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| Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy  Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services  Eleventh session  Windhoek, 10–16 December 2024  Item 8 of the provisional agenda[[1]](#footnote-2)\*  Building capacity, strengthening knowledge foundations and supporting policy |  |

Information on advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies

Note by the secretariat

1. One of the four functions of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) set out in its founding resolution is to support “policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development.”[[2]](#footnote-3)
2. In decision IPBES-7/1, the Plenary of IPBES adopted the rolling work programme of IPBES for the period up to 2030, which included objective 4 (a), on advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies. The objective focuses on supporting the use of policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies in the implementation of the programme of work relevant for biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use, as well as the provision of ecosystem functions and services in the conduct of the assessments, and in enabling the uptake of the findings of the assessments in decision-making. It also focuses on promoting and catalysing the further development of policy instruments and policy support tools to fill gaps identified in assessments and related capacity-building activities.
3. In section V of the decision, the Plenary established a task force on policy tools and methodologies to implement objective 4 (a) of the rolling working programme of IPBES up to 2030, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in annex II to the decision, and decided to review the mandate and terms of reference of the task force at its tenth session.
4. In decision IPBES-10/1, the Plenary welcomed the progress made by the task force on policy tools and methodologies in the implementation of objective 4 (a) of the rolling work programme and approved a workplan for objective 4 (a) for the intersessional period 2023–2024, as set out in annex VII to the decision. In the decision, the Plenary did not extend the mandate of the task force, but requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau of IPBES to implement the workplan.
5. In section V of that decision, the Plenary requested the Executive Secretary to invite members, observers and stakeholders to submit their views on the future role of the policy support function and ways to strengthen the implementation of objective 4 (a).
6. An overview of activities carried out by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, supported by the technical support unit for policy support tools and methodology, since the tenth 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 11/3).
7. The annex to the present document provides further information on activities carried out by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, supported by the technical support unit, in implementing the workplan for objective 4 (a) for the intersessional period 2023–2024, in particular activities to increase the policy relevance of IPBES assessments and activities to promote and support the use of IPBES products in decision-making (section I and appendix). Section II sets out additional information on the proposed workplan for the task force for the intersessional period 2024–2025, which is presented in document IPBES/10/8. Sections III and IV contain draft workplans for objective 4 (a) for the intersessional periods 2025–2026 and 2026–2027, respectively. The annex and the appendix thereto are presented without formal editing.

Annex[[3]](#footnote-4)\*

Information on work related to policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies

I. Report on progress in the implementation of objective 4 (a): advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies

A. Promoting and supporting the use of findings of IPBES products in decision-making

1. The activities carried out or planned to be implemented to promote and support the use of findings of IPBES products in decision-making are presented in the following paragraphs.
2. *Finalization of fact sheets.* Seven fact sheets based on the *Assessment Report of Invasive Alien Species and their Control* have been finalized. They focused on: data on trends and impacts of biological invasions; the role of business in the management and governance of biological invasions; biological invasions affecting protected areas and most natural ecosystems; biological invasions on islands; management and governance of biological invasions; stakeholder engagement, and on climate change and biological invasions. All factsheets are available on the IPBES website alongside the assessment report (<https://www.ipbes.net/ias>).
3. The process for *developing draft fact sheets for the nexus and transformative change assessments* has begun. The draft topics for the nexus assessment include: (i) drivers of and past and current trends in nexus elements and their interactions; (ii) future interactions among nexus elements; (iii) nexus challenges, nexus governance, actors and capacities; (iv) Indigenous Peoples and local communities, Indigenous and local knowledge, equity and justice within the context of interacting with and managing the nexus; (v) response options; (vi) linkages between assessment findings and international frameworks; and (vii) finance in support of the nexus. The draft topics for the transformative change assessment include: (i) transformative change: how do we make it happen; (ii) transformative change in practice: examples from agroecology; (iii) it’s not just size and scale: the quality and direction of transformative change matters; and (iv) the role of human-nature relations in transformative change. The fact sheets will then be finalized after IPBES 11, in line with the approved text of the summaries for policymakers and made available on the IPBES website.
4. *In person dialogue meeting with national focal points to further enhance the capacity of Governments to use completed IPBES assessments and other IPBES outputs in policy- and decision-making.* A dialogue meeting with IPBES national focal points was held from 5 to 7 December 2023 in Bergen, Norway, led by the technical support unit for capacity-building. The meeting included a session on strengthening the uptake of approved IPBES assessments, including efforts to catalyze knowledge generation, and in particular on ways to support use of the *Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and their Control* and other IPBES work in policy- and decision-making. The results provided input to the process of identifying ways to strengthen the implementation of IPBES work programme objective 4 (a), see paragraph 14 below.
5. *Strengthening of the role of national and (sub-)regional science-policy platforms.* An online dialogue workshop on the topic was led by the task force on capacity building on 7 November 2024. The dialogue workshop provided a forum to share information on national preparatory processes towards IPBES 11 (10 to 16 December 2024, Windhoek). The dialogue further explored potential roles and support that could be provided by national and (sub)regional platforms, networks and assessments, including the use of IPBES assessments.
6. *Promoting the use of findings of completed IPBES assessments through dialogue workshops.* A global online dialogue was held on 5 September 2024. The online dialogue brought together 70 participants from 26 countries who work at the science-policy interface, including IPBES national focal points and focal points of other relevant biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and a further 16 participants from the assessment expert group, secretariat and technical support units. The dialogue focused on the *Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and their Control* and covered presentations on the content of the assessment report, including identified knowledge gaps; IPBES tools and materials available to support the uptake of the assessment; tools and further work based on the assessment and examples from countries on how they are using the assessment.A report of the dialogue is available on the IPBES website.[[4]](#footnote-5)
7. Survey *on the use of IPBES assessments.* A second edition of the survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at national and subnational levels was part of the workplan for the intersessional period approved by the Plenary at IPBES 10 to gather information on the use of recently completed IPBES assessments. The questions used in the first survey conducted in 2020[[5]](#footnote-6) were reviewed and refined by the management committee. The survey was open to members, observers and stakeholders from 11 June to 8 July 2024. A total of 79 responses were received, across all regions. Individuals responded to the survey in three different capacities: (1) on behalf of their governments (which included not only national focal points but also representatives from other government agencies), (2) on behalf of their organizations and, (3) as individual experts. Those responding on behalf of their organization or as individual experts included, for example, representatives from universities, research institutions, intergovernmental organizations, international organizations and non-governmental organizations. A report of the results of the survey can be found in the appendix.
8. *Encouragement to add examples of the successful use of completed IPBES assessments in policy- and decision-making to the IPBES impact-tracking database (TRACK).* Members, observers and stakeholders were encouraged to add examples to TRACK during the global online dialogue and as part of the survey on the use of IPBES assessments.

B. Strengthening the policy relevance of IPBES assessments

1. The activities carried out or planned to be implemented to strengthen the policy relevance of IPBES assessments are presented in the following paragraphs.
2. *Provision of support to assessment experts with a view to increasing the policy relevance of IPBES assessments*. The resources that are available (see https://www.ipbes.net/modules-assessment-guide) were brought to the attention of author teams for the current ongoing assessments. Support to the authors of policy chapters is provided by the technical support unit for policy support on request from author teams.
3. *An online dialogue workshop with practitioners to facilitate their contribution to the scoping of any new assessments*. Online dialogues with government representatives and stakeholders were organized on 11 and 12 June 2024, respectively, as part of the external review of the draft scoping report for the second global assessment, led by the task force on capacity-building; see IPBES/11/INF/13 for further information. The presentations of the draft scoping report highlighted the relevance of the second global assessment for practitioners and a number of practitioners submitted their views and comments as part of the external review.
4. *Online dialogues with national focal points and stakeholders with the objective of increasing the policy relevance of the assessments in the context of the second external review of the nexus and transformative change assessments and the external review of the business and biodiversity assessment.* These dialogues were implemented as part of the workplan on capacity-building. They contributed to enhancing the policy relevance of the assessment by engaging national focal points in the review stage of the assessment process. Specifically, the dialogues were held on 18 December 2023 for the nexus assessment; 15 and 17 January 2024 for the transformative change assessment and 27 and 29 August 2024 for the business and biodiversity assessment. Further information can be found in document IPBES/11/INF/13.
5. *Fostering of the participation of policy practitioners in IPBES assessments through the online dialogue workshops with stakeholders being organized for ongoing assessments*. These dialogues were implemented as part of the workplan for capacity-building. Policy practitioners were able to engage in the online dialogues for the nexus assessment, transformative change assessment and the business and biodiversity assessment. Further information can be found in document IPBES/11/INF/13.

II. Strengthening the implementation of objective 4 (a)

1. In accordance with decision IPBES-10/1, a notification was issued to IPBES members, observers and other interested stakeholders on 17 October 2023. The notification requested inputs on four elements: refining the scope and clarifying the aims of objective 4 (a); identifying the types of activities/deliverables necessary to implement objective 4 (a), and the scale at which they should be implemented; identifying the types of impacts that these activities/deliverables intend to achieve; and identifying options for institutional arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate delivery. Initial inputs were requested by 30 November 2023 and formed the basis for discussions on the strengthening of objective 4 (a) at the IPBES national focal points workshop (5-7 December 2023) (see paragraph 4). The deadline for final submissions was 12 January 2024.
2. Based on these inputs, a draft concept note setting out a plan with activities, deliverables and options for implementation (including draft terms of reference for a task force) was made available for review and input by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau in March 2024. The concept note was then revised and made available for external review by members, observers and interested stakeholders by 31 May 2024. A series of online dialogues were held between 15 to 19 April 2024, to present and discuss the concept note. Comments were submitted by IPBES members, observers and stakeholders as part of the external review. Comments were received from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Norway, the United States of America and the European Union, as well as from twenty-three stakeholders. Some comments endorsed the suggested activities; some suggested additional activities; and others requested further information on the options for institutional arrangements presented. The Bureau and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel took the comments into account when revising the concept note.
3. The final version of the concept note including options for institutional arrangements, for consideration by the Plenary at its eleventh session is presented in annex I to IPBES/11/9.
4. Based on the concept note, workplans were developed for the intersessional period 2024–2025, set out in IPBES/11/9, annex VI, for consideration by the Plenary, and for the periods 2025–2026 and 2026–2027, set out in sections III and IV below.
5. As part of the implementation of its 2023–2024 workplan, a set of indicators for measuring the effectiveness of the implementation of the workplans were developed. These are included in document IPBES/11/9 for consideration by the Plenary.

III. Draft workplan for the intersessional period 2025–2026 (for information)

A. Ensuring that IPBES assessment reports and other products are policy relevant

1. Activities include:
   1. Provision of support to assessment experts of the monitoring, spatial planning and connectivity assessment and second global assessment[[6]](#footnote-7) in the use of the guidance on how to present and assess the effectiveness of policy instruments in IPBES assessments;
   2. Review of drafts of the chapters of the spatial planning and connectivity assessment and second global assessment[[7]](#footnote-8) that set out policy options during their external reviews;
   3. Encouragement of participation of policy experts, practitioners and knowledge holders as expert reviewers in the spatial planning and connectivity assessment and second global assessment.[[8]](#footnote-9)

B. Supporting decision-makers in all relevant sectors to use completed IPBES assessment reports and other IPBES products

1. Activities include:
   1. Working with the co-chairs and the technical support unit in the development of draft fact sheets for the monitoring assessment, to be finalised following the thirteenth session of the Plenary;
   2. Conducting a survey on the use and effectiveness of IPBES assessment reports (including their summaries for policymakers and fact sheets) in policymaking at national and subnational levels. Lessons learned will be collated and reported to the Plenary at its thirteenth session;
   3. Engagement, with the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations to inform them about the assessments in preparations and about findings of the completed business and biodiversity assessment;
   4. Coordinating relevant experts to provide information about IPBES assessments on preparation and about the findings of the completed business and biodiversity assessment to relevant bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations;
   5. Assisting the task force on capacity-building in supporting IPBES members, in particular their national focal points, as well as observers and other stakeholder in organizing uptake events on completed IPBES assessment reports, including in the margins of meetings of bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations through the provision of, among others, information; outreach materials and the identification of potential IPBES experts to participate in such events;
   6. Working with the technical support units of the spatial planning and connectivity assessment and second global assessment[[9]](#footnote-10) and the secretariat to develop materials which IPBES members, in particular their national focal points, observers and other stakeholders can use to inform actors in relevant sectors about the scope, scale, significance and process of these assessments;
   7. Working with the technical support units of the business and biodiversity assessment and the secretariat, to develop both short and more detailed presentations on that assessment for use by IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders. Presentations will be made available on the IPBES website;
   8. Assisting the task force on Indigenous and local knowledge in conducting online dialogues with IPBES national focal points and Indigenous Peoples and local communities on the relevance of the business and biodiversity assessment report for Indigenous Peoples and local communities (with a focus on Indigenous and local knowledge), to share experiences in the context of policymaking;
   9. Conducting a global online dialogue with IPBES national focal points and a dialogue with stakeholders to share experiences in using IPBES assessment reports in policymaking and decision-making at the regional, national and sub-national levels, with a focus on the policy options identified in the reports and the relevance for specific sectors.

C. Encouraging member States, observers and other stakeholders to carry out activities that support the uptake and impact of IPBES Assessment Reports and other products

1. The Executive Secretary will issue a notification, also in support of IPBES work on capacity-building, inviting IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders to carry out activities that support the uptake and impact of IPBES assessment reports and other products, and in particular to undertake the following activities in their respective areas of work and responsibility:
   1. Promoting the establishment, or expanding the scope of regional or national science-policy platforms to focus on biodiversity and the undertaking of periodic national ecosystem assessments in support of the work of IPBES and that of other relevant intergovernmental processes and regional or national priorities;
   2. Developing practical guidance and convening workshops for national focal points and other decision makers on how to translate specific policy options set out in the IPBES business and biodiversity assessment report into policy, legislation, decisions and actions at the regional, national and subnational levels, with due regard to their specific contexts;
   3. Convening workshops to foster cross-sectoral collaboration to implement relevant policy options set out in the IPBES business and biodiversity assessment report, including with the private sector;
   4. Developing training courses for formal and informal education purposes focusing on the use of IPBES assessments and products within different policy settings;
   5. Developing their own fact sheets and other materials to support their uptake of the business and biodiversity assessment report and other products in their respective policy settings.
2. The Executive Secretary will issue a notification to IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders inviting them to report on activities that they have undertaken to promote the uptake of IPBES assessments. A summary will be provided to the Plenary at its thirteenth session.

IV. Draft workplan for the intersessional period 2026–2027 (for information)

A. Ensuring that IPBES Assessments and the resulting Reports and other products are policy relevant

1. Activities include:
   1. Provision of support to assessment experts of ongoing assessments in the implementation of the guidance on how to present and assess the effectiveness of policy instruments in IPBES assessments;
   2. Provision of training to experts in new assessments[[10]](#footnote-11) on the needs and process of policymaking in order to strengthen their awareness of policy landscape and its relevance for the assessment;
   3. Review the chapters of assessment reports that set out policy options during its external review;
   4. Encouragement of participation of policy experts, practitioners and knowledge holders in IPBES assessments, including as expert reviewers.

B. Supporting decision-makers in all relevant sectors to use completed IPBES Assessment Reports and other IPBES products

1. Activities include:
   1. Working with the co-chairs and the technical support unit in the development of draft fact sheets for the spatial planning and connectivity assessment, to be finalised following the fourteenth session of the Plenary;
   2. Engagement with the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations to inform them about the assessments in preparation and about findings of the completed spatial planning and connectivity assessment;
   3. Coordinating relevant experts to provide information about IPBES assessments in preparation and about the findings of the completed spatial planning and connectivity assessments to relevant bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations;
   4. Assisting the task force on capacity-building in supporting IPBES members, in particular their national focal points, as well as observers and other stakeholder in organizing uptake events on completed IPBES assessment reports, including in the margins of meetings of bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental processes and relevant international organizations through the provision of, among others, information; outreach materials and the identification of potential IPBES experts to participate in such events;
   5. Working with the technical support units of the spatial planning and connectivity assessment and the secretariat, to develop both short and more detailed presentations on that assessment for use by IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders. Presentations will be made available on the IPBES website;
   6. Assisting the task force on Indigenous and local knowledge in conducting online dialogues with IPBES national focal points and Indigenous Peoples and local communities on the relevance of the spatial planning and connectivity assessment report for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, with a focus on Indigenous and local knowledge, to share experiences in the context of policymaking;
   7. Conducting a global online dialogue with IPBES national focal points and a dialogue with stakeholders to share experiences in using IPBES assessment reports in policymaking and decision-making at the regional, national and sub-national levels, with a focus on the policy options identified in the reports and the relevance for specific sectors.

C. Encouraging member States, observers and other stakeholders to carry out activities that support the uptake and impact of IPBES Assessment Reports and other products

1. The Executive Secretary will issue a notification, also in support of IPBES work on capacity‑building, inviting IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders to carry out activities that support the uptake and impact of IPBES assessment reports and other products, and in particular to undertake the following activities in their respective areas of work and responsibility:
   1. Promoting the establishment, or expanding the scope of regional or national science‑policy platforms to focus on biodiversity and the undertaking of periodic national ecosystem assessments in support of the work of IPBES and that of other relevant intergovernmental processes and regional or national priorities;
   2. Developing practical guidance and convening workshops for national focal points and other decision makers on how to translate specific policy options set out in the IPBES spatial planning and connectivity assessment report into policy, legislation, decisions and actions at the regional, national and subnational levels, with due regard to their specific contexts;
   3. Convening workshops to foster cross-sectoral collaboration to implement relevant policy options set out in the IPBES spatial planning and connectivity assessment report, including with the private sector;
   4. Developing training courses for formal and informal education purposes focusing on the use of IPBES assessments and products within different policy settings;
   5. Developing their own fact sheets and other materials to support their uptake of spatial planning and connectivity assessment report and other products in their respective policy settings.
2. The Executive Secretary will issue a notification to IPBES members, observers and other stakeholders inviting them to report on activities that they have undertaken to promote the uptake of IPBES assessments. A summary will be provided to IPBES 14.

Appendix

Use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at national and subnational levels: An analysis of stakeholder survey responses – second edition

I. Introduction

1. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.[[11]](#footnote-12) Within this overarching objective, a key function of IPBES is to support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, enable decision-makers to gain access to them, and promote their further development.
2. At IPBES 7, the IPBES Plenary adopted the rolling work programme for the period up to 2030, which included establishing a task force on policy tools and methodologies.[[12]](#footnote-13) The task force was mandated to oversee and take part in the implementation of objective 4 (a) of the work programme, including by enabling the uptake of the findings of IPBES assessments in decision-making.[[13]](#footnote-14)
3. To fulfil its mandate, the task force identified a list of deliverables and activities to be implemented ahead of IPBES 8.[[14]](#footnote-15) Among these, in the context of promoting the use of the findings of IPBES assessments in decision-making, it contained an action point for the task force to: “Identify how key messages of IPBES assessments flow into policy and how IPBES products are used by policymakers at a national level”. Specifically, this included improving understanding of:
   1. How completed IPBES assessments have been used at the national and subnational levels, and
   2. What evidence decision-makers need from IPBES to improve the situation in their country/context.
4. In response to this mandate, the task force, with support from the technical support unit, developed the first edition of a survey and report in 2021 to collect insights from IPBES stakeholders. That initial report presented the responses received, analyzed the findings and offered options for how IPBES could strengthen the use of key assessment findings in policymaking.[[15]](#footnote-16)
5. At IPBES 10, the Plenary approved the workplan for objective 4 (a) of the work programme of the Platform up to 2030. With a view to gathering insights on the use of IPBES assessments over time, among the activities for the intersessional period 2023–2024, the Plenary requested conducting a second edition of the survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at national and subnational levels to gather information relating to new IPBES assessments.[[16]](#footnote-17)
6. This current report is the analysis of responses to the second edition of the survey. While building on the first, it aims to provide a deeper understanding of how completed IPBES assessments are being used in policymaking at the national and sub-national levels, as well as their related outputs, particularly fact sheets.

A. Survey objectives and design

1. IPBES members, observers and stakeholders were invited to participate in a ‘Survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at (sub)national levels.’[[17]](#footnote-18) Invited participants included more than 17,000 representatives of governments, organizations and networks, researchers and members of Indigenous Peoples and local communities registered to the IPBES mailing list. The survey was open between 11 June and 8 July 2024. The full list of survey questions is presented in annex I.
2. The survey was designed to facilitate understanding of how completed assessments, and their related outputs, are currently being used to support policymaking. Specific sections of the survey focused on identifying which assessment reports are being used most widely and for what purposes, the key benefits and challenges, and suggestions on how to maximize their use. The survey sought to collect ideas on what other tools, methodologies and types of activities might further support the use of assessments at the national and subnational level - and thereby contribute to the advancement of the IPBES policy support function going forward.

B. Overview of responses

1. A total of 79 respondents participated in the survey, responding in three different capacities: (1) on behalf of their governments (which included not only national focal points but also representatives from other government agencies) (12 responses), (2) on behalf of their organization (8 responses) and, (3) as individual experts (59 responses).[[18]](#footnote-19) Those responding on behalf of their organization or as individual experts included, for example, individuals affiliated with universities, research institutions, intergovernmental organizations and international organizations, including non‑governmental organizations.

C. Regional coverage

1. The geographical coverage of survey respondents was global, with responses received from across the five United Nations regions.[[19]](#footnote-20) However, participation varied, with the highest levels from the Western European and Other States group (32 responses), and significantly fewer responses from the Eastern European States, where only 2 respondents participated.
2. Across all respondent groups, geographical coverage generally showed a similar pattern. One Government representative participated from the African States, 3 from Asia-Pacific States, 2 from Eastern European States, 2 from Latin American and Caribbean States, and 4 from Western European and other States. In contrast, organizational representatives only participated from African States (4), Western European and other States (3) and Asia-Pacific States (1), with no participants from Eastern European States and Latin American and Caribbean States.
3. In general, the highest number of responses (25 in total) were received from government representatives and stakeholders based in the ‘Western European and other States’ regional group. 3 respondents opted out of providing locational information.

II. Survey results and analysis

A. Use of IPBES assessment reports and their findings

1. Which of the IPBES assessment reports have respondents used in their work?

1. The results from the survey suggest that a wide range of IPBES assessment reports are being used by governments and stakeholders to support their work. A total of 91% of survey respondents stated that they had used IPBES assessment reports directly in their work, including 100% of those responding on behalf of governments. Respondents indicated that currently the most widely used IPBES assessment reports were:
   1. Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (71% of responses)
   2. Regional Assessments of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (65% of responses)
   3. Thematic Assessment of Invasive Alien Species and their Control (39% of responses)
   4. Methodological Assessment of the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature (35% of responses)
   5. Thematic Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration (33% of responses)

2. Why have respondents used IPBES assessment reports in their work?

1. The results from the survey suggest that the assessments are being used for a wide range of purposes.[[20]](#footnote-21) The most commonly cited were: to support revision and/or implementation of environmental plans, policies or strategies, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and nationally determined contributions (NDCs), for example by using data, other information or some of the policy responses from the assessment (covering 28% of respondents); and to support advocacy (covering 16% of respondents). Assessments are also being used by government and non-government officials to promote cross-sectorial/inter-ministerial dialogue and to adjust nature conservation and sustainable use practices (both reasons covering 13% of respondents). The same percentage of respondents also indicated using the assessments to support formulation and/or implementation of development/sectorial (e.g., agriculture, fisheries, water) plans, policies or strategies, for example by using data from the assessment reports, or for developing recommendations and/or identifying policy alternatives based on the assessment reports. 10% of the respondents indicated having used the assessments for other reasons (See section 2.1.3). Finally, only 3% of the respondents did not use the assessments in their work.

3. Examples of how IPBES assessment reports and findings have been used to support relevant policy processes

1. For each of the reasons identified in section 2.1.2 above, or where ‘other reason’ was selected, respondents provided further details and background information on how they used the assessment reports and findings for policy processes. A summary of the key points raised is provided below, with the full range of responses set out in annex II (Table A1).

(a) Use of assessments to formulate and revise plans and policies

* 1. Government representatives provided examples of using assessments to design policies at the local and national level (including sectorial policies such as pollination cross-sectorial plans), incorporating the findings into national reporting, and updating related plans and policies using the Assessments of Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production and Invasive Alien Species and their Control. For instance, a respondent stated the use of the assessment to formulate and implement the “Biodiverse and Resilient Cities” program in Colombia using the IPBES Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** noted that assessments supported the updating and reviewing of national strategies and policies, such as the revision of NBSAPs, and wildlife policies. The Thematic Assessment on Invasive Alien Species Assessment and their Control has also been used to develop a draft policy on conservation, to support the formulation of a strategy for planning green infrastructure at a sub-national level and to develop national ecosystem assessments.

(b) Use of assessments to support advocacy

* 1. Representatives of governments and organizations, and individuals used assessments to advocate for policy changes, provide evidence for campaigns and initiatives including mobilizing support for conservation efforts, and engage with policymakers and stakeholders.

(c) Other uses of assessments

* 1. **Government representatives** used assessments for various purposes, including capacity-building, education and research. For example, governments used the assessments to train government officials on biodiversity and ecosystem services, develop educational materials and support research projects.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** alsoused assessments for research and education, to support capacity-building (including building the policy-science-practice cross-sectoral network around the assessment themes, particularly in Central and Western Africa), and knowledge sharing among stakeholders (including establishing a national biodiversity platform).

4. Which Assessment outputs have respondents used to support policy processes?

1. Respondents found the summary for policymakers most valuable in supporting policy processes indicating the usefulness of clear and actionable information. However, other outputs are useful including the chapters of the assessment reports and their executive summaries, specific terms and concepts used in the assessment, fact sheets, media releases, social media assets, outreach videos and the recently released Invasive alien species interactive learning tool. The responses to the survey highlight that the range of assessment outputs are important to allow use of the assessments by a broad range of audiences.
2. Respondents were further asked which sections from the summary for policymakers and the chapters of the assessment reports, and their executive summaries were used. Regarding the summary for policymakers, respondents identified the following sections were identified as highly relevant to their work:
   1. Key messages on direct and indirect drivers
   2. Key messages on status and trends of biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people
   3. Key messages on policy options/response
   4. Background information in the summary for policy makers
   5. Tables and figures
   6. Knowledge gaps
3. For chapters of the assessment reports, respondents, especially government representatives, found specifically the information most relevant to their work included:
   1. The status and trends of biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people
   2. Direct and indirect drivers
   3. Future trajectories, including towards achieving societal goals (e.g., the Sustainable Development Goals)
   4. Policy options/responses
   5. Case studies.

5. What are the key benefits of using the assessment reports to support the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies, and programmes?

1. In the survey, participants were asked to identify the primary benefits of assessments in supporting policymaking at national and subnational levels. The question was open-ended, allowing participants to provide relevant information without predefined categories. Responses were diverse but grouped into five thematic areas, recognizing the value of assessments: (1) as a source of credible information, (2) in aligning with international agreements, (3) in providing a rationale for evidence‑based decision-making for policymakers, (4) as providing national capacity-building and, (5) in increasing stakeholder engagement. These thematic areas were identified as crucial aspects of assessments and should be sustained and strengthened in the future. An overview of the key benefits governments and non-government officials present under each theme is provided below, with the full range of responses detailed in appendix II (Table A1).

(a) Source of credible information

* 1. **Government representatives** noted that the assessments provide extensive up-to-date data, reliable and accountable knowledge, and trustworthy recommendations.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** noted that they benefit from the conceptual framework offered by IPBES, which helps them understand and address biodiversity challenges. They use IPBES outputs to access credible information on biodiversity and ecosystem services, support evidence-based decision-making, and engage in informed discussions on environmental issues.

(b) Rationale to support policy development and actions

* 1. **Government representatives** highlighted that the assessments provide evidence-based information to guide policy decisions, identify priority areas for conservation and restoration and track progress towards achieving biodiversity goals.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** used assessments to align their work with global biodiversity goals and targets, mobilize resources for conservation initiatives and advocate for policy changes.

(c) National capacity-building

* 1. **Government representatives** noted that the assessments have been used to inform and share their national biodiversity strategies, contribute to capacity development initiatives and support the implementation of national biodiversity action plans.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** have enhanced their technical expertise through participation in IPBES-related activities, built partnerships with other stakeholders and contributed to building national capacity through their involvement in citizen science projects.

(d) Alignment with international agreements

* 1. **Government representatives** have found them particularly useful in articulating their national commitments under frameworks like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Sustainable Development Goals and tracking progress towards meeting international targets. For example, the assessments have helped countries identify gaps and prioritize areas for action.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** have also benefited from assessments, as they provide a common framework for understanding and addressing global biodiversity challenges.

(e) Promotion of stakeholder engagement

* 1. **Government representatives, individuals and organizations** have noted that the inclusive and participatory nature of the IPBES process has fostered greater trust and collaboration among diverse stakeholders. The transparent and inclusive approach of IPBES has also helped to build consensus around biodiversity priorities and facilitate the development of collaborative solutions.

B. Challenges of using the assessments and suggestions for improvement

1. What key challenges did respondents face in using IPBES assessment reports to support policymaking?

1. The survey aimed to gain deeper insight into the primary challenges encountered by participants when using the assessments to inform policymaking. Participants were invited to share their own experiences and describe the key challenges they faced. The question was open-ended, allowing survey respondents to provide relevant information based on their perspectives and experiences.
2. The responses received covered a wide range of issues, encompassing broader concerns related to national capacity and resources, and accessibility and relevance in implementing policy recommendations. These responses were categorized into five main thematic areas, highlighting challenges related to: (1) the lack of public awareness of IPBES products, (2) the complexity and volume of information, (3) language barriers, (4) insufficient national capacity and expertise, (5) the lack of localized data and relevance and, (6) political and economic constraints.
3. Collectively, these five themes suggest valuable pathways for strengthening future assessments. The specific challenges raised by respondents are outlined below, with a comprehensive compilation of comments provided in annex II (Table A3).

(a) Lack of localized data and relevance

1. A large number of comments from both government, organizations and individuals highlighted several challenges related to implementing policy options provided in assessments**.** 
   1. **Government representatives** noted that it is difficult for policymakers to translate assessment findings to (sub) national levels due to a lack of local examples. They also expressed concerns about the lack of data relating to specific regions and the challenges of local implementation.
   2. **Organizations and individuals** echoed these concerns, emphasizing the need for more locally relevant and specific information. While IPBES reports provide global insights, they often lack subnational data and examples for practical applications necessary for effective decision-making at the local level.

(b) Complexity and volume of information

1. This theme was a common challenge faced by representatives of governments and organizations, as well as individuals.
   1. **Government representatives** noted the difficulties in understanding the complex pathways and the sheer volume of information contained in IPBES assessment reports.
   2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** also expressed concerns about the complexity and scope of the reports, often citing inadequate understanding among stakeholders and the lack of time to review the extensive materials. Additionally, the general challenge of information overload was mentioned, with some respondents noting that people tend to prefer concise and digestible information rather than long and complex reports.

(c) Insufficient national capacity and expertise

* 1. **Government representatives** highlighted several challenges in understanding and utilizing IPBES outputs due to limited capacity and expertise, particularly in translating technical information into policy-relevant recommendations. This is evidenced by the examples of governments struggling to identify and address local challenges, adapt global recommendations to national contexts to assess policy effectiveness, and integrate IPBES findings into policymaking processes due to limited capacity.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** also expressed concerns about inadequate resources and capacity, limited knowledge and awareness of IPBES outputs by decision makers, and the need for more support to translate IPBES outputs into local languages.

(d) Language barriers

* 1. Many of the comments received from **governments, organisations and individuals** noted challenges associated with language barriers at the national and subnational levels. They emphasized that the lack of availability of the assessments in their national language(s) prevented the widespread adoption and use of the assessments, particularly at the subnational level. This suggests a need for more translation and localization efforts to ensure that the reports are accessible to a wider audience.

(e) Lack of public awareness of IPBES products

* 1. **Government** respondents noted that there is a lack of awareness of IPBES itself and its products, highlighting the need for improved communication and outreach efforts.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the challenge of making IPBES findings accessible to a wider audience and ensuring that decision-makers are aware of and understand the relevance of these products.
  3. Overall, the responses suggest that there is a need for more effective dissemination strategies to increase public awareness of IPBES and its products.

(f) Political and economic constraints

* 1. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** noted that policymakers often operate with limited knowledge and awareness of IPBES outputs, indicating a lack of political will and prioritization of environmental concerns.

2. Suggestions to improve IPBES outputs to encourage their use in policymaking

1. Survey participants were asked to identify which outputs of the assessments, if any, could be modified to improve the use of the IPBES assessment reports in policymaking. Predominately individuals compared with governments and organizations responded to this part of the survey. Respondents indicated that the chapter of assessment reports focused on policy options/responses, and the key messages in the summary for policymakers had the most potential for improvement. Additionally, survey participants recommended improvements to the background information in the summary for policymakers.
2. Respondents provided details on recommended improvements for the outputs. Most of the recommendations were not on specific outputs. These responses were broadly grouped into increasing accessibility of the outputs and enhancing the relevance of the outputs for policymaking. An overview of the full range of responses set out in annex II (Table A2).

(a) Increase accessibility of the outputs

1. Most of the comments were received from both government representatives and individuals emphasizing the importance of translating IPBES outputs into local languages to ensure wider accessibility and relevance to diverse audiences (one respondent mentioning to do this at least for the summary for policymakers). They also emphasized the need to simplify the outputs to enhance clarity, particularly for non-expert audiences. Suggestions were additionally made to use a more inclusive language that avoids jargon and technical terms, so that the outputs are more accessible to a broader range of stakeholders. Respondents also emphasized the importance of clear, concise and direct messaging in the outputs, particularly in the **background information in the summary for policymakers**. A preference for shorter and more focused outputs to avoid overwhelming policymakers and the public was also expressed. Finally, enhancing communication and engagement with stakeholders is seen as crucial for maximizing the impact of IPBES outputs. A respondent suggested that engaging policymakers through summaries, briefs and presentations tailored to their interests and needs can increase their receptiveness to the recommendations.

(b) Enhancing the relevance of the outputs

1. Many respondents strongly desire IPBES to create regionally focused outputs and call for including subnational data to inform local and regional decision-making, making IPBES outputs more relevant to policymakers at different levels. There was also a suggestion that the **key messages** **in the summary for policymakers** should focus on actionable recommendations that are feasible and relevant to current policy frameworks. The recommendations should be specific, measurable and achievable within given political and economic contexts. Furthermore, participants suggested that the key messages should include a clear statement about its implication for policy.

3. How to maximize the use of IPBES findings at national and subnational levels?

1. In a follow-up question to the previous section, and considering identified challenges, participants were asked for their opinion on what could be done to maximize the use of assessment findings in policymaking at the national and sub-national levels. Specifically, participants were asked whether they felt a need for other types of outputs or activities to increase the use of findings at the national level. The question was open-ended (with no pre-defined categories) and a varying level of detail was provided in the responses.
2. The responses can thus be divided into two main themes, with some participants suggesting improvements to assessments (with many of the responses overlapping with the key challenges identified in the previous section) and others suggesting new types of outputs and activities. In terms of improvements to assessments, responses can be grouped into three areas: (1) improving communication and outreach, (2), adjusting assessment content and, (3) increasing stakeholder inclusion in the assessment process. The suggestions for new types of outputs and activities can be grouped into two areas: (1) the creation of institutional arrangements for knowledge transfer, and (2) the production of new outputs. A more detailed review of the recommendations made under each of these areas is provided below, with the full details and specific comments set out in Table 1.

(a) Improving effective communication and outreach

* 1. **Government representatives** suggested providing support to national focal points for organizing workshops and webinars on assessment findings, while also conducting training sessions for policymakers and local “champions”. They emphasized the importance of intensifying training and capacity-building at all levels to ensure effective understanding and utilization of IPBES information. Additionally, government representatives advocated for improving the dissemination of reports through various channels, including making them available in multiple languages.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** emphasized the importance of presenting successful case studies and conveying the practical implications of IPBES findings in a subregional context. They suggest creating concise summaries and visual materials to enhance accessibility and engagement. Participants expressed the need for assessment reports to be accessible in multiple languages, pointing out that policymakers often do not use English. They also highlighted that this approach would facilitate regional meetings aimed at promoting and introducing the assessments.

(b) Adjusting assessment outputs

* 1. **Government representatives** proposed that the assessment outputs should be presented in clear and concise formats that are accessible to policymakers. They suggested preparing and developing tangible action plans such as those outlined in the Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for the Americas that policymakers can implement. They noted that creating one-page summaries of the summary for policymakers can aid in communicating the complex issues and technical terms in the outputs.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** emphasized that it would be helpful to incorporate case studies and examples of successful policy interventions from various regions that can provide valuable insights and inspiration for policymakers seeking to address biodiversity challenges.

(c) Stakeholder inclusion

* 1. **Government representatives** proposed the co-creation of assessments with national policymakers to support the application of policy recommendations at local scales.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** echoed this sentiment, suggesting engagement with local research institutions to help generate context-specific data and information.

(d) Producing new outputs

* 1. **Government representatives** observed that creating new types of outputs, alongside assessments, could enhance use of the assessments at national and subnational levels. Additionally, suggestions included exploring policy support tools created by other organizations, such as IUCN, as well as creating a preparation toolkit with concise messages and visually engaging backgrounds.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** highlighted the fact sheets and learning tool for the Assessment of Invasive Alien Species and their Control as a promising example to enhance the uptake of IPBES findings in policy. They suggested collaborating with local institutions to translate and distribute materials in relevant languages, as well as developing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of IPBES recommendations. Additionally, they have proposed creating simplified summaries and visual aids, such as infographics and charts, to effectively communicate key findings and recommendations to non-specialists. They also emphasized the need to translate the assessment outputs to (sub)national contexts and settings.

(e) Creating institutional arrangements for knowledge transfer

* 1. **Government representatives** made suggestions that included establishing new (informal) national platforms or fora and encouraging existing platforms to bring together policymakers and experts to facilitate the exchange of knowledge transfer.
  2. **Representatives of organizations and individuals** also proposed establishing inter-departmental committees or working groups to ensure cross-sectoral integration.

Table 1

Suggestions for maximizing the use of IPBES assessment findings

| *Themes* | *Respondent capacity* | *Examples of suggestions* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Effective communication and outreach | Governments | * Produce outputs in local languages. * Provide funds to support the dissemination of assessments. * Support National Focal Points to organize webinars/workshops, ideally with assessment experts, for senior executives and other relevant staff to raise awareness of IPBES, present assessment findings, and discuss how the findings could be translated to local contexts. * Efforts should be increased to disseminate outputs and provide tools that can be used in countries to address the negative scenarios identified in assessments, including information on funding opportunities. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Provide support to IPBES national focal points to disseminate reports. * Conduct training sessions and workshops for policymakers and stakeholders to explain the findings and their implications for policy. * Identify and support local champions (e.g., community leaders, scientists, policymakers) who can advocate for and implement IPBES findings at the local level. * Offering webinars to explain the information and how it might be used goes a long way to get agencies to support the assessments. * More opportunities for policymakers and IPBES authors to interact to bridge the science-policy interface. |
| Adjusting assessment content | Governments | * Prepare outputs in short form or summaries with key findings. * Develop and communicate tangible actions (e.g., the table on pages 32-33 in the Americas Regional Assessment provides a strong starting place for policymakers). * A one-page summary of the summaries for policymakers would be useful to communicate/explain each assessment for those who are not familiar with the technical terms/issues. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Develop regional summaries and recommendations based on the broader assessments. * Include case studies and examples of successful policy interventions from various regions. |
| Improve accessibility/produce new outputs | Governments | * Provide a regional assessment that is more relevant to northern latitudes. * Consider the policy support tools developed by other science-based biodiversity organizations (e.g., IUCN translocation of species is often cited to guide policy and operations). * Create content, based on the assessments, for local television stations, and poems and lyrics in local/national languages. * Distribute pamphlets and advertorials. * Creation of a task force on policy support. * A prepared tool set with short messages and visually appealing backgrounds for use on different social media platforms. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Create simplified summaries and visual aids (e.g., infographics, charts) to communicate key findings and recommendations. * Develop mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of IPBES findings. * Develop and promote portals, mobile apps, and other digital tools for information sharing and collaboration. * Organize outreach events at (sub)national levels to increase participation and engagement. |
| Stakeholder inclusion | Governments | * Co-creation of resources by IPBES and (sub)national policymakers to support the application of policy recommendations at local scales through, for example, the development of case studies and meta-analyses, would be a useful contribution. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Establish partnerships with local research institutions in the assessment process and fund collaborative projects to help generate context-specific data and information. |
| Creation of institutions for knowledge transfer | Governments | * National platforms should be encouraged. * Establishment of IPBES clubs in schools to familiarize children and youth with the vision of IPBES early. * Establish new informal fora in which policymakers and experts meet and exchange, also in person. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Establish inter-departmental committees or working groups to ensure cross-sectoral integration. |

C. Using IPBES assessment reports and outputs: comparing insights from the first and second survey editions

1. In the first edition, the Regional Assessments and the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services were ranked as highly used, while in the second edition, the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Thematic Assessment of Land Degradation and the Restoration and the Thematic Assessment of Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production took prominence. It is interesting to note that the Assessment of Invasive Alien Species and their Control gained wide usage despite being launched most recently, in 2023. The Thematic Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration has remained very relevant to respondents in the two editions of the survey.
2. The main reason why respondents use the assessments remains to support revisions/implementation of plans, policies and strategies - ranking highest for both editions. There is a slight change in the use of the assessment to support formulation/implementation of development/sectoral plans in the second edition as the first edition showed it as a frequent reason.
3. From the analysis of the responses from both editions of the survey, several key themes emerge regarding the perceived benefits of assessments. Respondents from both editions consistently highlighted the value of assessments as a source of credible and reliable information on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Both editions emphasized the role of assessments in supporting policy development, decision-making and the implementation of national and international biodiversity strategies. Respondents from both editions noted the contribution of IPBES to capacity-building at national and international levels, enhancing technical expertise and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. The inclusive and participatory nature of the IPBES process was identified as a key benefit in both editions, promoting trust, collaboration, and consensus-building.
4. While many themes were consistent across both editions of the survey, there were some notable differences. The second edition placed a greater emphasis on the alignment of assessments with international agreements reflecting a growing focus on global biodiversity goals. The second edition also highlighted the role of IPBES in supporting national capacity building initiatives.
5. Where participants were asked to identify outputs that could be modified to improve use in policymaking, the chapter of assessment report focused on policy options, and key messages in the summary report remain frequently mentioned. Common suggestions to improve these outputs that appeared in both editions were increasing accessibility and relevance of outputs. This includes making the outputs clear and concise, simplified language, direct messaging or tailored to policy relevance. Both also suggested a shorter summary for policymakers. Another related theme is producing a regionally focused output.
6. The translation of assessments into policy briefs for national context had not become a prominent activity since the first survey. No further details were provided to understand why the development of policy briefs had not taken place. An output that was recently produced since the first edition of the survey were factsheets, and it has been found very relevant by participants who are aware of or have used them in their work. However, they need wider publicity as many of the participants were not aware of the factsheets or did not know where to find them on the IPBES website.
7. From the responses of participants in both editions, there were consistent reoccurring themes in the **key challenges that hinder the use of assessments**. For example, the lack of public awareness of IPBES and its products was a recurring theme in both editions. This highlights the importance of improved communication and outreach strategies to ensure wider dissemination of IPBES findings. Respondents from both editions highlighted the need for more localized data and practical applications of assessments. This suggests a growing demand for information that is tailored to specific regional and subnational contexts.
8. While the overall challenges remain consistent across both editions of the survey, there are some notable differences in the responses. For example, in the second edition, there seems to be a greater emphasis on the need for more localized data and relevance, as well as on the challenges of effective communication. Additionally, the issue of language barriers appears to be mentioned more often in the second edition. The second edition also placed a greater emphasis on the need for scalable and relevant information at national and subnational levels, indicating a growing demand for more granular data.
9. The responses from both editions of the survey noted several key **suggestions for maximizing the use of IPBES assessment findings**. Respondents from both editions emphasized the need for enhanced communication and outreach strategies to ensure wider awareness and understanding of assessments. This includes the development of more accessible formats, increased use of social media, and targeted communication to specific audiences. Both editions highlighted the importance of involving a wider range of stakeholders in the assessment process and the dissemination of findings. This includes engaging with Indigenous Peoples and local communities and businesses. Respondents from both editions suggested that assessments should be more tailored to specific regional, sectoral and policy needs to improve their relevance and usefulness for decision-makers. The creation of institutional arrangements for knowledge sharing and capacity-building was identified as a key priority in both editions. This would help to ensure that assessment findings are effectively integrated into policy and practice.
10. While many themes were consistent across both editions of the survey on maximizing the use of assessment findings, there were some notable differences in respondents’ suggestions. The second edition placed a greater emphasis on the importance of stakeholder inclusion in the development and use of assessments. The second edition also highlighted the need for enhanced knowledge sharing and exchange among different actors.

Annex I to appendix: Survey questions

**1. Have you used IPBES assessment reports in your work?**

* Yes [if yes, the following appears:]

Which of the following IPBES assessment reports have you used? Please select all that apply.

* Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
* Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Europe and Central Asia
* Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Asia and the Pacific
* Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for the Americas
* Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Africa
* Thematic Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration
* Thematic Assessment of Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production
* Thematic Assessment of Invasive Alien Species and their Control
* Thematic Assessment of the Sustainable Use of Wild Species
* Methodological Assessment of Scenarios and Models of Biodiversity and Ecosystem services
* Methodological Assessment of the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature
* No [if no, the following appears:]
* If you have not used an IPBES assessment report to support policymaking at (sub)national level, please briefly describe the reasons why: [text field]

**2. For what purpose/s have you used an IPBES assessment report? Please select all that apply.**

* To support revision and/or implementation of environmental plans, policies, or strategies, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and nationally determined contributions (NDCs), for example by using data, other information or some of the policy responses from the assessment
* To support a national assessment
* To support formulation and/or implementation of development/sectorial (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, water) plans, policies, or strategies, for example by using data from the assessment report, or for developing recommendations / identifying policy alternatives on the basis of the assessment report
* To promote cross-sectorial/inter-ministerial dialogue
* To adjust nature conservation and sustainable use practices
* To support advocacy
* Other – Please specify: [ticking this box should also open the field below]

[if any box above is ticked:] Please briefly describe how you used the assessment reports and their findings to support the relevant policy processes. You can share the link to or upload supporting documents: [text field] [URL/upload field].

**3. Which of the output(s) of the IPBES assessments have you used to support policy processes and why? Please select all that apply:**

* The summary for policymakers:
* Key messages on status and trends of biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people
* Key messages on direct and indirect drivers
* Key messages on future trajectories and achieving societal goals (e.g. Aichi Biodiversity Targets, goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and Sustainable Development Goals)
* Key messages on policy options/responses
* Other key messages
* Background information in the summary for policymakers
* Tables and figures
* Knowledge gaps
* Other materials from the summary for policymakers
* The chapters of the assessment reports and their executive summaries:On status and trends of biodiversity
* Other [text field]

[If any of the above are ticked:] Please briefly indicate the reasons why and/or how you used the outputs indicated above: [text field]

**4. In your opinion, which of the following IPBES assessment outputs, if any, would need to be modified to improve the use of IPBES assessment report in policymaking? Please select all that apply:**

* Chapter of assessment report focused on policy options/responses
* Other chapters of assessment report
* Background information in the summary for policymakers
* Key messages in the summary for policymakers
* Factsheets
* Media release
* Outreach video
* Social media assets
* Invasive alien species interactive learning tool

[If any of the above are ticked:] Please indicate how the IPBES assessment output(s) indicated above could be improved in your opinion: [text field]

**5. Please indicate key benefit(s) of using IPBES assessment report to support the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes at the (sub)national level:** [text field]

**6. Please list key challenges one may face in using the IPBES assessment report for supporting policymaking at the (sub)national level:** [text field]

**7. Have you prepared or are you aware of policy briefs that have been developed using the findings of IPBES Assessments and translating them into national contexts, in particular the key messages and policy options? If possible, please share the policy brief(s) (if available).** [URL/upload field]

**8. In your opinion, what needs to be done to maximise the use of findings of IPBES assessments in policymaking at (sub)national level? Do you think there is a need for other types of outputs or activities to increase the use of findings of IPBES assessments at national level?** [text field]

**9. If you have used any of the factsheets made available on the IPBES website for different assessments, do you have any feedback in terms of areas for improvement to support the facilitation for the use of the findings of IPBES assessments?**

**10. Please include your contact details:** [please make the fields non-mandatory]

* Full name:
* Name of the organisation:
* Position/Function:
* Country:
* E-mail:
* Are you submitting your responses to this questionnaire:
  + On behalf of your Government/organisation
  + In your individual capacity

## Annex II to appendix: Survey responses

This annex contains further details of the specific comments and suggestions received from survey participants. Each of the tables below presents the responses to an individual survey question. For brevity and to minimize duplication, not every comment is listed (the example comments cover the full breadth of comments received).

Table A1. Key benefits of using IPBES products

| Themes | Respondent capacity | Examples of comments |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Source of credible information | Governments | * The strength of the conclusions, the breadth of the analyses carried out, the scientific rigor of the evaluations, and the conceptual framework with which we agreed. * Extensive up-to-date reviews on biodiversity statutes, trends and key factors affecting biodiversity and ecosystem services. * Provides scientific evidence for reporting and appropriate references. * The conceptual framework and pathways were used for the thesis. * The reports provide access to a defensible synthesis of the best available evidence on global, regional and thematic issues relating to biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the best available evidence on appropriate policy responses. Thus, the reports can provide policymakers with confidence that the approach/es taken is in line with leading scientific advice. * Context level of general problem and level of urgency of the challenges faced by (sub)national levels are easily available and the source is reliable and generally accepted. * The character of a policy/strategy/programme can be checked against key messages and additional information available in the summary for policymakers and the /assessment report. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Reliability, accountability, and wide census of the best available scientific knowledge. * The key benefit was to use the results of data analyzed at a high level. This ensures that policies are based on credible and comprehensive evidence, which leads to more effective results. * They are a trustable reference to construct rationales and backgrounds. * High credibility and status. The reports are built on scientific knowledge in a documented way. Concrete advice to policymakers is formulated as essential political conclusions. * The IPBES assessment report is necessary to get serious scientific advice on the state of biodiversity and to analyze the gaps in public policies concerning the conservation of biodiversity. * They provide a source of authority, and reliable information to apply and share. * The member states recognize the assessments as legitimate and credible. The sets of concrete and tangible evidence, particularly quantitative and visualized ones, serve as an enabler to convene relevant sectoral agencies and non-governmental partners and develop a joint biodiversity and ecosystem services solution to work towards. * The assessment report is one of our primary sources of data, both quantitative and qualitative, that we use to inform the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies, strategic master plans and programmes at the local level. Evidently, the report is incorporated into modelling design, including presentations, both audio and/or video, including literature and other reading materials to communicate, collaborate, and share information with the public, private, and third sector. |
| Promote stakeholder engagement | Government | * Good relationships between different groups were fostered. * Greater trust from Indigenous Peoples and local communities. |
| Organizations and individuals | * IPBES emphasizes the involvement of various stakeholders, including Indigenous communities, local populations, and industry representatives. * The inclusive and participatory process of the assessments promotes stakeholder engagement, consensus, and collaboration among the various sectors and communities involved in environmental governance. |
| Alignment with international agreements | Governments | * Supports comparison of global to sub-national levels and can inform priority setting. Reports are informative and include new emerging concepts. * Finding solutions to some local issues by linking them up with global issues voiced by IPBES. * They also pull together complex and expansive research into a form that is useful for briefing, high-level summary documents and framing of national issues, and they allow national and sub-national policy/issues to be contextualized internationally. * It is very important to have this international reference framework, which is scientifically supported and prestigious. At the same time, this makes it possible to identify the state of nature at a regional level based on the general framework. * Allows to articulate the different global efforts for biodiversity, development, and climate change agendas. The Biodiverse and Resilient Cities program of the Ministry of Environment aims to address the triple planetary crisis (climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss). |
| Organizations and individuals | * It helps to give the global perspective and then cascades to the national and local levels. * IPBES reports align with international frameworks such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment helps subnational entities develop policies that contribute to national commitments and global targets, ensuring coherence between local actions and international obligations. * Reports include internationally recognized standards and best practices that can be tailored to local contexts, improving the quality and effectiveness of national and subnational policies. * Assessments also emphasize the critical role of biodiversity and ecosystems in achieving sustainable development goals, assisting policymakers in aligning their initiatives with larger sustainability goals. |
| National Capacity building | Governments | * Knowledge and skill base for report. * Even when these are not directly included in policy development, they support education and mainstreaming. * To inform and share the assessment report with national/subnational committees and responsible agencies as well as with the general public for raising awareness and updating related policies and plans. |
| Organizations and individuals | * Reports contribute to capacity building by providing access to scientific knowledge, methodologies, and best practices. * Finally, using the assessment reports can help national and subnational institutions build their capacity by providing them with the most up-to-date scientific knowledge and methodologies for ecosystem assessment and management. |
| Rationale for policy development and actions | Governments | * The IPBES Conceptual Framework has been used as a basis to prepare the Japanese Biodiversity Outlooks (JBOs). The assessment reports, in particular the Global Assessment, have been used as a scientific base to prepare Japanese NBSAPs. * Key messages can also initiate and/or inspire (sub)national policies/strategies/programmes, cooperation or initiatives. |
| Organizations and individuals | * The assessments provide rigorous scientific evidence and comprehensive assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services. This evidence base allows policymakers to develop informed and effective policies grounded in the latest scientific knowledge, reducing reliance on anecdotal or incomplete information. * The assessments identify critical drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, enabling policymakers to target interventions at the most significant pressures. * The reports offer scenarios and models that help policymakers understand potential future changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services under different policy and management options. * Detection of key knowledge and monitoring gaps at subnational levels. * These reports provide a solid foundation of scientific data and analyses, allowing policymakers to make informed and evidence-based decisions. IPBES reports provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationships between biodiversity, ecosystems, and human well-being. This broad perspective enables policymakers to create integrated and long-term strategies that address the multifaceted nature of environmental issues. These reports help to identify the key drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, allowing for targeted and effective interventions. * Having credible evidence summarized is incredibly helpful for the design of biodiversity programs and strategies and in communicating with leadership and building support for biodiversity conservation.   It gives factual backing for decision-making. Data support is also provided which is crucial in conservation. |

Table A2. Further details on how assessments are being used (including comments provided under ‘other’ reason)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Respondent capacity | Examples of comments |
| Details on how assessments have been used | Governments | * Used to provide recommendations for public policies to advise and support local governments(municipalities). * Used to inform indicators and narrative components in Ontario's State of Biodiversity Report (Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy (2023-2030)). * The methodology for assessments was used to set up the scope of the national ecosystem assessment. |
| Organization and individuals | * Used for advocacy and guidance for stakeholders, and committee members. * Developed action plans for land use degradation neutrality (LDN) and pollination and pollinators. Developed workplan implementation of the Kenya national trialogue supported by BES-NET through UNDP and implemented in Eburu landscape in Rift valley Kenya. |
| Other reasons | Governments | * Used to report to the Russian Ministry of Environment, research papers and reviews, and presentations at conferences. * Used to support National Ecosystem Assessment report and summaries for policymakers. * Used to develop policy dialogue for media and talk shows. * For teaching and research on ecosystem services and Nature-based Solutions. * The factual information in the IPBES report has been used in policy and program development, educational materials and to support decision-making. * Regularly use the findings of the reports in briefings for state secretaries. |
| Organizations and Individuals | * Reports have been used for informing policymakers and the public mainly about biodiversity loss and its drivers. * To develop policy briefs for decision-makers. * The report was used as a reference to strengthen the need to study key plant species in the Amazon biome. * Used to reference the joint work of IPBES and IPCC a number of times in advocating for the integration of climate and biodiversity, and reference that work in a policy motion for the largest public utility in the US. * Cited the report in government white papers. * Used the A.R. data and findings to control exotic invasive species, and in ecological restoration of grasslands. * Education and teaching (including community outreach) * Research development (project preparations, policy advice for the government projects. * As source of general knowledge and to support political arguments for nature-based solutions and policies. * Training and capacity. |

Table A3. Key challenges faced by respondents when using the assessments in their work

| Themes | Respondent capacity | Examples of response |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Language barriers | Governments | * It is essential that the products are also available in other languages, in our case, in Spanish This still represents a significant barrier to access and use. * Language barrier for understanding by local people. * Language (both linguistically and technically) might not fit policymaking at the (sub)national level. |
| Organization and Individuals | * The key challenge is the availability of IPBES Assessment Report(s) almost only in English. * The professionally laid-out version of the SPM is only available in English - In some countries and regions, the assessments are requested in hard format. * In a given event, to convey key messages to the policymakers, there is always a need for translation as the IPBES's documents are originally in English. |
| Lack of localized data and relevance | Governments | * The messages are rather abstract and general due to the global or regional character of the assessments and might therefore not fit the (sub)national setting. * The capacity to translate them to the regional scale. It is mandatory to have regional data at this scale. * There are many policy documents used in formulating policy and IPBES reports are just one. Often national decision-making is too specific (e.g. nationally listed threatened species) for the broad IPBES Assessment Reports to be relevant beyond the general framing of the issues or a brief to international commitments. As such, a key challenge is the need for support in applying policy recommendations that are often global and regional in scale, and conceptual at national and subnational scales. * Identifying positive case studies and opportunities from information aggregated. |
|  | Organization and Individuals | * The dearth of local examples and contextualizing larger scale results in local problems. * Most valuations happen at national levels not considering local valuation. * While IPBES reports provide global and regional insights, they may lack specific local data that is crucial for addressing unique environmental challenges at the (sub)national level. The absence of context-specific information can limit the applicability of the recommendations. * There are frequent data gaps and issues of local relevance, as global findings must be tailored to Kenya's unique conditions. * The policy implications are often not very clear in how they can be applied to my context. * Lack of data relating to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), especially for the Caribbean region. * The biggest challenge is local implementation, within the specific social, economic, environmental and especially political context that implementation needs to occur. Tangible contextual studies that take global recommendations into local implementation would be incredibly helpful. |
| Complexity and volume of information | Governments | * The messages can be a bit too complex, or sometimes too repetitive. * Difficulties in understanding the scientific information in the materials even if they have been translated into Japanese. Some of the descriptions seem to require advanced scientific knowledge to understand. Terminologies may be confusing and not easy to understand for those who are not so familiar with technical readings on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Sometimes the SPM key messages may not be so relevant to the policy context. * Accessibility of information: Create more accessible and concise materials that are digestible to broader audiences. Developing and promoting infographics that communicate complexities and are shared broadly. Distilling key messages down even further using more simple language. |
| Organization and Individuals | * IPBES Assessment Reports are extensive and can be complex, making it difficult for policymakers to distil key insights and actionable recommendations. The sheer volume of data and the technical nature of the content may overwhelm those not specialized in biodiversity or environmental science. * Complexity and scope of the reports. * Inadequate understanding among politicians, policymakers and bureaucracies at national, regional and local levels. * Lack of knowledge and time to read many documents. * The volume of information and the need to select and emphasize the most important messages in various contexts. * People don't read things. They need things on one or a few pages. On the other hand, single infographics with too much information on them get confusing. |
| Insufficient national capacity and expertise | Governments | * Different educational backgrounds. * Little support to translate this into local languages. |
| Organization and Individuals | * Many (sub)national entities may lack the technical expertise or institutional capacity to interpret and implement the findings of IPBES reports effectively. Limited human and financial resources can constrain the ability to translate scientific assessments into practical policies. * Financial and technical constraints can make it difficult to put recommendations into action. * Institutional capacity may be limited, making it difficult to effectively interpret and apply complex scientific data. * Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to assess policy effectiveness can be difficult due to resource capacity constraints. * Rallying concerted global efforts. * Lack of economic resources to manage meetings to propose or communicate the use of the information in local languages |
| Effective dissemination or public awareness of IPBES | Governments | * Lack of awareness of IPBES and the products and tools that are being developed. Some self-promotion may help to enhance familiarity with IPBES's work and resources. |
| Organization and individuals | * That decision-makers become aware of the key messages and that the populations are aware of the evaluation report visibility, and widespread dissemination of evaluation report results. * From global to national - challenges country or subnational region specific. * Inadequate resources and capacity to spread the IPBES reports and material. * Limited knowledge and awareness within business as well. * IPBES Assessment reports should be more well-known by the media and the civil society. |
| Political and economic constraints | Organization and Individuals | * Policymakers often operate within political and economic frameworks that may not prioritize environmental issues. Conflicting interests, such as economic development versus environmental protection, can impede the adoption of IPBES recommendations. * Political will and prioritizing environmental policies over other socioeconomic challenges are critical but difficult to achieve. * Integrating IPBES recommendations across various sectors, such as agriculture, water management, and urban planning adds complexity. * Geopolitical interests and interferences -Conflicts and wars in some regions. * In [my country], it is only those in leadership positions who can make any meaningful input that will be recognized. Even if the opportunity arises, documentation and implementation become an issue. |
| Stakeholder engagement |  | Another challenge is ensuring meaningful stakeholder engagement, which requires collaboration among various groups such as local communities, government agencies, and the private sector. |

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1. \* IPBES/11/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, appendix I, sect. I, para. 1 (d). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. \* The annex has not been formally edited. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. www.ipbes.net/events/dialogue-workshop-promote-use-ipbes-products-policymaking [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. IPBES/8/INF/13. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Subject to the initiation of the assessment by Plenary. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Subject to the initiation of the assessment by Plenary. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Subject to the initiation of the assessment by Plenary. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Subject to the initiation of the assessment by Plenary. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Subject to the initiation of the assessment by the Plenary [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. See UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, available [here](https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/UNEP_IPBES_MI_2_9_EN_0.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. [Decision IPBES-7/1](https://ipbes.net/document-library-catalogue/decision-ipbes-71). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. IPBES/8/INF/13<https://ipbes.net/library?combine=&amp;field_document_category_tid=All&amp;field_document_type_tid=All&amp;order=name&amp;sort=asc&field_document_category_tid=All&field_document_type_tid=All&order=name&sort=desc&search_api_fulltext=&field_document_category=All&field_document_type=All&page=4,0,0,0> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. IPBES/8/INF/13. Available at <https://www.ipbes.net/event/ipbes-8-plenary> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. IPBES/10/L.12. Workplan for objective 4 (a): advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies, for the intersessional period 2023–2024. Available at [<https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/104754>](https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/104754) [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. IPBES Notification Reference EM/2024/29 ‘Survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at (sub)national levels’. Full notification is available [here](https://www.ipbes.net/o4-supporting-policy/survey-on-use-of-ipbes-assessments-2024/notification). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. The survey questionnaire separated respondents into two groups: those responding on behalf of their governments/organizations, and those responding as individual experts. Those responding on behalf of governments were then separated out further based on their affiliation, where this was freely provided. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Countries grouped as per the UN Regional groups of Member States, available here: [www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups](http://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups). Note that the ‘Western Europe and other States’ regional group includes Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the special cases of USA, Israel and Turkey. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Participants selected multiple options in answering this question. The percentages represent the proportion of participants selecting each specific option and therefore the percentages cannot be combined across the multiple options. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)