

**Online dialogue workshop to
promote the use of IPBES
products in policymaking
in Asia and the Pacific**
17 June 2022

Online dialogue workshop to promote the use of IPBES products in policymaking in Asia and the Pacific

Online – 19 April 2022

Summary of key discussion and outcomes

I. Background

Objective 4 (a) of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030, “advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies”, includes a focus on enabling the use of the findings of IPBES assessments in decision-making. To address this, one of the deliverables in the workplan of the task force on policy tools and methodologies is to promote the use of findings of IPBES assessments in decision-making.

One of the key activities under this deliverable is to convene a series of dialogues with actors at the science-policy interface in different sectors, working with existing platforms at national and subregional levels. As part of this work, the task force identified the need to provide a space where relevant stakeholders can share their experiences on how IPBES products, including the findings of IPBES assessments, are being used in decision-making in order to further promote their use.

Within this context, the online dialogue workshop to promote the use of IPBES products in policymaking in Asia and the Pacific took place online on 19 April 2022. This was the second dialogue of its kind, following from and drawing on the lessons learnt of the pilot online dialogue workshop for Africa which was held in early 2021.

A brief summary of discussions and key outcomes identified as a result of the online dialogue is presented below. The full agenda of the event is available in annex I. The agenda and presentations delivered have been made available on the IPBES website at <https://ipbes.net/events/dialogue-workshop-promote-use-ipbes-products-policy-making-asia-and-pacific>.

II. Participants, opening remarks and setting the scene

The dialogue workshop brought together 48 participants, including IPBES national focal points, government representatives from different sectors, members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, members of the task force on policy tools and methodologies, IPBES experts, representatives of international and regional organizations, and members of the IPBES secretariat and technical support units. Dr Madhav Karki, member of the Multidisciplinary

Expert Panel and of the task force on policy tools and methodologies welcomed participants. In his opening remarks, Dr Karki outlined objective 4 (a) of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 and noted that this dialogue workshop followed the pilot dialogue workshop for Africa which took place in 2021, and built on its lessons learned. The dialogue was facilitated by Ms. Daniela Guarás, member of the IPBES technical support unit on policy support tools and methodologies. Ms. Guarás outlined the purpose of the dialogue workshop: to provide an informal space for the exchange of views and experiences on the use of IPBES products to support policymaking in the region, whilst also identifying ways in which future products could be improved to respond better to the needs of the actors involved. Moreover, the workshop sought to allow for the identification of challenges to the use of IPBES products and how to overcome these hurdles within the Asia and the Pacific region.

Ms. Guarás presented a brief online Mentimeter questionnaire which served as an ice breaker. Please see table 1 below for an overview of the questions and answers received during this questionnaire.

| Table 1: Mentimeter questions and results | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <i>What do you expect to take away from this dialogue workshop?</i> | | | |
| Lessons from other countries on how they have enhanced the level of uptake of IPBES outcomes | Examples demonstrating successful uptake of IPBES assessments | How countries are utilising and applying the IPBES assessments that were adopted | Ways to use IPBES products in relation to policymaking in my country |
| How to generate interest in and increase attention to the findings of IPBES assessments | To understand how to promote the use of IPBES products in policymaking | Tangible applications of IPBES assessments at the national and local level | To understand about policymaking methods in various regions |
| Knowledge regarding the use of a particular product and why it is policyrelevant and to get to know different policy perspectives | Update on progress on how the regional assessment for Asia-Pacific is influencing policy in different countries, and how countries viewed the assessment outcome | Understand challenges to uptake by policymakers and how to overcome the challenges of using the assessment outcomes | Understand what policymakers expect from the IPBES assessments for the efficient and effective policy uptake |
| Tools that can assist countries in the implementation of IPBES | Some inspiration on outreach for IPBES products | How to get more involved in using the work of IPBES | To follow up on the effectiveness of the IPBES Asia-Pacific assessment |

Dr. Suneetha Subramanian, coordinating lead author of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and Dr. Ram Pandit, coordinating lead author of the Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration set the scene for the discussions by presenting key aspects from the two assessments and highlighting their policy-relevance.

III. National experiences using IPBES products for policymaking

Representatives from three countries within the region (Japan, Pakistan and China) shared their experiences of using IPBES assessments as examples of how IPBES products have been used in policymaking in Asia and the Pacific, in order to encourage a discussion among dialogue participants.

Mr. Koji Miwa from the Institute of Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), presented on the experience of Japan. He explained how IGES, alongside the Japanese Ministry of the Environment, has been promoting the use of IPBES assessments in the country. After every IPBES Plenary session, a debriefing is organized to inform the Japanese public about the outcomes. Additionally, the summaries for policymakers of IPBES assessments are translated into Japanese. Mr. Koji Miwa also outlined that many Japanese experts support the assessments in different capacities. Japanese IPBES experts meet annually to share progress in their work and discuss challenges they face, to foster mutual support and advice. To encourage further engagement from the Japanese public and private sector, an IPBES symposium is organized annually. This provides a forum to present progress in IPBES assessments and discuss the summaries for policymakers.

Mr. Rizwan Irshad, deputy director of the Ministry of Climate Change in Pakistan shared the experience from Pakistan. Highlighting the multi-scalar legal context between regional and national governments in the country, Mr. Irshad referred to the complexity of some governance structures where the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) falls on provincial actors. Targets set under the Convention on Biological Diversity around areas such as pollinators and invasive species are communicated to provincial governments and acted on at sub-national levels. Mr. Irshad also noted that when emerging IPBES messages are communicated to actors at different scales, their use can sometimes be hindered because of a perceived difference in priorities that certain stakeholders have. However, in revising the country's national biodiversity strategy and action plan, Mr. Irshad highlighted the success of bringing actors from different sectors together to contribute. He pointed out a need for regional and federal efforts to convey the message of IPBES to actors at different scales of government.

Ms. Lei Wang from the Ministry of Ecology and the Environment in China shared perspectives of China. China actively encourages national experts to participate in the IPBES scientific processes and attaches importance to making full use of relevant IPBES outcomes in decision-making, including policy formulation. Some information from different IPBES assessment reports is used directly by Government departments whilst most of the time these assessments influence experts in the field and shape their advice which informs Government decision-making processes. IPBES assessments also provide a reference for the undertaking of national biodiversity assessment work in China, such as the one conducted in 2019. Additionally, Ms. Wang also provided some recommendations for enhancing the influence of the Platform's products, namely:

- (a) Increasing participation of IPBES members;
- (b) Further considering the recognition of different IPBES products;
- (c) Enhancing the development of IPBES products to make them more inclusive, including by providing a longer timeframe for the external peer review of IPBES products;
- (d) Further promoting communication and understanding of the key content of IPBES products to enable policymakers and the public to quickly capture the core outcomes and highlights of IPBES products.

IV. Moderated discussion

Building on the experiences shared by the three country representatives, as well as the contributions made by other participants, the moderated discussion was structured around the following issues:

- (a) Identifying further examples of how IPBES products have been used in policymaking;
- (b) Discussing challenges and opportunities for increasing the use of IPBES products (including complete, ongoing and future IPBES assessments in policymaking);

- (c) Identifying how IPBES can help overcome some of the challenges mentioned and engage a wider range of national agencies in using those findings.

Some of the key inputs from the discussion are presented below.

A. Other examples of how IPBES assessments have been used in different countries

Multiple attendees explained that after the approval of IPBES assessment reports, they had participated in or organized workshops to promote the use of results.

It was highlighted that the IPBES regional assessments have been used considerably at the regional level to inform policy dialogue processes. For example, one of the co-chairs for the assessment presented at a round table meeting for SDG 15 as a keynote speaker. Likewise, IPBES assessment reports were utilized in preparing background materials to inform the deliberations of the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific.

Another example mentioned came from a lead author of the IPBES pollination assessment, who had worked with grassroot agricultural communities to increase knowledge around local pollination practices to increase yield crop and the use of bio-pesticides.

B. Challenges and opportunities for increasing the use of IPBES products

A participant highlighted the need for more in-depth discussion to gain a better understanding at the regional and national levels of IPBES products to bolster capacity-building and learning from experiences. This reflected similar points made by other participants in relation to the different scales of governance and the challenge of disseminating key messages and policy options from IPBES assessments at the sub-national scale. Concerning new and pressing forms of environmental problems, the participant noted that it was not unusual that policies and governance structures needed to be adjusted to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Government agencies or institutions at different levels.

A notable challenge highlighted by several participants related to language and the translation of IPBES assessments. Much of a country's work in understanding and communicating the assessment reports related to the process of translating the often-complex report findings into its official national language.

C. How can IPBES overcome identified challenges

Participants agreed that there is an increasing opportunity for cross-sectoral efforts at the regional level in the form of dialogue and policy development. These cross-sectoral mechanisms provide an opportunity to present the findings from IPBES assessments and promote the use of IPBES products more broadly. It was outlined that the Regional Assessment for the Asia-Pacific region provides information on multi-sector and multi-scale approaches towards integrating biodiversity into the food, water and land sectors, which can help address the challenges resulting from 'working in a silo'.

Additionally, there was a shared understanding that key messages should be more relevant and sensitive to diverse cultural and social issues, as this would improve their use in policy processes. It was also suggested that in future assessments, it would be helpful to provide region- and country-specific information and key messages.

The representative from the UNEP regional office suggested considering utilizing resident coordinators and UN country teams processes at the national level as these often act as entry points to different national ministries and sectors.

The IPBES impact tracking database (TRACK) was highlighted as a useful tool, designed for countries and others to share what they have been doing with regard to policy actions in response to IPBES products. Participants were encouraged to contribute examples to this database.

V. Brief introduction to the work of the task force on capacity-building

Ingunn Storrø, head of the IPBES technical support unit on capacity-building, provided an overview of the work of the task force on capacity-building. The task force is mandated to implement objective 2 of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 with the aim that all of the activities undertaken are developed from capacity-building needs reported by IPBES members. Such activities include a fellowship programme, which provides training and mentoring to early-career individuals involved in the development of IPBES products; a training and familiarisation programme providing face-to-face training and e-learning resources to develop experts' capacities to contribute to IPBES products; and organise science-policy dialogue meetings with Governments and stakeholders to discuss key IPBES deliverables and processes.

IPBES also relies on the support of a wide range of institutions, organizations and individuals to familiarise decision-makers, different stakeholder groups and the general public with the key findings from the IPBES assessments and other deliverables. The technical support unit on capacity-building can provide support to such activities in the form of physical/electronic materials, feedback on agendas, contact details of relevant IPBES experts and presentations, where needed. The task force also works on strengthening national and regional capacities, and encourages the establishment of science-policy platforms, networks and assessments for biodiversity and ecosystem services at national and (sub)regional levels.

Annex I

Online dialogue workshop to promote the use of findings of IPBES assessments in policymaking in Asia and the Pacific

Provisional agenda

Connection details

The dialogue workshop will be held using the platform Zoom. Connection details are received by email when participants register.

To ensure the best possible delivery of the dialogue workshop, participants are encouraged to take the following into consideration:

- Check your internet connection in advance of the meeting (try joining 15 minutes before the start). The internet connection tends to be stronger when using an ethernet cable or a dedicated Wi-Fi connection.
- Use headsets with a microphone if possible.
- Please check you have the latest version of zoom downloaded: Version: 5.10.1 and check for any Zoom software updates. Further information can be found [here](#).

Objective of the meeting

The dialogue workshop contributes to objective 4 (a) of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030, entitled: “advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies”.

Specifically, the dialogue workshop aims at achieving the following two objectives:

1. Better understanding how IPBES products are being used to support policymaking. The dialogue workshop aims at allowing participants to share experiences in using IPBES products to advance biodiversity-related policies at the regional, national and subnational levels.
2. Identify ways in which IPBES products could be improved to better respond to the needs of actors at the science-policy interface. The dialogue workshop seeks support the facilitation of the use of IPBES products at the national and regional levels.

Tentative schedule

| Time (CEST) | Session |
|---------------|--|
| 09:15-09:30 | Join meeting |
| 09:30-09:35 | Opening of the meeting – Technical support unit on policy support tools and methodologies |
| 9:35 – 9:40 | Welcome remarks from the task force <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Madhav Karki – Member of the task force on policy tools and methodologies, and member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel |
| 09:40-9:55 | Overview of IPBES and its work, with focus on completed assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Suneetha Subramanian - Coordinating lead author, Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services • Dr Ram Pandit - Coordinating lead author, Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration |
| 09:55-10:30 | Examples of how IPBES products have been used in policymaking in Asia and the Pacific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Liu Li, Associate professor, Nanjing Institute of Environmental Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China • Mr Koji Miwa, Policy Researcher, Biodiversity and Forest Area, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan • Mr Rizwan Irshad, Deputy Director, Ministry of Climate Change, Islamabad Pakistan |
| 10:30 – 11:30 | Moderated discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify further examples of how IPBES products have been used in policymaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have IPBES products been used in your country or at the regional level to support policymaking? If so, which ones and how? • At which levels (regional, national or subnational) are IPBES products being used the most? Why do you think that is the case? • What specific parts of the assessments have you used and why? (e.g., summaries for policymakers, chapters (any chapter in particular?)) • Have IPBES products been used only by environment agencies or also by governmental agencies in other development sectors? Which ones? • For what purpose have you used IPBES products? (e.g., to formulate policy and technical measures, elaborate technical reports, promote capacity-building and awareness raising) Discuss challenges and opportunities for increasing the use of IPBES products (including complete, ongoing and future IPBES assessments in policymaking) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key challenges that you face in using IPBES products for policymaking? • What are the key benefits that you have experienced of using IPBES products to support policy processes? Identify how IPBES can help overcome some of the challenges mentioned and engage a wider range of national agencies in using those findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be done to further promote and facilitate the use of IPBES products in supporting policymaking? • How can the challenges identified earlier be most effectively addressed, and by whom? • How can IPBES build on and further promote sharing of experiences of countries in using IPBES assessments most effectively? |
| 11:30-11:45 | Brief introduction to the work of the task force on capacity-building – Ingunn Storrø, head of IPBES technical support unit on capacity-building |
| 11:45-12:00 | Final wrap up and closing remarks |

Key information resources

- [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(full report\)](#)
- [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(Summary for policymakers\)](#)
- [Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Asia and the Pacific \(full report\)](#)
- [Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Asia and the Pacific \(Summary for policymakers\)](#)
- [Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration \(full report\)](#)
- [Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration \(Summary for policymakers\)](#)
- [Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production \(full report\)](#)
- [Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production \(Summary for policymakers\)](#)
- [IPBES Regional Assessments \(video\)](#)
- [IPBES Regional Assessment of Asia-Pacific \(video\)](#)
- [IPBES Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration \(video\)](#)
- [The Critical Importance of Pollinators \(video\)](#)