of the IPBES approach itself, other respondents noted that they value the capacity-building they receive through the dialogue processes in terms of sharing knowledge about the specific topics of the assessments and more generally about indigenous and local knowledge and biodiversity at a global scale. Others also noted the value they have received from the informal networks of indigenous peoples and local communities that are built during the workshops, as they are valuable opportunities for participants from indigenous peoples and local communities to connect and learn about each other's communities.

### **IV. Conclusion**

15. In conclusion, there is evidence that IPBES work with indigenous and local knowledge is having significant impacts on science-policy processes at the national level, through partnerships between IPBES members, other international organisations and indigenous peoples and local communities, and IPBES is often noted as setting new standards in terms of work with indigenous and local knowledge. At the local level indigenous peoples and local communities are also making use of IPBES products for activities that support their cultures and sustainable use of resources. In these processes, the efforts of national governments, external organisations, and indigenous peoples and local communities are crucial.