

IPBES-9 Plenary, Opening Statement

European Union and its Member States that are members of IPBES

Madam Chair,

Madam Executive Secretary,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic speaks on behalf of the European Union and its Member States that are members of IPBES.

We are very pleased that the Ninth Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services meets in person, after two years of online virtual meetings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While IPBES has shown that it can take decisions in a virtual format at last year's Plenary, we are very happy to engage in a face-to-face exchange again. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Executive Secretary, her team, and all others who have worked so hard and tirelessly in preparing this Ninth Session here in the beautiful city of Bonn.

We would also like to thank the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, the Secretariat and the Technical Support Units for their tremendous efforts in implementing the IPBES work programme in a reasonable and effective manner under the unusual circumstances we have been facing in the last years.

Since its approval in 2019, the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has become a widely accepted and highly regarded source of information on the worrying state, changes and trends of biological diversity. Unfortunately, despite this wake-up call and despite efforts and actions undertaken, the decline and loss of nature continues at a massive scale. The world is subject to constant change and the future, just to quote the famous French poet and philosopher Paul Valéry, is not what it used to be.

In this context, let us express the EU and its MS' full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Russia is waging an unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, violating the UN Charter and other fundamental principles of international law. We call on Russia to put an end to the war it started and to end the tragic suffering and loss of life it continues to cause. We also express our deep concern with regard to the profound damaging impacts of the military action by Russian Federation on the nature in Ukraine.

The outstanding relevance of IPBES and its deliverables has never been so crucial for people and nature. The documents we will discuss and agree upon this week will provide the necessary, useful and recognized knowledge base for the effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, contributing to human well-being and sustainable development. They will be of the utmost importance for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to be adopted at the CBD COP 15 in Montreal in December under the Presidency of China.

We, the IPBES Member States, have concluded that transformative change is urgently needed, meaning a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values. In this regard, IPBES plays a key role due to its engagement with both science and policy and, in particular, their interfaces. It serves therefore as an important bridge between the two spheres.

At this Plenary, we will consider important IPBES deliverables: the assessments of the sustainable use of wild species and of the diverse values and valuation of nature. We will also agree upon the scoping report for the business and biodiversity assessment and discuss the task force work plans for the coming years.

The European Union and its Member States that are members of IPBES invite all to work on options for strengthening the collaboration between IPBES and, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, recognizing the interdependence of the nature and climate crises.

The European Union and its Member States that are members of IPBES will do their best to ensure a successful outcome of this Ninth Session of the Plenary.

We wish all participants a fruitful and successful meeting and look forward to constructive discussions that lead to an ambitious result in the seven days ahead.

Thank you, Madam Chair.