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Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Initial work programme of the Platform: scoping
documents for regional assessments, land degradation and
restoration and the conceptualization of values****Report on the regional scoping process for a set of regional and
subregional assessments (deliverable 2 (b))****Draft complementary scoping report for the regional assessment of
biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas****Note by the secretariat**

Within the framework of the draft generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES/3/6/Add.1), the annex to the present note sets out the draft complementary scoping report for the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas. It was developed by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau on the basis of the outcome of the joint regional scoping process undertaken in response to decision IPBES-2/5 (see IPBES/3/6 for further details regarding the process). The draft complementary scoping report outlines characteristics specific to the Americas that would need to be assessed in order for the assessment to be policy-relevant.

* IPBES/3/1.

Annex

Scoping for a regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas

I. Scope, geographic boundary, rationale, utility and assumptions

A. Scope

1. Within the scope outlined in the draft generic scoping report (IPBES/3/6/Add.1), the complexity, heterogeneity and interdependence within and between subregions of the Americas, including multiple types of inequality (social, ecological and economic), will be considered in the context of biodiversity and its benefits to people. Key processes, including urbanization and deruralization, natural resources exploitation, pollution, deforestation and land degradation in the subregions, and their impacts on biodiversity and its benefits to people and quality of life, will be taken into account in the assessment of the Americas. The context for governance will also be informed by the sociocultural norms and the status and trends in biodiversity deterioration associated with the main economic sectors in the region. The implications of the loss and degradation of biodiversity and the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services to people for industries, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, tourism, business and water, food, energy and livelihood security in the region, will be explored.

B. Geographic boundary of the assessment

2. The Americas extend from the north boreal region to the subantarctic region, crossing the equator. They have four subregions: North America, Mesoamerica, the Caribbean and South America. The countries included in these four subregions are:

| <i>Subregions</i> | <i>Countries and territories</i> |
|-------------------|---|
| North America | Canada and United States of America |
| Mesoamerica | Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama |
| Caribbean | Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, ^a Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. May include British, French, American and Dutch overseas territories in the Caribbean (islands) |
| South America | Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, ^b Guyana, ^a Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) |

^a On socioeconomic, cultural and historical grounds, the Dominican Republic could be considered part of Mesoamerica, and Guyana part of the Caribbean.

^b Overseas territory.

Because of the size of South America in relation to the other subregions, its latitudinal extent and varied physiography, additional subdivisions of this subregion (e.g., the Southern Cone, the Amazon region and the tropical Andean region) will be contemplated in the subregional assessment.

C. Rationale

3. In the context of the general rationale outlined in the draft generic scoping report, the present section sets out the rationale specific to the Americas. The region's rich biodiversity and its benefits to people provide essential contributions to the economy, livelihoods and quality of life. The region is also bioculturally diverse, with traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities promoting, among others, the diversification and conservation of many varieties of cultivated plants and domestic animals that are the staple food for many other regions of the world (e.g., maize and potatoes). Many of these local communities are also highly dependent on nature's benefits for subsistence. In order to meet growing demand for biomass and energy, changes in land use and cover have led to the expansion of the agricultural frontier at the price of degradation and significant loss of nature's benefits to people. This is partly the result of the development decision made by a single sector with little or no consideration of the immediate or long-term consequences for biodiversity and its multiple benefits to society. Rapid urbanization, changes in land tenure structure and ownership, especially in Latin America, as well as the role the Amazon plays in regulating global climate and the contribution

to global fisheries of the extensive coastlines of the Americas, are all important factors that have an impact on biodiversity and its benefits.

D. Utility

4. In the context of the general utility outlined in the draft generic scoping report, the present section sets out the utility specific to the region. The Americas assessment emphasizes the importance and values of biodiversity and its benefits to people, including multiple values (including intrinsic, cultural, economic and relational values). It will inform decision makers (including policymakers, practitioners and leaders in the public and private sectors and civil society) on the status and trends of biodiversity and its benefits to people, and provide policy options for the conservation and restoration of ecosystems and their societal benefits. These policy options will incorporate indigenous and local knowledge systems, promote good quality of life and include the benefits for future generations to be obtained from ecosystems. The assessment will facilitate the mainstreaming of biodiversity (i.e., putting biodiversity and its benefits high on the agendas of education, public health, environment, economic growth and development policy) at different administrative and political levels, and emphasize interlinkages between ecosystems, indirect and direct drivers of change and key outcomes for the food-fibre-water-energy nexus in the region. The assessment and the scenarios developed will include practical tools and recommendations for decision makers and leaders at all levels in all sectors.

E. Assumptions

5. In the context of the general assumptions outlined in the draft generic scoping report, the present section sets out the assumptions specific to the region. The central assumption of the scoping for the Americas regional assessment is that science-based knowledge and indigenous and local knowledge are both relevant to the process. These two types of knowledge systems will be utilized in the assessment. In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Platform, the draft assessment report will be open to peer review by experts, policymakers and stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities. Another critical assumption highlighted by the scoping process is that the assessment will be scale-dependent and that, while undertaken at regional and subregional levels, all scales are equally important for its scope. In addition to findings at regional or transboundary levels, local-level patterns and processes are also important for taking into account diversity of animals, plants and peoples in the subregions, the relative gaps in science-based knowledge, as well as access to and information from indigenous and local knowledge systems. It is further assumed that the region will have two working languages: English and Spanish.

II. Chapter outline

6. The assessment of the Americas region will follow the chapter outline as set out in the draft generic scoping report but will focus in particular on the regionally specific scope as set out in section I above. In addition, chapter 2 will examine the intrinsic value of biodiversity beyond its anthropocentric value underpinning nature's benefits to people.

III. Key datasets

7. Beyond the general issues concerning key datasets outlined in the draft generic scoping report, the present section sets out issues related to key datasets specific to this region. Relevant datasets from ongoing activities drawn from a wide range of sources, including global, regional, national, subnational and local institutions and organizations will feed into the Americas regional assessment. Some examples are national biodiversity and strategic action plans, national reports and United Nations agencies (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank) and regional/national government research bodies (the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network, Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad, Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Geological Survey and Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazonia). Examples of relevant data portals include the Global Earth Observations System of Systems/Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network, the Global Invasive Species Database, the Indigenous Peoples' Climate Change Forum, regional data repositories (the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre) and subregional or national datasets. Examples of relevant research institutes include Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, the International Energy Agency, the World Resources Institute and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute. Datasets from published scientific literature and research and citizen science projects will also be used.

IV. Strategic partnership and initiatives

8. Beyond the general issues concerning strategic partnerships and initiatives outlined in the draft generic scoping report, the present section sets out issues related to strategic partnerships and initiatives specific to the region. In order to avoid duplication and identify synergies, the Americas regional assessment process will develop strong connections with regionally specific activities of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity. Building strategic partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Latin America, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the International Council for Science regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean (which publishes its own biodiversity assessments) would also be valuable. Public or private stakeholders that could provide scientific and technical support to the assessment include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research, Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe, the Foundation for Development Planning Inc., the World Bank, Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, Corporación Colombiana de Investigación Agropecuaria and Fondo Indígena, which are just some of the organizations that currently support a number of environmental initiatives. Local community networks, including the Native Research Network, Inc. and the Indigenous Environmental Network, could help in linking the Americas regional assessment to local and indigenous communities or with outreach and communication.

V. Operational structure

9. As noted in the draft generic scoping report, the operational structures best able to deliver the Americas regional assessment, including its capacity-building component, will need to be identified. A technical support unit may be established for the Americas region to coordinate the delivery of the regional assessment, working as part of the secretariat.

VI. Process and timetable

10. The process and timetable are set out in the draft generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

VII. Cost estimate

11. The cost estimate is set out in the draft generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

VIII. Communication and outreach

12. In addition to what is outlined in the draft generic scoping report, it is suggested that national and local government be encouraged to translate relevant material from the Americas regional assessment report into local and native languages. The Platform will also engage with the relevant scientific community, knowledge holders, stakeholders and policymakers through national focal points and a non-exhaustive list of partners, including: national science foundations, academies of science, the InterAmerican Network of Academies of Science, Future Earth, branches of relevant United Nations agencies (e.g., the United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, FAO and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity), centres of excellence (the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre), research institutions (the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, the International Council for Science regional office for Latin America and Caribbean, universities (the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the University of the West Indies, the Center for International Earth Science Information Network at Columbia University, New York, among others), international organizations, local non-governmental organizations (e.g., the Latin American Network on Ecosystem Services and Red Latinoamericana de Botánica), partnership institutions, scientific publications, regional environmental publications (e.g., SinergiA), conferences, academic and other scientific networks (e.g., the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture of the CGIAR Consortium).

IX. Capacity-building

13. Capacity-building will be based on the priorities submitted to the Platform by Governments and other stakeholders to the Platform and will target individuals, institutions and indigenous and local communities through fellowships, training programmes and technical support with regard to access and management of relevant data. It will support the establishment and/or strengthening of regional, subregional and national platforms and networks.
