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

Paris, 29 April–4 May 2019

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation  
of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018****Information on work related to 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<sup>1</sup> 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. In its decision IPBES-2/5, the Plenary requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to develop an online catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies (hereinafter called “the policy support gateway”) to facilitate access by decision makers to policy support tools and methodologies, and to provide guidance on how to promote and catalyse their further development. The decision also mandated the establishment of a task-specific expert group to support implementation as necessary.
3. At their tenth meetings, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau endorsed the next steps for the further development of the policy support gateway as well as those for the development of methodological guidance for assessment experts. Progress was subsequently reported to the Plenary at its sixth session in document IPBES/6/INF/6. In section VII of decision IPBES-6/1, the Plenary, among other things:
  - (a) Requested the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies to further develop the online policy support gateway and the guidance to IPBES assessments by implementing activities to further increase the uptake of those tools and methodologies by policymakers and practitioners;
  - (b) Requested the Executive Secretary, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, subject to the availability of resources, to refine the structure and functionality of the policy support gateway and its visualization, access and validation procedures; to ensure that additional efforts were made to invite Governments and stakeholders to provide input to the gateway; and to ensure that the gateway was integrated into the other functions of IPBES;
  - (c) Invited other organizations, Governments and stakeholders to join the efforts to contribute information to the online policy support gateway by submitting relevant information for inclusion, and requested the Executive Secretary to ensure that relevant elements from completed assessments were included in the gateway;

\* IPBES/7/1/Rev.1.

<sup>1</sup> UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, annex I.

(d) Encouraged the authors of the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and other assessments to use the content of the gateway in the development of their assessments.

4. The Plenary decided to allocate additional funds to this deliverable as part of its approved budget for 2018, thus enabling the expert group to meet in person.

5. At their eleventh meetings, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau welcomed the proposed next steps for the further development of the policy support gateway and the further development of methodological guidance to support assessments. At their twelfth meetings, they received drafts of the methodological guidance for assessing policy instruments and facilitating the use of policy support tools in IPBES assessments, draft procedures for uploading content to the policy support gateway, draft validation procedures for the content of the gateway, suggested next steps relating to the further development of the gateway, and collated options for how the gateway could be integrated into the other functions of IPBES, as well as lessons learned by the expert group during the first work programme of IPBES. Following those meetings, the documents were finalized by the expert group in line with written comments received from the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau.

6. Information on the activities of the expert group is set out in document IPBES/7/2, the report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, sets out further information on activities carried out by the expert group in addressing its mandate. It also describes activities that a task force on policy tools and methodologies could undertake as part of the next work programme of IPBES.

## Annex

### Information on work related to policy support tools and methodologies

#### I. Composition of the reconstituted expert group on policy support tools and methodologies

1. The task groups of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies consist of the following experts:

(a) Task group for the development and review of methodological guidance (“task group on guidance”):

<i>Name</i>	<i>Country</i>
Aletta Bonn	Germany
Kai Chan	Canada
Neville Crossman	Australia
Prudence Galega	Cameroon
Mary George	Malaysia
Mochamad Indrawan	Indonesia
Claudia Ituarte-Lima	Mexico
Tatiana Kluvankova	Slovakia
Juana Mariño	Colombia
Emmanuel Munyeneh	Liberia
Lydia Olander	United States of America
Paul Ongugo	Kenya
Eeva Primmer	Finland
Irene Ring	Germany
Masaru Yarime	Japan

(b) Task group for the further development of the policy support gateway, and for promoting and facilitating its use (“task group on the catalogue”):

<i>Name</i>	<i>Country</i>
Mialy Andriamahefazafy	Madagascar
Juliette Young	United Kingdom

2. In addition to the experts mentioned above, the following organizations and initiatives have supported the work of the task group on the catalogue: ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity; BES-Net, hosted by the United Nations Development Programme; the Mexican Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO); the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research South Africa; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and in particular experts involved in the former ValuES project; the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research; the Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute (Colombia); the International Union for Conservation of Nature; the Network-Forum for Biodiversity Research Germany; the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme; the United Nations Environment Programme; the United States Geological Survey; the Network of Regional Centres of Expertise facilitated by the United Nations University and the Wildlife Institute of India.

#### II. Meeting of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies

3. The meeting of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies was held in Cambridge, United Kingdom, from 7 to 9 August 2018. The meeting was co-chaired by Ana Maria Hernandez and Senka Barudanovic, members of the management committee for IPBES work on policy support tools and methodologies (deliverable 4(c)).

4. Sessions were held either in plenary, or in two parallel working groups to allow for specific matters being adequately covered. One of the working groups focused on drafting the methodological guidance on how to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies through IPBES assessments. The other identified ways in which the policy support gateway could be further developed, and its use facilitated. Finally, two plenary sessions focused on considerations for the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau on lessons learned with respect to the IPBES function to support policy formulation and implementation with a view to informing the next work programme of IPBES. The outcomes and outputs of the meeting are set out in the following sections.

### **III. Further development of the methodological guidance on how to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies through IPBES assessments**

5. In decision IPBES-6/1, the Plenary requested the expert group to further develop the online catalogue and the guidance to Platform assessments by implementing activities to increase the uptake of those tools and methodologies by policymakers and practitioners. It also encouraged the authors of the global and other assessments to include elements of the catalogue in their methodological approaches.

6. The methodological guidance aims to support current and future IPBES assessments in considering policy support tools and methodologies. The guidance is one of the modules accompanying the guide on the production of assessments (deliverable 2(a)), available on the IPBES website.<sup>2</sup> It builds on the experience of ongoing and completed assessments and will help ensure consistency in the way in which policy instruments and support tools and methodologies are identified and included in IPBES assessments. Thereby, it will facilitate links between assessment processes and the policy support gateway.

7. The methodological guidance consists of four sections: (i) context and purpose of the guidance; (ii) scope and definitions; (iii) assessing policy instruments, support tools and methodologies within an IPBES assessment; and (iv) linking to the policy support gateway.

8. Based on the annotated outline developed by the expert group and agreed by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau in 2017 and subsequent modifications introduced in early 2018, the experts of the task group on the guidance have each contributed to developing one or more of the sections of the guidance. A preliminary draft of some sections of the guidance was developed in the period January/February 2018.

9. During the meeting of the expert group in Cambridge, the task group developed elements for the full draft of the methodological guidance. After the meeting, the structure and content of the document were further refined, and experts who could not attend the meeting were invited to provide their inputs.

10. The complete draft was circulated on 3 October 2018 for review by the management committee, the task group on the guidance, and coordinating lead authors for chapter 6 of the regional and global assessments and for chapters 6 and 8 of the land degradation and restoration assessment. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau were invited to review the draft and provide comments and guidance to be taken into account in its finalization.

11. The task group addressed the received feedback, and the guidance was finalized in consultation with the management committee. The final version of the methodological guidance was circulated electronically to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau for their information. The full document is contained in appendix I.

12. A webinar on the methodological guidance is planned to be developed following the seventh session of the Plenary and run in partnership with the task force on capacity-building. Other training opportunities will be identified.

### **IV. Further development of the IPBES policy support gateway**

13. In decision IPBES-6/1, the Plenary requested the expert group to further develop the online gateway and the guidance to IPBES assessments by implementing activities to further increase the uptake of those tools and methodologies by policymakers and practitioners. It also requested the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ipbes.net/guide-production-assessments>.

Executive Secretary, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, subject to the availability of resources, to refine the structure and functionality of the gateway, its visualization, access, and validation procedures, and to ensure that additional efforts are made to invite Governments and stakeholders to provide input to the gateway, and that the gateway is integrated into work relating to the other functions of IPBES, namely assessments, capacity-building, knowledge generation and efforts relating to communication. Lastly, it requested the Executive Secretary to ensure that relevant elements from the regional and land degradation and restoration assessments are included in the policy support gateway.

14. In response to those requests, the expert group focused its work on:
- (a) Identifying ways to refine the structure, functionality, and visualisation of the gateway;
  - (b) Preparing options and/or recommendations on validation procedures, including cost implications;
  - (c) Identifying options for the gateway to be integrated into work related to the other functions of IPBES;
  - (d) Working with the task force on capacity-building to explore ways to more effectively promote and facilitate the future use of policy support tools and methodologies at appropriate scales that meet the needs of policymakers.

15. Key outputs from the meeting included draft options to refine the structure, functionality and visualisation of the policy support gateway, draft procedures for uploading and updating content in the policy support gateway and draft validation procedures, as well as draft options for the policy support gateway to be integrated into the other functions of the Platform.

16. The draft options to refine the structure, functionality and visualisation of the gateway included a number of recommendations and proposals by the expert group for making the online platform more user friendly and appealing to users. The draft procedures and principles for uploading and updating content in the gateway will guide the addition of content, specifying the process and responsibility for adding information into the gateway, as well as its subsequent update. The draft validation procedures describe a series of non-exclusive mechanisms to implement a largely user-driven quality control process. Lastly, the expert group developed draft options for the gateway to be integrated into work relating to the other functions of IPBES, including concrete suggestions for their implementation.

17. The Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel reviewed the draft options and procedures and provided comments and guidance towards their finalization by the expert group in consultation with the management committee for the deliverable. The options to refine the structure, functionality and visualisation of the policy support gateway are set out in appendix II, the procedures for uploading and updating content from the policy support gateway in appendix III, the validation procedures in appendix IV and the options for the policy support gateway to be integrated into work relating to the other functions of IPBES appendix V. These are living documents and would be kept under review during the next work programme of IPBES to ensure they continue being fit-for-purpose.

18. With respect to the development of validation procedures for the content of the gateway, concerns regarding the validation of indigenous and local knowledge were raised. The expert group suggested to refer this issue to the task force on indigenous and local knowledge for guidance, an approach that was supported by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau at their twelfth meetings. This matter would therefore be included in the agenda of the first meeting of the task force on indigenous and local knowledge following the seventh session of the Plenary, if the Plenary at that session extended the mandate of that task force.

19. The policy support gateway is available on the IPBES website<sup>3</sup>. The following activities, undertaken under the guidance of the expert group and the strategic partners, have been implemented in further developing the gateway:

- (a) The IPBES secretariat requested quotes for the implementation of structural, functional and visual changes. A contractor has been identified and selected to design and implement these changes. Structural, functional and visual changes of the gateway will be implemented in conjunction with the revamp of the IPBES website, led by the secretariat in Bonn. Terms of reference for contracting graphic design, user interface and web development services were developed by the secretariat;

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ipbes.net/policy-support>.

- (b) The technical support unit led the process for uploading content from regional and land degradation and restoration assessments into the gateway. The technical support unit has been working with relevant experts and other technical support units, as appropriate, and work is currently ongoing;
- (c) Further suggested changes will be implemented in May 2019.

## V. Next steps

### A. Suggested activities under the next work programme of IPBES

20. Building on the lessons learned from the implementation of the work programme 2014-2018, and with a view to enhancing the policy support function of IPBES and strengthening the integration among its four functions, the following activities could be implemented under the next work programme:

- (a) Establishment of a task force on policy tools and methodologies to enhance and guide the implementation of the IPBES policy support function, including through the activities listed in subparagraphs (b) to (h) below;
- (b) Provision of support to the further development of the policy support gateway by facilitating the addition of resources, by gathering and analyzing information concerning the use and effectiveness of the gateway and by modifying services accordingly;
- (c) Development of a communications strategy for the release of the policy support gateway that targets appropriate networks at sub-regional and local levels, as well as global organizations and national focal points for effective outreach;
- (d) Identification and convening of capacity-building activities on the use of the gateway and policy support tools and methodologies, working through the IPBES capacity-building rolling plan, and ensuring that products developed through capacity-building activities are integrated into the policy support gateway and linked with the relevant policy support tools and methodologies;
- (e) Strengthening of the provision of timely and targeted support to assessments on how to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies through IPBES assessments, including through webinars and other training opportunities as appropriate;
- (f) Promotion of the use of assessments to populate the policy support gateway, while encouraging the use of the content of the gateway during the development of assessments, both as a source of information for the assessments and as a tool to facilitate the flow of information from governments to authors;
- (g) Convening workshops in conjunction with other relevant meetings, to bring together the community of practice to promote the further development of policy support tools and methodologies;
- (h) Raising awareness of the policy support gateway and its potential, including by considering opportunities for making the gateway available in more languages.

21. In addition, the following activities might also be considered:

- (a) Exploring possible approaches for using the gateway to identify key areas relevant for policy support (institutions, governance, policy instruments, policy support tools, etc.);
- (b) Using the gateway as a basis for facilitating uptake of assessments, developing learning materials focused on IPBES products, and developing guidance for the establishment of national science-policy platforms and networks;
- (c) Undertaking further IPBES methodological assessments as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of policy instruments and policy support tools.

### B. Outline of proposed activities for the 2019-2020 intersessional period

22. Building on the information presented in the previous section, an indicative list of activities to be implemented in the 2019-2020 intersessional period is presented below for the work on policy support tools and methodologies. This is based on the assumption that this work will form part of the next work programme and that the necessary resources will be made available.

23. The following activities are proposed:

- (a) Further development of the policy support gateway as a means to facilitate the implementation of the IPBES function supporting policy formulation and implementation and

development of a strategy and associated communication materials to promote the use of the policy support gateway;

(b) Provision of support to the identification and convening of capacity-building activities on the use of the gateway and policy support tools and methodologies, consistent with the IPBES capacity-building rolling plan, and ensuring that products developed through capacity-building activities are integrated into the policy support gateway;

(c) Provision of support to experts of ongoing IPBES assessments with respect to using the guidance for assessing policy instruments and facilitating the use of policy support tools and methodologies and promotion of the use of the assessments to populate the policy support gateway;

(d) Close liaison with the technical support unit of the methodological assessment on values and with ongoing work on scenarios and models, in order to facilitate access to policy support tools and methodologies arising from this work;

(e) Ensuring input from appropriate experts into this work, including convening at least one meeting of the task force on policy support tools and methodologies to advance the implementation of the activities mentioned above.

## Appendix I

### **Methodological guidance for assessing policy instruments and facilitating the use of policy support tools and methodologies through IPBES assessments (module D of the Guide on the production of assessments)**

**Co-chairs of the Expert Group:** *Members of the Bureau Senka Barudanovic and Ana María Hernandez Salgar*

**Expert Group (in alphabetical order):** *Mialy Andriamahefazafy; Aletta Bonn, Kai Chan, Neville Crossman, Prudence Galega, Mary George, Mochamad Indrawan, Claudia Ituarte-Lima, Tatiana Kluvankova, Juana Mariño, Emmanuel Munyeneh, Lydia Olander, Paul Ongugo, Eeva Primmer, Irene Ring, Esther Turnhout, Masaru Yarime; Juliette Young*

**Additional contributing IPBES Experts:** *Lilibeth Acosta, Keisha Garcia, Ram Pandit, Marina Rosales, Lindsay Stringer, Louise Willemen*

**Members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel:** *Antonio Díaz-De-León, Özden Görücü, Voahangy Raharimalala, Mersudin Avdibegović, Rizwan Irshad, Madhav Karki, Sandra Lavorel, Judith Fisher, Shizuka Hashimoto, Bibiana Vilá*

**Technical Support Unit:** *Claire Brown, Daniela Guarás and Ben Gilbey*



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Context and purpose of the guidance

The IPBES Guide on the production of assessments (the Guide) is complemented by a series of modules, which contain further information for those involved in IPBES assessments. This guidance constitutes Module D of the Guide. It explains how to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies through IPBES assessments and addresses the issues relevant in this context. It relates to one of IPBES's four functions, which 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 catalyze their further development*" (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, appendix 1, paragraph 1(d)).

IPBES assessments synthesize and build on peer-reviewed scientific literature, grey literature and other available knowledge systems such as indigenous peoples and local communities as well as practitioners' knowledge. They include a review and synthesis, as well as an analysis and an expert judgement of the available knowledge base. In order to support the implementation of the policy support function, IPBES assessments should assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies for a specific theme, or as part of a methodological assessment.

In addition to its modules, the Guide identifies four "key IPBES resources" that have been developed to support the work of assessment authors. These resources include:

- (a) **IPBES e-learning modules:** E-learning modules cover different aspects of assessments and support the development of capacity. Available at: <https://www.ipbes.net/e-learning>
- (b) **IPBES webinar series:** Webinars cover different aspects of the assessment process, as well as the assessments themselves. Available at: <https://www.ipbes.net/webinars>
- (c) **IPBES preliminary guide on the conceptualization of values:** This Guide contains further information on the identification and conceptualization of different values. Available at: [www.ipbes.net/guidance-and-conceptual-framework](http://www.ipbes.net/guidance-and-conceptual-framework)
- (d) **IPBES policy support gateway:** Contains information regarding a range of policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies linked to assessments, case studies, capacity-building opportunities and resources, and communities of practice. Available at: <https://www.ipbes.net/policy-support>

This guidance is based on IPBES rules and procedures, its conceptual framework and experience gained during the development of completed assessments.

### 1.2 Key users of the guidance

This guidance is aimed at IPBES assessment authors, in particular those selected to assess policy instruments and to facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies through the assessment. It may also support authors in coordinating the development of key themes and narratives across chapters and the development of the summary for policymakers.

Experts undertaking IPBES-like regional, national or sub-national ecosystem assessments may also benefit from using this guidance document.

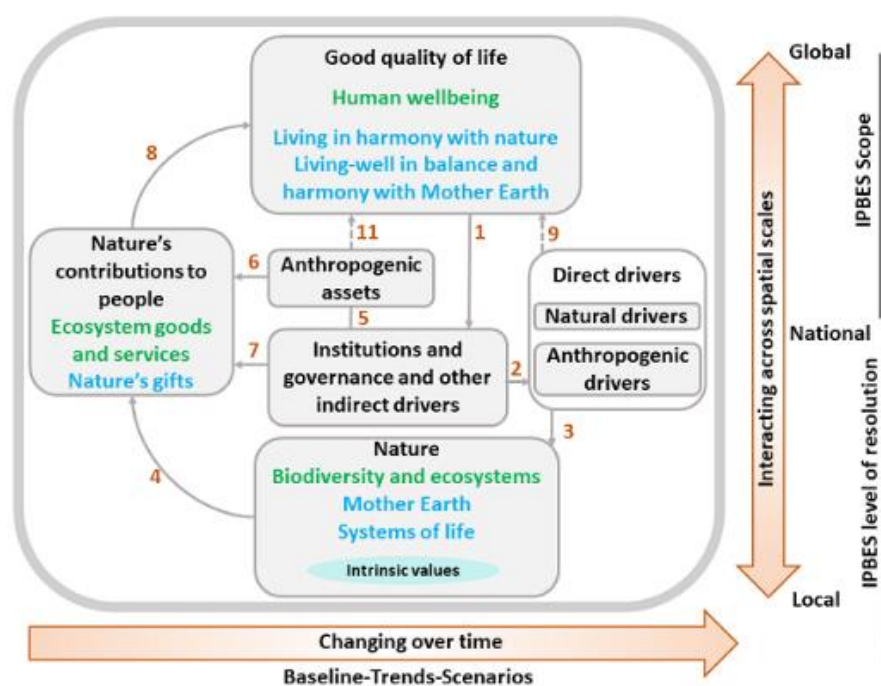
It should be noted that this guidance is a living document and will be updated based on the ongoing work of IPBES. Therefore, users should ensure they are using the latest version. Feedback by users can be provided to the relevant technical support unit and the IPBES secretariat.

### 1.3 Structure and contents of the guidance

Section 2 focuses on the scope and definitions to be considered. Section 3 describes the process for assessing policy instruments and facilitating the use of policy support tools and methodologies, taking into account a series of steps that should be considered for this purpose. Section 4 introduces the IPBES policy support gateway and its relevance to assessments.

### 1.4 The IPBES conceptual framework and the relevance of policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies

The work of IPBES is underpinned by a conceptual framework (figure 1) which consists of six interlinked elements constituting a social-ecological system that operates at various scales in time and space: i) nature; ii) nature's contributions to people; iii) anthropogenic assets; iv) institutions and governance systems and other indirect drivers of change; v) direct drivers of change; and vi) good quality of life (Díaz et al., 2015a & b). The conceptual framework guides authors in undertaking IPBES assessments. Authors assessing the use and effectiveness of policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies will focus primarily on 'Institutions, governance and other indirect drivers', although other parts of the framework may also be essential to their work.



**Figure 1.** IPBES assessment framework. The IPBES conceptual framework builds on previous conceptual frameworks. It includes a graphic expression of the interrelationships between biodiversity and ecosystems, and human quality of life, at different temporal and spatial scales, and from the perspectives of different worldviews (including western science, and indigenous and local knowledge).

## 2. Definitions of key terms and concepts

A number of key terms related to policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies are provided to ensure consistency of interpretation and understanding between and within IPBES assessments, as well as other IPBES outputs such as the IPBES policy support gateway:<sup>4</sup>

- **Policy:** A definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions<sup>5</sup>;
- **Policy instrument:** A set of means or mechanisms to achieve a policy goal;
- **Policy support tools and methodologies:** Approaches and techniques based on science and other knowledge systems that can inform, assist and enhance relevant decisions, policy making and implementation at local, national, regional and global levels to protect nature, thereby promoting nature’s contributions to people and a good quality of life;
- **The policy cycle:** Policies are often cyclical in that emerging problems are addressed with the formulation of policies, followed by their implementation and subsequent evaluation. These stages in the policy cycle can be formalized with assigned roles and processes, and consist of many other sub-stages. For example, the policy formulation stage can include problem definition, identification of alternatives, consultations and public hearings, and finally, a decision on the chosen policy. Implementation can include allocating budgetary, assigning implementation roles to different actors, setting specific targets, and possibly developing guidelines. The evaluation and redefinition of the problem can be conducted with the help of formal monitoring systems as a periodic exercise, or it can be an ad-hoc process or a mere societal discussion of the impacts and consequences of existing policies;
- **Governance:** The way the rules, norms and actions in a given organization are structured, sustained, and regulated.

### 2.1 Policy instruments

Within the IPBES context, the following four categories of policy instruments are identified:

- (a) Legal and regulatory instruments e.g. protected areas; land degradation neutrality targets;
- (b) Economic and financial instruments e.g. payment for ecosystem services; ecological fiscal transfers; REDD+;
- (c) Rights-based instruments and customary norms e.g. indigenous community conserved areas (ICCAs);
- (d) Social and cultural instruments e.g. voluntary sustainability standards; eco-labelling certification schemes.

In some situations, overlaps between the four categories have been identified. For example, in some of the IPBES Regional Assessments of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services it was found that it was difficult to differentiate cultural instruments from customary norms.

### 2.2 Policy support tools and methodologies

Policy support tools play an important role in improving the governance process by ensuring that governance arrangements are integrated, based on an inclusive and adaptive evidence-base. Within the IPBES context, seven families of policy support tools and methodologies have been delineated. The families are defined by the broad challenges they address, as shown in the examples presented

<sup>4</sup> The definitions of “policy instrument”, “policy support tools and methodologies” and “governance” are taken from the IPBES glossary available at: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary>. Other terms contained in the glossary may also be useful in this context.

<sup>5</sup> Merriam-Webster <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy>.

below. Some policy support tools and methodologies may be attributed to more than one family (e.g. the integrated valuation of ecosystem services and tradeoffs (InVEST)).

### **2.2.1. Assembling data and knowledge**

The policy support tools and methodologies in this family assist in gathering, processing and providing data to understand the function and dynamics of biodiversity, human wellbeing, nature's contributions to people (including ecosystem goods and services), and associated social-ecological systems. The family includes tools such as data collection efforts, databases and monitoring, indicators, oral history, mapping of ecosystem services, among others. This family is relevant to all elements of the policy cycle.

*Examples of policy support tools and methodologies of this family include databases provided by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON).*

### **2.2.2 Assessment and evaluation**

The second family of policy support tools and methodologies consists of tools that synthesize and assess knowledge, including indigenous and local knowledge. The family includes different types of assessment and evaluation tools, based on a variety of methods and diverse conceptualizations of values of nature, nature's contributions to people, and a good quality of life. This family is relevant to all elements of the policy cycle.

*Examples of this family include analysis of management effectiveness and tools, trend analysis, scenarios impact assessments, indigenous peoples and local communities' monitoring systems, quantitative modelling, accounting, life-cycle assessment, deliberative valuation, cost-benefit analysis, trade-off analysis, geographic information systems and human rights assessments.*

### **2.2.3. Public discussion, involvement and participatory process**

Policy support tools and methodologies from this family assist in identifying problems and opportunities, setting goals and priorities, establishing a case for policy action, and building a shared understanding of requirements and consequences. They may also facilitate the achievement of principles such as equality, equity, non-discrimination, and effective participation. This is achieved by supporting discussions on new and existing knowledge and data, emerging risks and opportunities, and options for societal responses, institutions, policy settings and their effectiveness. Tools of this family are relevant in particular for the policy formulation stage but can support all stages of the policy cycle.

*Examples of this family include expert interviews, stakeholder mapping and analysis, field observation, focused group discussion, public hearing and auditing, participatory well-being ranking, mass media communication, and legal empowerment methodologies (e.g. community protocols).*

### **2.2.4. Selection and design of policy instruments**

This family consists of policy support tools and methodologies that support the identification, evaluation and selection of policies and institutional settings, including the evaluation of and comparison with relevant experience and outcomes under similar and different circumstances. They can be used for both the selection and design of individual policy instruments, and the analysis of policy mixes, thereby considering the interaction among several instruments in real-world contexts (Ring and Schröter-Schlaack, 2015). This family focuses primarily on selecting and designing new policy instruments and improving existing policies to achieve certain policy objectives, considering that policy instruments are different from policy support tools and methodologies. This family is

primarily aligned with the policy formulation stage of the policy cycle, but it could be relevant to the other two stages, for example to support the implementation policy.

*Examples of this family include analysis of individual, or a combination of, policy instruments, identification of missing instruments and instrument impact evaluation. Other examples include legal assessment tools (e.g. for gender equitable land tenure), ex-ante evaluation of options and scenarios, designing systems of protected areas, and policy mix analysis.*

#### **2.2.5. Implementation, outreach and enforcement**

Policy support tools and methodologies under this family support the practical implementation of policy instruments, including laws, regulations and quasi-regulations, independent compliance mechanisms, economic and financial instruments, and information tools. Information tools, through monitoring, may provide information to stakeholders and support enforcement and compliance. This family focuses primarily on supporting the implementation of policies that have already been decided and enacted. It is mostly aligned with policy implementation, but could be relevant to the other two stages of the policy cycle.

*Examples of policy support tools and methodologies of this family include: risk-based enforcement effort, process standards (e.g. those under the International Standards Organization (ISO)), monitoring, reporting, verifying and systematic information sharing through platforms and processes, amici curiae (friends of the court) and expert witnesses.*

#### **2.2.6. Training and capacity building**

Policy support tools and methodologies of this family support the identification and addressing of capacity gaps and shortfalls by enhancing the skills and capacities of relevant actors and organizations, including government officials and agencies, communities and representatives, businesses, non-governmental organizations, environmental advocacy groups, think tanks and research organisations, advisors, and support services. This family cuts cross the other six families.

*Examples of policy support tools and methodologies of this family include handbooks, manuals, guides, e-learning resources, education, workshops, knowledge sharing, national science foundation agendas, and the IPBES fellows programme.*

#### **2.2.7. Social learning, innovation and adaptive governance**

Policy support tools and methodologies within this family address gaps and disconnects in the policy process and between different sectors, actors and decision-making levels. These tools support social learning, strengthen links, feedback mechanisms and responsiveness to change, and improve risk management, and the overall performance of policy processes.

*Examples include workshop series, peer-to-peer learning dialogues, resilience assessments, transition arenas, and technology assessment.*

### **3. Assessing policy instruments, and facilitating the use of policy support tools and methodologies within IPBES assessments**

This section sets out steps that IPBES assessment authors can use to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies as part of an assessment. Chapters 6 of the IPBES Regional Assessments of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services were developed using these steps. The description of each step includes a checklist for authors.

The majority of the policy analysis is expected to occur within the chapter focusing on governance and policy instruments. However, the assessment of policy instruments is also likely to be addressed in the assessment chapter on drivers. The coordinating lead authors of relevant chapters

within an assessment and across ongoing IPBES assessments are encouraged to coordinate their work closely to ensure coherence.

In IPBES assessments, policy may be analyzed at different levels from global, regional, national or sub-national to local, with analyses highlighting the interactions between scales of decision-making. Authors may focus on policy emerging at the international level, including under multilateral environmental agreements, or at the national level, including executive orders, regulations and policy statements.

Authors are encouraged to refer to the scoping document and other chapters in the assessment at any point during the assessment process, to ensure consistency around the assessment of policy instruments.

### **Step 1: What are the policy goals and what is the policy context and history?**

Historical, social, economic, political, ecological, legal and institutional settings influence the design and implementation of policy instruments. Identifying these settings will help authors to describe the policy context and history of policy instruments and of the use of policy support tools and methodologies. Authors are encouraged to consider administrative, social and cultural norms, as well as the scale of policy implementation, i.e. regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national and local (see also guidance on scale under step 3f below), when describing policy context.

Authors should first state the policy goal the assessment relates to as well as other relevant policy goals and targets. Policy goals related to an assessment can be very specific (e.g. secure pollination, protect and use forests sustainably), or more comprehensive (e.g., addressing transboundary issues, such as species migration or air pollution). Policy goals can be related to implementing bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements and contribute to the achievement of global targets (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals or Aichi Biodiversity Targets).

The policy context will shed light on the challenges which a policy aims to address. The description of the policy context should address relevant direct drivers (e.g. land use change, climate change), indirect drivers (e.g. demography, science and technology), as well as current gaps in achieving policy goals, including with regard to the institutional context (e.g. laws, regulations), actors'/stakeholders'/right-holders'/duty-bearers' interrelationships (e.g. government, non-governmental, private and societal organisations), and governance models (e.g. centralized, decentralized, public-private, etc.) that are utilized to address social, economic and ecological challenges. This description will support an understanding of the biodiversity and ecosystem service governance and the role(s) of various stakeholders in the governance system.

#### **Checklist of key actions**

- ✓ **Historical, social, economic, political and institutional settings described**
- ✓ **Relevant challenges identified**
- ✓ **Policy goals described**
- ✓ **Current gaps described**
- ✓ **Scales at which governance and decision-making takes places considered**

### **Step 2: What are the policy instruments relevant for the assessment?**

Authors may wish to describe relevant policy instruments under the four categories used in the IPBES context (, see section 2.1 above). The categories can be adjusted to correspond to the specific context of an assessment, but adjustments should be described and followed systematically.

Authors are encouraged to describe the criteria they used for selecting the instruments they address (e.g. availability of literature or case studies, etc.).

It may also be informative to consider the evidence base upon which an instrument was selected and incorporated within a policy or strategy, where possible including information on the policy support tools and methodologies that were used to inform its selection. The scale at which a policy instrument operates should also be described.

Authors may wish to describe not only individual policy instruments, but also policy instruments forming “policy mixes”, as part of which, instruments appear in a certain sequence, complement or are in conflict with each other.

Authors may also consider presenting information on policy instruments along key themes. This approach can be used to specifically highlight policy mixes which utilize a suite of policy instruments and policy support tools.

### **Checklist of key actions**

- ✓ **All relevant policy instrument categories or themes described**
- ✓ **If relevant, potentially missing instruments in the policy mix identified**

### **Step 3: How to assess policy instruments and policy support tools?**

This section sets out a series of sub-questions that can guide the assessment of policy instruments.

It is important to remember that the assessment should be based upon existing knowledge and literature and not involve primary research.

#### **Step 3a: How are the policy instruments implemented?**

The way in which policy instruments are implemented depends on the process employed, the resources available and the specific institutional setting, governance style and structure. Authors could start by describing for each policy instrument addressed in the assessment, based on available literature:

- (a) The roles of different actors in the implementation of a policy instrument, including their formal responsibilities, which could be reported in the literature as a narrative of an organizational structure, in legal instruments or in court decisions, and less formal roles, e.g. the role of intermediaries, knowledge brokers, practitioners, non-governmental organizations or businesses;
- (b) The financial resources allocated to implementing the policy instrument, including their source (e.g. national budget, municipality budget, donor, charity, private sector), continuity and predictability, and relative abundance as compared to other similar financial allocations;
- (c) The human resources allocated to implementing the policy instrument, including numbers, skills and mandate of experts, professionals and managers implementing the policy instrument, including the mandate and capacity of the respective authority;
- (d) The enabling and constraining conditions, and the relevant institutions and governance modes.

In their descriptions, authors should refer to confidence terms (see section 2.2.6 on using confidence terms in the IPBES Guide on the Production of Assessments), which should rate confidence in the conclusions based on both the level of scientific agreement, and the quantity and quality of the evidence available (based on the literature).



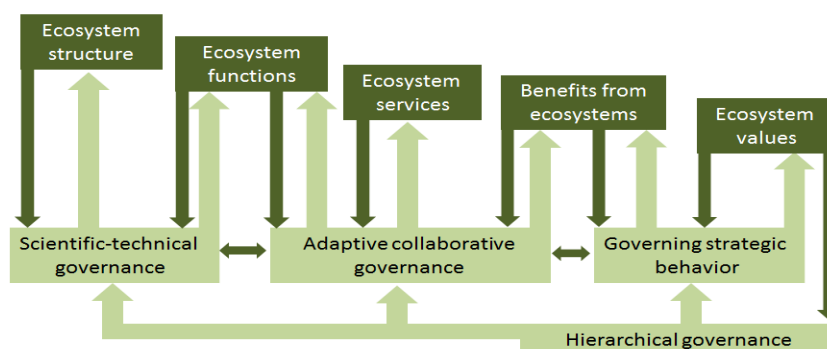
Authors may also wish to describe how governance influences the implementation of the policy instrument (see also step 3b below). This could include the ways in which implementation is enabled by governance conditions and recognize possible barriers for implementation. An analysis of the enabling context may reveal that governance structures other than those directly relating to the instrument being assessed also influence policy implementation. In particular, rigid sectoral role division or major changes in governance structures (e.g., decentralization, marketization, administrative, legal or political changes might have a notable impact on the governance of the assessed policy).

### Step 3b: What is the governance system(s) in which the policy instrument is being implemented?

A clear understanding of the governance system in which a policy instrument or policy support tool is being implemented is an important part of their assessment.

Good governance is an important enabling condition for policy implementation; it enhances the implementation of policies and distributes resulting positive impacts evenly. Good governance is usually characterized as including: participation, inclusiveness, consensus orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equality and non-discrimination, and rule of law. Good governance reduces the risks of corruption, and engages and empowers minorities and vulnerable groups.

Biodiversity governance is well addressed in the literature and through case studies in most parts of the world, but literature on ecosystem services governance is only starting to accumulate. The different modes of governance of ecosystem services have been framed as: (1) hierarchical top-down governance; (2) scientific-technical governance; (3) adaptive collaborative governance and (4) governing strategic behavior (Primmer et al., 2015). Different governance modes usually imply different policy instruments and different parts of an ecosystem targeted by responses (See figure 2).



**Figure 2.** A framework for analyzing governance of ecosystem services (Primmer et al. 2015)

### Step 3c: Who are the relevant actors and stakeholders?

While gathering the available literature related to the assessment of a policy instrument, it is important to understand the full range of actors and stakeholders associated with that policy instrument, as well as their various roles. This should include actors and stakeholders at the scale at which the policy instrument applies as well as any other scale at which the instrument may have an influence.

In the IPBES context, stakeholders are defined as “any individuals, groups or organizations who affect, or could be affected by (whether positively or negatively) a particular issue and its associated policies, decisions and action”<sup>6</sup>. While terms are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature to describe stakeholder groups (e.g. actors, target groups, beneficiaries), care should be taken to ensure that terms are used appropriately and consistently within the assessment.

In the context of each policy instrument that is presented and assessed, the extent to which stakeholder information can be included will be based on the available literature. Some policy instruments, for which there is an appreciable amount of information, may mention very specific stakeholders; others may be broader in their description of the stakeholder groups. The assessment should try to include and highlight:

- (a) Whether beneficiaries and target groups have been either positively or negatively affected by the use of the policy instrument under question - this could help to identify the “winners” and “losers”; and discourage discriminatory practices;
- (b) Whether the individual(s) or group(s) responsible for implementing the policy instrument have fulfilled their duties and roles. This could help in assessing implementation effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and accountability;
- (c) The relationships between and amongst stakeholder groups. This could help in understanding the governance arrangements associated with any policy instrument.

Keeping in mind that stakeholders are affected differently over time and space by policies and policy instruments, it is important to include dimensions of scale (see step 3f below) when identifying stakeholders and the ways in which they are affected.

Other knowledge systems, including indigenous and local knowledge, (see IPBES’ work on indigenous and local knowledge) as well as practitioners’ knowledge should, to the extent possible, be considered when assessing a policy instrument. Indigenous and local knowledge should be considered in accordance with the approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge adopted by the Plenary (see decision IPBES-5/1, Annex II).

### **Step 3d: What impacts do the policy instruments have?**

Policy impacts are the direct, indirect, intended and unintended impacts that a policy instrument generates. Intended impacts are related to the policy goals to which the specific IPBES assessment refers, as defined in its scoping document. When assessing impacts, authors may consider linking to other relevant areas of the assessment report, which could include chapters on status and trends, drivers (including the unintended impacts of previously implemented policy instruments), scenarios, and human wellbeing.

All impacts, including ecological, economic, cultural and social impacts, should be considered for each selected policy instrument, to the degree that this is feasible. Links between impacts and tradeoffs and the different ways in which different stakeholders experience the impacts could also be considered to assess the distributional and equity impacts.

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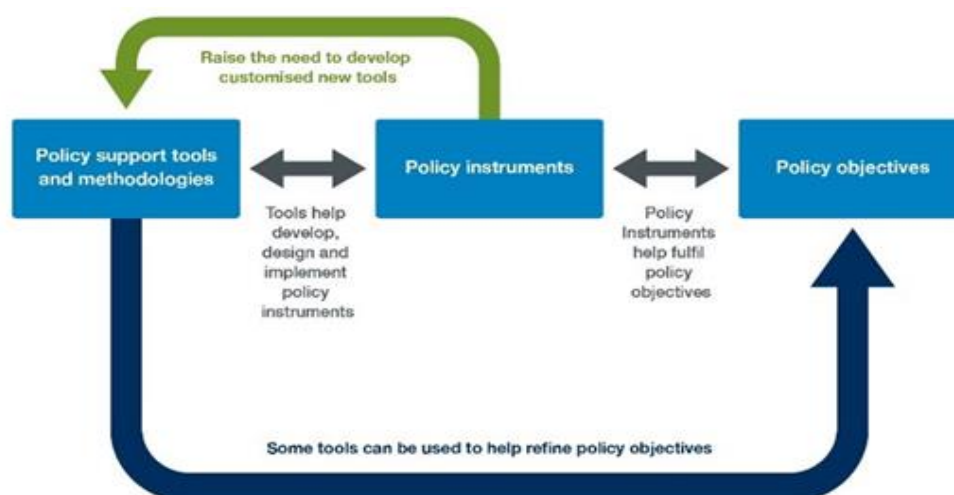
<sup>6</sup> IPBES glossary: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary/stakeholders>

The temporal and spatial scales at which the impacts occur could also be relevant, as some impacts may occur with long delays, at a very local scale or well beyond the scale at which they are implemented, including outside the targeted policy area (e.g. through telecoupling<sup>7</sup>).

### Step 3e: Are the policy instruments achieving the desired outcome?

Effectiveness can be assessed in a variety of different ways depending on the literature and information related to monitoring and evaluation that is available and can include various measures of efficiency, such as goal achievement, effectiveness, cost effectiveness and legitimacy (including equity and inclusion). Criteria selected for the evaluation of the effectiveness of a policy instrument in an assessment should be explained.

Effectiveness of a policy instrument or mix of instruments generally relates to the desired impacts that can be directly attributed to that instrument or mix. Causal links may, however, be difficult to establish, often requiring judgement about whether the anticipated targets have been achieved, and whether the impacts generated can be attributed to the policy. Cost-effectiveness commonly compares the effects of instruments, i.e. achieving a policy goal, with the costs of implementing them, which could also take into account the costs of inaction. A more cost-effective measure will achieve greater results for lower investment. Several of the policy support tools and methodologies available through the IPBES policy support gateway may be relevant for evaluating effectiveness.



**Figure 3.** Relationship between policy objectives, policy instruments and policy support tools

Where possible, policy evaluation literature should be used to inform the evaluation of the effectiveness of policy instruments selected individually and/or in combination. If relevant, and considering various policy instruments in real-world policy mixes, it can be important to take issues of sequencing into account. If literature and information are not readily available, knowledge gaps should be clearly stated. Confidence terms should be used to refer to a limited focus in available literature or contradictory findings.

Some policy instruments may support or complement others; while others may be in conflict with each other. Presentation of these tradeoffs where possible is useful and should consider relevant

<sup>7</sup> IPBES glossary: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary/telecoupling>

spatial and temporal scales. Examples of the effectiveness of different instruments can demonstrate “what works, where and when”, synthesizing the information gained in each of the steps above. Infographics can aid in communicating this information.

### **Step 3f: What is the scale at which the policy instrument is operating?**

Scale is an important consideration in assessing the effectiveness of any policy instrument and its associated policy support tools and methodologies. It refers to the dimensions used to measure and study any phenomenon<sup>8</sup>. Two important types of scale that should be considered in IPBES assessments are the spatial (geographical) and temporal scales.

*Spatial (geographical) scale:* Spatial scale is comprised of two properties: (i) spatial extent, that is the size of the total area of interest for a particular study (e.g. a watershed, a country, global scale); and (ii) spatial grain or resolution, that is the size of the spatial units within this total area for which data are observed or predicted, e.g. fine-grained or coarse-grained grid cells<sup>9</sup>. Within the context of each IPBES assessment, the spatial scale of the policy instrument(s) being assessed is outlined in or framed by the scoping document for that assessment. Including a spatial dimension in the assessment of effectiveness can help to improve accuracy as it highlights whether a policy instrument had the intended impact(s) at its relevant scale; and whether benefits or unintended consequences of the policy instrument occurred at other scales. It is often not possible to assess the effectiveness of a policy instrument or policy support tool and methodology at one scale or for one specific geographical context, by drawing on the experience of the implementation of the same type of policy instrument at another scale or for another geographical context. Policy instruments are often very specific to the social, legal, political, economic, cultural and ecological context in which they are designed and implemented.

*Temporal scale:* Temporal scale is comprised of the: (i) temporal extent, that is the total length of the time period of interest for a particular study (e.g. 10 years, 50 years, or 100 years); and (ii) temporal grain or resolution, that is the temporal frequency with which data are observed or projected within this total period (e.g. at 1-year, 5-year or 10-year intervals)<sup>10</sup>. Policy instruments are often designed with specific timeframes in mind. Taking these timeframes into account when assessing effectiveness is thus very important, especially when considering who is benefitting and who is “losing out”, as impacts may have time lags. The timeframes for achieving specific policy goals through the use of policy instruments may also not match timeframes for the achievement of other goals and targets coming from different levels. Care should therefore be taken when assessing the effectiveness of policy instruments in the contexts of goals and targets that are not specifically linked to that instrument.

#### **Checklist of actions**

- ✓ **Institutional setting described, including enabling and constraining factors, and resources available, both human and financial.**
- ✓ **Governance system being implemented considered.**
- ✓ **Impacts, direct or indirect, intended or unintended, at a variety of geographical scales considered.**
- ✓ **Actors and stakeholders involved considered.**
- ✓ **Effectiveness based on relevant criteria considered.**

<sup>8</sup> IPBES glossary: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary/scale>

<sup>9</sup> IPBES glossary: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary/scale>

<sup>10</sup> IPBES glossary: <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary/scale>

- ✓ **Spatial and temporal scales at which the instrument operates considered, including how telecoupling or time lag effects might affect impacts.**

#### **Step 4: Linking policy support tools and methodologies to policy instruments**

As outlined above, policy support tools and methodologies support different stages of the policy cycle and their assessment should ideally draw on literature, including empirical analyses of the relevant policy goals, context, implementation, governance, stakeholders, impacts, efficiency and effectiveness. Where this is not the case, or if an assessment addresses an emerging issue that is not subject to systematic policy steering, it can be helpful to draw on policy support tools and methodologies instead of policy instruments.

Prior to an assessment, authors may use policy support tools and methodologies to support the exploration of the issue at hand. After an assessment is completed, policy support tools and methodologies can support the integration of assessment findings into policy and decision-making.

#### **Checklist of actions**

- ✓ **If limited literature is available related to particular policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies to support the analysis considered.**

## **4. Incorporating information into the IPBES policy support gateway**

The IPBES policy support gateway (hereafter “the gateway”) is an innovative, dynamic, evolving online platform with two main goals:

- (a) To enable decision makers to gain easy access to tailored information on policy support tools and methodologies to better inform and assist the different scales and phases of policy-making and implementation;
- (b) To allow a range of users to provide input to the gateway and assess the usability of policy support tools and methodologies in their specific contexts, including resources required and types of outputs that can be obtained, and thus help to identify gaps in tools and methodologies (IPBES/3/INF/8).

### **4.1 Introduction to the gateway and its purpose**

There is a wide range of policy support tools and methodologies to support different stages of the policy cycle. However, it is often difficult for decision makers and practitioners to access such tools and methodologies and to identify how relevant they might be for addressing a particular situation. In its decision IPBES-2/5, the Plenary requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to develop an online catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies to facilitate access by decision makers to policy support tools and methodologies, and to provide guidance on how to promote and catalyse their further development.<sup>11</sup>

The IPBES policy support gateway is available at <https://www.ipbes.net/policy-support>. The gateway has been developed by IPBES with the support of a wide range of experts and resource people across the globe, and together with Oppla, a European research project.

With purpose of achieving its two main goals, the policy support gateway was developed around the following functions:

<sup>11</sup> Decision IPBES-2/5, section VIII.

**Goal A: To enable decision makers to gain easy access to tailored information relating to policy support tools and methodologies**

- (a) *Allow users to browse, search, identify and retrieve relevant policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies and information relating to them:* The gateway is a “one-stop-shop” of policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies relating to biodiversity and ecosystem services. Users can search by policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies, case studies, capacity-building opportunities and resources or assessments according to their needs and requirements. For this, users can use different entry points or filters. The filters identify specific areas which relate to the resource being uploaded, namely: Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals; related realms (including units of analysis); related categories of nature’s contributions to people; and sub-regions covered;
- (b) *Provide online functionality for its target groups:* The gateway has been designed from the perspective of the needs and requirements of its potential users to make it as accessible as possible and ensure it is used by decision makers, thereby potentially improving the quality of ensuing decisions;
- (c) *Develop a community of practice to strengthen user networking:* The gateway also has a strong networking function, allowing users working with specific policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies to share experiences of developing or using these with peers. In addition, users have the possibility to reach out to the developers and practitioners for any specific policy support tool or methodology in the database. Contact information is available on the gateway entries to allow exchanges between peers and with developers.

**Goal B: To allow a range of users to provide input to the gateway and their experiences and lessons on the usability of policy support tools and methodologies in their specific contexts:<sup>12</sup>**

- (a) *Submit information on policy support tools and methodologies:* Any users can submit information relating to any of the types of resources included in the gateway (see section 4.2.1 below). The types of products include policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies, linked to case studies, capacity-building resources and opportunities and assessments. The gateway furthermore includes two types of content: (i) content relating to the specific product types mentioned previously; and (ii) experiences relating to the use of specific policy instruments or policy support tools already contained in the gateway (by adding comments in the comment box available for each resource);
- (b) *Share lessons learned:* Users of the catalogue are encouraged to share their experiences and identify lessons learned from using policy support tools and methodologies. This experience could be documented in case studies, but feedback may also be provided by users and developers of support tools. Lessons learned can relate to cost-effectiveness; adaptability to different contexts; and user-friendliness of a specific resource, among others;
- (c) *Evaluate the gateway:* Mechanisms are being put in place to evaluate the usage of the gateway, particularly in relation to meeting its intended objectives. The best method by which such evaluation can currently take place is through the comments box in each resource page. At the bottom of the page there is a comment section where users are encouraged to leave feedback for each policy support tool, policy instrument, case study, assessment, or capacity-building opportunities and resources. Users can share any positive feedback, or any concerns they may

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<sup>12</sup> IPBES/3/5.

have regarding a particular resource, for example relating to the benefits or limitations of applying it in a specific context. Additionally, users may wish to provide suggestions on how a specific policy support tool could be improved;

(d) *Provide information to the Plenary of the Platform:* Regular reports from the Executive Secretary to the Plenary outline the usage of the gateway (analytics), lessons learned and progress made in its implementation. This allows IPBES to better understand who the main users of the catalogue are, while also helping to identify potential gaps in policy support tools and methodologies.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Structure of the policy support gateway

The IPBES policy support gateway comprises two key components:

- (a) A catalogue of policy instruments and policy support tools linked to assessments, case studies, capacity-building opportunities or resources, and a network of experts/practitioners (communities of practice);
- (b) Methodological guidance based on the methodological work developed by IPBES so far on:
  - (i) scenarios and models by providing an overview of what they are and how they can link to agenda setting and decision support; and
  - (ii) on multiple conceptualizations of diverse values by providing the conceptual justification for the approach, explaining through a six-step approach how to address them and providing an immersion to the topic for the IPBES community.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Types of resources in the policy support gateway

The gateway gathers a range of individual policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies as well as a number of additional types of resources linked to them, namely:

- (a) *Case studies* related to the implementation of specific policy instruments or application of policy support tools, including those from IPBES assessments. Since case studies provide examples relating to the practical application of policy support tools or instruments, it is strongly encouraged to have a variety of case studies for each of those;
- (b) *Capacity-building opportunities and resources* are means to help build the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and apply relevant tools and instruments, e.g. in-person and online training, documents, etc.
- (c) *Individual experts and practitioners* with expertise in relation to specific policy instruments or policy support tools
- (d) Further, given the decision to integrate the content of the existing catalogue of assessments (deliverable 4(a)) into the gateway, assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services other than those of IPBES would also be included, ranging from global (e.g. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment) to national (e.g. UK NEA) scales.

It is worth noting that the types of resources (a) to (c) above can only be uploaded if they are linked to a policy instrument or support tool already included in the gateway. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the relevant policy instrument or support tool are already in the gateway or otherwise upload those first, to be followed by the complementary material.

<sup>13</sup> IPBES/4/INF/14.

<sup>14</sup> IPBES/6/INF/16.

For each individual item of content, a broad range of relevant information is available. Further, the gateway displays a list of gateway items related to the one being browsed. These interlinkages are an important functionality of the gateway as they link different resources allowing users to understand the use of different resources in combination with others.

#### **4.2 Information to be captured for each policy instrument and policy support tool and methodology**

The information that needs to be provided for the upload of different product categories is available in the forms available at <https://www.ipbes.net/policy-support/add-content>.

Whereas some of the fields are compulsory, others are optional. Compulsory fields are presented at the beginning of the forms (identified with a red asterisk). Identifying interlinkages with other resource types in the gateway is generally encouraged and compulsory in some of the forms. This is the case, for example, for case studies or capacity-building opportunities and resources, which need to be linked to existing policy instruments or policy support tools.

Further, those uploading content are encouraged to select a set of relevant tags for their resource, as these are being used as filters to refine the search results when desired. Currently, these are the following:

- Related category of nature's contributions to people
- Related Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals
- Related realms (i.e. terrestrial, marine and coastal, and freshwater) (and units of analysis)
- Sub-region covered

Moreover, some are shared among all product types, but others are specific to a product type. Some of the fields that are present for all types of content include:

- Summary of the resource and purpose of its use
- Languages in which the resource is available
- Copy of the resource or link to where the resource can be found (e.g. a report or other kind of document, website of the organization or project, etc.)
- Contact details of the relevant individual/s or organization/s
- Information on whether the resource is open access

#### **4.3 Responsibilities for entering and maintaining the information in the gateway**

The gateway is an evolving facility helping to achieve the IPBES' objectives, capable of adapting to an ever-changing context.<sup>15</sup> Importantly, the gateway contributes to the delivery of IPBES function to support policy formulation and implementation. It is therefore of fundamental importance that it continues:

- Being a high-quality repository of policy support tools and instruments relating to biodiversity and ecosystems;
- Being used by decision makers, practitioners and experts to support policy formulation and implementation related to biodiversity and ecosystems.<sup>16</sup>

IPBES is mandated to perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages at different scale of application. One component of IPBES assessments is assessing policy responses. The gateway should be a source of information for experts undertaking IPBES assessments to get in touch with other experts working on related issues

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<sup>15</sup> IPBES/4/INF/14.

<sup>16</sup> IPBES/6/INF/16, appendix IV.



around the world, or to learn about related products to the policy instruments, support tools and methodologies being initially considered.

Regarding the incorporation of policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies, case studies and capacity-building resources and opportunities into the IPBES policy support gateway, there are two main activities that need to be considered: (a) uploading content; and (b) updating content. The current processes for uploading and updating content are set out in annexes III and IV.

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## Appendix II

### Refining the structure, functionality and visualization of the policy support gateway

The Plenary, at its sixth session, requested the Executive Secretary, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel to refine the structure and functionality of the policy support gateway, as well as its visualization and access (decision IPBES-6/1). In response, the expert group proposed the following modifications to enhance the gateway, its functionality and use. These suggestions guided the redevelopment of the policy support gateway.

#### I. Areas for improvement of the gateway:

1. Layout/Landing page:
  - a. Make the appearance of the gateway distinctive with an attractive and distinct look and feel, profound identity and theme;
  - b. The landing page should not be the same as the search page;
  - c. The “get started” field should be moved to the top;
  - d. Add a “scroll to top” function.
2. Content and content type forms:
  - a. When clicking on a search result, the content page should indicate the type of product (policy support tool, policy instrument or case study) and a colour-coding scheme should be used for differentiating product types;
  - b. Explore the use of digital object identifiers/stable IDs;
  - c. Explore the use of tools that would prevent users from adding duplicative content, e.g. allowing to “search gateway” within the form or use a plagiarism checker, e.g. once a month.
3. Glossary: a glossary of terms for the policy support gateway, drawn from the IPBES glossary, should be made available and definitions should pop-up when hovering over specific terms.
4. Search function:
  - a. When a policy support tool or policy instrument is searched for using the exact phrasing, it currently appears last on the list of results; it should appear first on the list;
  - b. Search results should appear on a new page with options to search again or to refine the search;
  - c. Search results should be ranked based on relevance;
  - d. It is not clear whether clicking more boxes in the search function widens or limits the search. Add a ‘detailed or advanced search’ function and improve the functionality of search filters;
  - e. The filter “sub-region” should be reconsidered as there are too many regions sub/regions listed; it’s application could result in a list of regions/sub-regions where a specific tool is/has been applied.
5. Structure/navigation:
  - a. Users end up navigating away from gateway when clicking through search results;
  - b. For each deliverable, the right hand menu should be complemented with a link to “pollination-related policy tools”, leading to a pre-recorded request in the gateway.
6. User feedback: The comments box should be available even when users are not logged in and comments should be posted unedited.

#### II. Making the policy support gateway visually more attractive and intuitive:

1. Consider a new name for the catalogue in order to reflect more adequately its nature and intended use, as a search engine that contains policy support tools and methodologies, capacity-building resources and opportunities and methodological guidance, among others. Giving the catalogue a name and a visual identity is an opportunity to gain visibility and position it as an important product and deliverable of IPBES. The proposed new name is: Policy support gateway.
2. Develop a new visualization and structure of the landing page hosting the gateway, including:

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- a. A short introduction to the gateway;
  - b. Short and clear messages;
  - c. Categories with a short explanation of what they are (policy instrument, policy support tool, case study, capacity-building resource and opportunity, assessment);
  - d. A new section with additional guidance on the policy process within the methodological guidance.
3. Refine the search page:
    - a. A broader search engine which includes a hidden advanced search, linked as a secondary page, should be developed;
    - b. The search page should include the following filters: country/countries; related realms, including units of analysis, Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets (goal number and keyword search); and scale of application;
    - c. The case study finder (map of case studies) that currently sits on the homepage of the gateway would unhide only when the case study search option (filter) is enabled.
  4. The IPBES website should allow for the gateway to be accessible from other parts of the website and not only through the section “policy tools”.
  5. With regards to the content, further to inviting partner organizations, including regional organizations, governments and stakeholders to provide relevant information for inclusion in the gateway, the expert group considered that collaboration should be strengthened with other platforms such as GBIF, InforMEA, Oppla and others. This could for example include exploring opportunities for the development of web services to share content, such as API to allow updating of content and sharing resources between platforms e.g. Oppla and InforMEA; or using links to other resources from country profiles e.g. GBIF, and InforMEA.
  6. An algorithm could be used to find key recurring messages in multiple comments for each individual gateway entry; they could be displayed at the top of the comments section for each entry.
  7. The IPBES secretariat should continue to improve the gateway as part of an overall long-term IPBES communications strategy, including, possibly, using innovative approaches for the further development of the gateway, such as hackathons, in collaboration with partners.
  8. A graphic/visual (ideally a front-end) designer should prepare a proposal for an aesthetically modern, appealing and functional look; the most appropriate coding language should be selected based on that proposal.
  9. Coherence and compatibility with the IPBES website should be ensured.

## Appendix III

### Procedures for uploading content into the policy support gateway and subsequent update

The expert group identified the following procedures and principles to be applied for uploading content into the gateway.

#### 1. Process for uploading content into the policy support gateway

Uploading content into the gateway will be guided by the following **principles**:

- i) Users need to be signed in with their IPBES account;
- ii) Content from IPBES products should be prioritised when populating the gateway;
- iii) The addition of content into the gateway is done through a number of forms available on the IPBES website<sup>17</sup>: Based on the structure of the gateway, the different forms will allow for the inclusion of:
  - Policy instruments and policy support tools;
  - Case studies;
  - Capacity-building resources and opportunities;
  - Assessments.
- iv) The forms include a number of fields that are compulsory, which are presented first in the form. Users are encouraged to fill in the form to the best of their ability;
- v) Once the form is complete, users save their upload as “pending review”. Content is automatically submitted to the technical support unit of policy support tools for checking that the content is relevant to IPBES work, and that the information provided in the forms is clear and complete. After this review, content will be either sent back for amendments or published. The technical support unit would consult the task force as necessary, and content would be reviewed by the task force on a regular basis. When reviewing the content, the technical support unit would determine whether the content is based on an IPBES or non-IPBES resource for differentiation. The process for differentiation would be further discussed with the task force and the strategic partners, as appropriate, under the guidance of the management committee for this deliverable.

#### Process for adding resources coming from IPBES products: selection of content and responsibility for its inclusion

Inclusion of content from IPBES products requires due consideration of the assessment process. Policy instruments and policy support tools and methodologies are identified in all stages of the assessment process.

There are two types of content coming from the assessments that the expert group recommended to be added into the gateway. The first type relates to inputs that are used for the production of assessments. The second type relates to the assessment reports themselves. Accordingly, content could be added to the gateway at two stages:

##### *Stage 1. At the scoping stage:*

- **What does it entail?** The identification of specific relevant policy instruments and policy support tools could be done by authors with support from policymakers. For example, the IPBES secretariat could issue a call for information on policy instruments and support tools relevant to the assessment being scoped to IPBES members, observers and stakeholders. The information gathered through this process would be compiled and added into the gateway as the assessment is being developed. This content would not appear as IPBES validated unless it was part of an approved assessment.
- **Who will be responsible for adding information into the gateway?** The assessment technical support unit should coordinate this process.

##### *Stage 2. Once the assessment report is approved:*

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ipbes.net/policy-support/add-content>.

- **What does it entail?** Policy instruments and policy support tools used in the assessment should be added into the policy support gateway.
- **Who will be responsible for adding information into the policy support gateway?** The technical support unit on policy support tools, with support from the technical support unit of the relevant assessment, should coordinate and facilitate the identification of relevant policy instruments and policy support tools and work with the assessment authors on the integration of policy instruments, policy support tools and case studies into the gateway.

Assessment authors are best placed to identify and upload content (see module D in the Guide for assessments). It is therefore essential that the integration of content of the assessment into the gateway is perceived as part of the assessment process.

Furthermore, the IPBES fellows network could be approached and given a prominent role in supporting the identification of policy instruments, policy support tools and case studies and their subsequent addition into the gateway.

#### **Additional aspects for consideration**

- **Ways to cluster resources:** In cases where a resource is applied by different countries/stakeholders in different ways and with different results, all relevant information should be added into the policy support gateway. A system to cluster those resources would be developed to allow different authors to contribute their experience regarding the same resource.
- **Calls for content:** Targeted calls for content in a specific field or on a specific topic could encourage a larger number of uploads from a specific community that relates to ongoing work of IPBES. Submissions could be requested related to a specific issue or a specific set of nature's contributions to people that would be particularly relevant for assessments about to start or at an early stage. An organisation working in a very specific area may not respond to a general call for "policy support tools", may consider its work relevant to a specific call.

#### **Cost implications**

Implementation of the above procedures would require:

- Staff available at the technical support unit on policy support tools to undertake the tasks detailed above;
- Staff available at the technical support unit of the relevant assessments to support the processes mentioned above;
- Embedding the identification of policy instruments and policy support tools and the upload of relevant information into the assessment process. This could entail additional work for the assessment teams both during the assessment process and once the assessment reports are finalised and approved by the Plenary.

## **2. Process for updating content of the policy support gateway**

It is intended that the gateway will be guided by the following principles:

- i) Its content is up-to-date;
- ii) It has a wide range of content for its different product types (policy instruments, policy support tools, case studies, capacity building opportunities and resources, assessments);
- iii) The gateway is visible and used.

The implementation of any identified mechanism for the inclusion of content into the policy support gateway needs to be feasible and cost effective, particularly with respect to the amount of time needed and the availability of staff to undertake the relevant tasks.

Bearing this in mind, the actions proposed below aim to simplify and automate processes for updating content in the gateway. For this purpose, it is expected that systems and processes already in place would be used to the extent possible.

The expert group recommended that the following actions could be implemented to help ensuring the content of the policy support gateway is up-to-date:

- i) A message stating "last updated on YYYY-MM-DD" will be displayed when selecting a specific resource from the gateway;

- ii) Make experts<sup>18</sup> the “creators” (term used in the forms)<sup>19</sup> of their various products and therefore responsible for updating them in the gateway. Given that individuals uploading resources may change affiliation or their day-to-day workload may limit their availability to regularly update information in the gateway, having more than one person with editing rights for each resource could help to ensure that the information in the gateway is accurate and up-to-date. This could include the identification of back-up/secondary “creators” or contact persons or ways to contact other individuals or organizations mentioned in the content form;
- iii) Add a box that would appear in the process of uploading content that requires the “creator” to commit to regularly updating the content or to designate another person;
- iv) To the extent possible, links included as part of the information on a specific resource in the gateway should refer to the websites on which the resource was originally published;
- v) The IPBES secretariat could, at regular intervals, issue calls for “creators” to review and update their resources as appropriate. Calls could be issued either every 6 or 12 months, for example through an automated email. Creators should also respond to the call if no changes occurred to allow the resource to be displayed as up-to-date.
- vi) The same process should be applied for updating content on IPBES and non-IPBES resources.

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<sup>18</sup> In this context, an expert is understood as an individual with knowledge relating to a product in the gateway, or an organization that developed a specific resource of relevance to the gateway.

<sup>19</sup> Having more than one expert performing the role of creators/owners of the products would be helpful to ensure continuity of the work, while allowing them to share or delegate the responsibility for a specific resource.

## Appendix IV

### Validation procedures for the content of the policy support gateway

According to decision IPBES-4/1, experts, Governments and stakeholders should provide policy support tools and methodologies to the gateway through an open and transparent process.

The expert group considered that quality control of the content in the policy support gateway should be largely user-driven. For this purpose, the following mechanisms are proposed in addition to the distinction between IPBES and non-IPBES resources as set out in the procedures for uploading content as set out in appendix III.

As set out in the procedures, for all uploads, the submitted content will be reviewed by the technical support unit on policy support tools regarding its relevance to IPBES work and whether the information requests in the upload form have been completed satisfactorily.

The mechanisms below do not exclude each other and would be implemented under the guidance of the task force, and in consultation with the management committee for this deliverable.

**Mechanism 1: Pop-up window when visiting the page of a specific policy support tool or methodology:** A pop-up window for users to provide feedback that would open up when the user visits a specific policy support tool page. The suggested text for this window would read as follows:

- Have you found this tool useful? *Yes – No – Not sure*
  - Please provide details
- Can it be improved? *Yes – No – Not sure*
  - Please provide details

Additional elements to be considered:

- It is important to identify users that have already responded and give them the options to either update/change their answer or to skip the question;
- A current summary of responses received could be displayed whenever a user answers these questions and a link to the summary could be displayed with each resource.

**Mechanism 2: Check box indicating if content has gone through any specific review process:** The forms for uploading content could include a check box to indicate whether the content being added has gone through a review process, and which type. The following options would be available: (i) external peer review, (ii) internal review, and (iii) not reviewed.

**Mechanism 3: Possibility of adding comments on individual resource pages:** There is a wide variety of policy instruments and policy support tools that lead to different outcomes depending on the context and scale at which they are used or implemented. Giving users the option to provide comments would allow them to share information on the specific context in which a policy support tool has been used or a policy instrument has been implemented, complementing the existing description. The addition of comments would also make the policy support gateway an interactive resource, thereby fostering interaction of communities of practice.

**How to process the comments posted under mechanism 3?** The expert group recommended that users need to be signed in with their IPBES accounts in order to add comments and that therefore anonymous comments would not be possible. An email should be sent within two days acknowledging the receipt of a feedback, briefly explaining the process that will follow.

Validation procedures will be implemented following a staged approach with some variances based on the types of resources on which feedback is provided.

A specific process would be applied when negative comments are submitted by users:

- i) When the feedback refers to the structure or content of the submission made, the technical support unit on policy support tools will send the feedback to the creator;
- ii) In situations in which the feedback relates to the content of the resource, or quality of a specific policy instrument, policy support tool, or case study:
  - a. Step 1: The technical support unit on policy support tools will review the feedback and check the content, particularly to identify whether the negative feedback refers to a

particular geographical/socioeconomic/political context or to the scale/approach/theories used for their application. The gateway should gather information with respect to situations in which a tool has proven to be successful in particular conditions, while in certain contexts it has not been the best option;

- b. Step 2: If the comments cannot be easily addressed by the technical support unit on policy support tools, the comments will be shared with the creator of the resource. This should be addressed ideally within two weeks;
  - c. Step 3: For situations in which the posted comments are controversial or sensitive, or no response under step 2 was received, the technical support unit on policy support tools will share them with the secretariat and the management committee for a way forward to be suggested.
- iii) For situations in which negative feedback relates to resources included in IPBES products, the technical support unit on policy support tools will channel those comments to the relevant assessment authors for them to address the received feedback. There will be a 4-week period for addressing it. If no response is received from the assessment authors within that period, the technical support unit on policy support tools will send the comments to the owner (or institution holding or hosting the support tool). If no feedback is received, the information will be sent to the management committee for a way forward to be suggested;
  - iv) The expert group recommended that a “comments policy” is developed for flagging or removal of comments that are abusive.

**Mechanism 4: Adding an option for users to report when a product would benefit from complementary information.** This could be implemented through an additional tab under each product that would allow for users to “report” information that is inaccurate, incomplete, or out of date. After clicking the link, a simple form would pop up, with a text box allowing users to explain their concerns. The author of the specific resource would receive each comment via email with an invitation to check and update the information as appropriate. If information is updated, an automated notification would be sent to the user that added the initial comment(s)..

**Mechanism 5: Exit survey on user experience.** Users could answer an exit survey to assess their experience and the effectiveness of the gateway based on their experience.

**Mechanism 6: Survey on effectiveness of the policy support gateway.** A survey regarding the effectiveness of the gateway and the usefulness of its content could be sent to governments, observers and stakeholders every two years.

### **Cost implications**

The implementation of the procedures requires support from a technical support unit. Cost implications of the implementation of different mechanisms vary. Some of them could require a full-time moderator. The time requirements depend on the amount of resources added at a given time.



## Appendix V

### Identifying options for the policy support gateway to be integrated into the other functions of the Platform

To ensure that links are made across the IPBES work programme, and products are used effectively, the Plenary has requested that the gateway is integrated into work related to the other three functions of IPBES, namely assessments, capacity building, and knowledge generation and work related to communication. In that regard, the expert group identified the options below. Further options could be identified as the implementation of the next work programme progresses.

#### 1. Assessments

The expert group identified potential for two-way integration between the assessments and the gateway: Using the assessments to populate the gateway and using the content of the gateway during the development of the assessments both as a source of information for the assessments and as a tool to facilitate the flow of information from governments to authors. Actions to achieve this two-way integration at each stage of the assessment process were identified. While some of them are detailed below, others are set out in the methodological guidance for authors (appendix I) and the process for uploading content to the policy support gateway (appendix III).

- i) From the scoping stage, the policy support gateway could be used to identify key areas relevant for policy support (institutions, governance, policy instruments, policy support tools, etc.) and the scoping report could be used to focus a call for governments and stakeholders to identify and upload policy instruments and policy support tools to the gateway, so authors can use these during an assessment;
- ii) Targeted calls for content from a specific field or on a specific topic could encourage a larger number of uploads from a specific community that relates to ongoing work in IPBES. Submissions related to a specific issue, or a specific set of nature's contributions to people that would be particularly relevant for assessments which are about to start or at an early stage could be requested. An organisation working in a very specific area may not respond to a general call for "policy support tools", but may consider its work relevant to a specific call;
- iii) It is essential that the templates for uploading content and the methodological guidance relate to each other so that the process for uploading content into the gateway is part of the assessment process;
- iv) The nomination and selection of policy practitioners as part of assessment expert groups should be further encouraged. This could require an adjustment of the criteria for their selection;
- v) It is suggested to establish a policy support liaison group within assessment expert groups. Members of the task force on policy support tools could also be part of the liaison group. The role of fellows in further supporting this work could also be explored.

Other suggestions included:

- i) During the assessment process, authors could identify apparent policy support gaps and communicate them as part of the review process of the first order draft of the assessment . Complementing drafts with a targeted questionnaire could aid the identification of policy support gaps;
- ii) The peer-review process could be used to further mobilise relevant knowledge and link to the knowledge generation function;
- iii) After an assessment is approved, the IPBES secretariat could issue a call inviting governments and stakeholders to add further case studies and policy support tools related to the specific assessment report into the gateway;
- iv) As assessments may also be considered policy support tools it should be noted that the information in the catalogue of assessments is being included into the policy support gateway within the most appropriate categories (usually assessments, policy support tools, or case studies);
- v) The initiation of a series of new assessments may provide a renewed opportunity to further strengthen the links between the assessment and the policy support function of IPBES and to understand the means by which the catalogue of assessments and the policy support gateway are

integrated and used. This could include the undertaking of methodological assessments to assess the effectiveness of policy instruments and policy support tools.

## 2. Capacity-building

The Plenary, at its fifth session, requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, in consultation with the Bureau and supported by the expert group, to work with the task force on capacity-building to explore ways to more effectively promote and facilitate the future use of policy support tools and methodologies at appropriate scales that meet the needs of policymakers. The functions of IPBES include to identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales and to catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge by engaging in dialogue with key scientific organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, non-governmental organisations, policymakers and funding organizations, among others.

Regarding the capacity-building function, the expert group acknowledged the work underway to facilitate uptake of assessments, and to develop learning materials focused on IPBES products and guidance for the establishment of national science-policy platforms and networks. The group made the following recommendations for greater integration between the policy support gateway and the capacity-building function:

- i) Review how scientists understand the language of policy-making and how policymakers use different IPBES deliverables, in order to better integrate the policy support gateway and capacity-building efforts by more effectively promoting and facilitating the future use of policy support tools and methodologies at appropriate scales that meet the needs of policymakers;
- ii) Use capacity-building activities to increase uptake of the gateway. This could be implemented as part of IPBES activities, for example by encouraging the addition of information on the gateway as part of the development of IPBES products, or by including information about the gateway as part of IPBES webinars. Furthermore, activities organized by strategic partners, e.g. capacity-building workshops, could also include extra sessions relating to the gateway or specific content included in it;
- iii) Consider different ways in which capacity-building for policy support tools and methodologies could be supported through the IPBES capacity-building rolling plan. For example, a help desk for national focal points could be established;
- iv) Ensure that products developed through capacity-building activities are entered into the policy support gateway and linked with the relevant policy support tools and methodologies;
- v) Likewise, the gateway could include an option to select “my organisation is interested to be trained to better use this tool” and the IPBES capacity-building task force and its partners could prioritize on this basis tools on which to focus their capacity-building activities.

## 3. Knowledge generation

The expert group identified the following recommendations for better integration of the policy support gateway with the knowledge generation function:

- i) Assessments could be used as a means through which policy support gaps are identified;
- ii) The identification of knowledge gaps and generation of knowledge could be catalysed through the gateway, including by:
  - a. Considering the possibility of including lists of datasets in the gateway as a way to help mobilise knowledge needed for the use of various policy support tools and methodologies;
  - b. Using the gateway to identify knowledge, information, data, and capacity gaps. This would require adding the necessary functionalities, for example by setting up processes that would allow to collect, (when possible synthesise), and disseminate the gathered information through the gateway;
- iii) A number of workshops could be convened in conjunction with other relevant meetings, to bring together the community of practice to promote further development of policy support tools and methodologies.

## 4. Communications and outreach

In decision IPBES-5/1, the Plenary requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, supported by the expert group, to explore ways to more effectively promote and facilitate the future use of policy support tools and methodologies at appropriate scales that meet the needs of

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policymakers. Communications and outreach is a key area of IPBES work to help ensure the widest reach and impact of the work that is undertaken.

The expert group on policy support tools and methodologies acknowledged that promoting the use of the policy support gateway is a challenge. Additionally, it was acknowledged that since the gateway is still under development, it could not be widely promoted yet. Therefore, the expert group recommended the development of an active communications and outreach strategy around the gateway. This could be achieved through the following actions:

- i) Building on lessons learned from communication activities that were organised around IPBES products, develop a communications strategy for the release of the gateway;
  - ii) Promotion of the gateway should take place at different levels (target appropriate networks at subregional and local levels as well as global organizations and national focal points for effective outreach). This could include reaching out to practitioners and using ‘world days’ for showcasing;
  - iii) Preparation of a video explaining the policy support function of IPBES that could be shared with IPBES national focal points as part of a guidance or media package that would help them to further promote the gateway;
  - iv) Exploring ways for using the gateway to promote IPBES assessments;
  - v) Communication experts could be engaged in the processing of messages derived from scientific studies in a way that is suitable for these being effectively utilised by decision makers;
  - vi) Further to the engagement of communication experts in the assessment process, they should be involved in the development of a methodology that delivers messages from assessments to policymakers in ways that allows them to make best use of the assessments. Policymakers could be asked for their preference regarding the form in which information would be presented to them;
  - vii) Implementation of an approach to measure the effectiveness of uptake from the communications and outreach strategy.
-